



SF CHILD SAFETY PROGRAM MANUAL

Created by: SF Child Safety Team [with Thanks to OC and Teach Beyond
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SF Child Safety Team

Introduction:

The SF Child Safety Program has a dual aim of enabling SF to fulfill its biblical, ethical, and legal responsibility of protecting the children in its care, guarding their safety and well-being, as well as helping SF members protect their integrity in how they interact with and treat children.

Since its beginning, Synergie Francophone (SF) has been involved in Kingdom work, envisioning Gospel transformation of whole nations through partnerships with national churches and ministries. As a Christian organization, SF believes its work is to be done to the highest Christian standards. SF members and associates must conduct themselves in a manner that reflects and honors God through their service and behavior. A critical part of this commitment includes a focus on preserving the safety and wellbeing of children, who are at a greater risk of being harmed and therefore require intentional safeguarding and support.

SF has implemented a Child Safety Program that is based on biblical truth to increase the safety of children in our care. Children have intrinsic value because they were created by God to bear His image. SF believes that all children are fearfully and wonderfully made by God (Psalm 139:14). Abuse tells children they are worthless, that God does not care about them, and that they do not have significance. Adults have the responsibility to keep children safe and teach them a correct view of God, in light of Scripture. In our broken world, children are often not seen, heard, or protected. SF members are obligated before God to do everything possible to protect, care for, and support the children in our care.

A Biblical Basis for Child Protection

As believers we often take for granted that children are a blessing and heritage from God. We believe that God created them intentionally and that we are to care for them and allow them to come to Him without hindrance.

For those of us who are followers of Jesus and who serve internationally amongst missions, schools, camps, and other kinds of ministries, rightly understanding God's view of children and our responsibility to care for them must undergird everything we do. Taking the Gospel and reflecting the life and work of Jesus to those who have not heard and do not know Him – which includes all children everywhere – requires that we make the safety and wellbeing of children a priority.

The attached short study ([Appendix A](#)) is not an exhaustive review of all God has said or that applies to children, but it is a place to begin

Child Safety Commitment

SF has a God-ordained responsibility for the care and nurture of its children and the children to whom we minister. This includes caring for their spiritual growth and general welfare, as well as safeguarding them from harm.

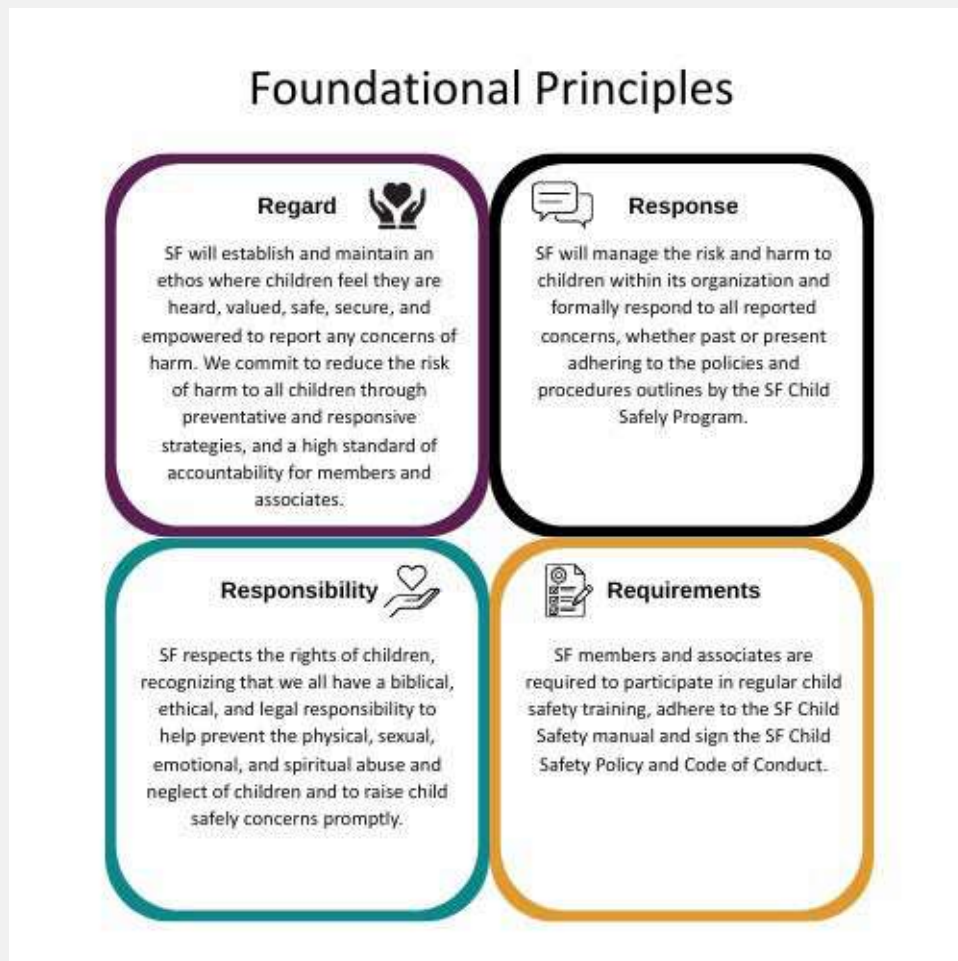
Child safety includes measures to protect the health, well-being, and human rights of children, which allows them to live free from harm. The goal is for people and organizations to work together to prevent and reduce the risks, occurrences, and impact of harm.

SF | Child Safety Program Manual

The objectives of SF's Child Safety policies are to reduce the risk of harm to children that come under its care and to ensure SF's members model healthy adult-child interactions.

With this in mind, SF's Child Safety Program rests on four foundational principles: **regard**, **responsibility**, **requirements**, and **response**.

Foundational Child Safety Principles



To ensure the full application of these principles, SF has put in place effective prevention and response strategies to be implemented as part of our Child Safety Program.

Governance Statement

Life and Lifestyle Child Safety Program

Special measures need to be taken to protect children from harm/abuse. SF is committed to the protection of children both in the treatment of SF missionary children as well as in our ministries to children around the world.

The emotional, sexual, or physical abuse of children or the neglect of a child is strictly forbidden and is a violation of the Standard of Conduct and is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and/or membership.

SF US requires background checks on all personnel applying from the US to serve with SF US which includes those whose ministry is specifically related to children.

SF US reserves the right to do background checks for past child abuse offenses on personnel currently in ministry contact with children.

BEST PRACTICES:

The organization makes reasonable efforts to screen workers, to provide a safe environment for all children, and to promote an open atmosphere of trust leading to freedom to report suspected inappropriate actions on the part of any SF US personnel.

All SF US leaders foster a climate of “belief” (i.e. it is possible that child harm/abuse could take place) and “freedom to report concerns.”

If a person believes there has been a violation of the Child Safety policy, they are to use the reporting procedures as defined in our Child Safety Program Manual. SF US expects employees and members to immediately report any violation to enable the organization to respond and take appropriate action.

It is recognized that SF US parents may have differences in parenting styles. SF US affirms the parent’s right to use reasonable and fair corporal punishment.

CHILD SAFETY STATEMENTS

Synergie Francophone:

- *Shall adopt and adhere to the SF Child Safety Program, shall ensure the child safety program is followed by SF members, and shall ensure each field has a locally appropriate child safety program that meets SF child safety principles.*
- *Shall ensure SF child safety training is provided to SF members. The SF Child Safety Team shall provide training for the child safety program.*
- *The immediate SF Supervisor, within 24 hours, will notify the SF Child Safety Advocate of a child safety concern involving an SF member as outlined in the SF Child Safety Program. The Field leader, the Child Safety Advocate, and the ED will respond together to any reported concerns.*

- *The SF Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct is approved by the SF Leadership Team (LT) and the Board and may be amended only by the LT and the Board. However, the Child Safety Program Manual may be amended by the Child Safety Team.*
- *SF members are required to accept and abide by the SF Child Safety Program Manual and sign the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct ([Appendix B](#))*

CHILD SAFETY PERSONNEL

INTRODUCTION

The Child Safety Team is made up of Child Safety Specialists, under the direction of the **Child Safety Advocate**, working cooperatively together with the **Executive Director** as a team to fulfill our biblical, ethical, and legal responsibility for the safety and well-being of children in our care, as well as to ensure the integrity of SF's members.

The Child Safety Team is not a legal, investigative body that responds to raised concerns with a law enforcement approach. The CS Team does not have the authority or jurisdiction to convict people of crimes. Instead, the CS Team uses an HR/employment approach that is informed by social work models with the duty of care to conduct internal inquiries and to hold SF members and associates accountable to SF's policies, and code of conduct regarding the safety and wellbeing of children.

This team is responsible for developing and promoting the Child Safety Program and ensuring that all SF members adhere to and comply with the Child Safety Program Manual. The Child Safety Team also works together to respond to concerns raised, working cooperatively with local leaders and under the supervision of the Executive Director.

CHILD SAFETY TEAM MEMBERS

Child Safety Advocate

The Child Safety Advocate is the person appointed to take the lead responsibility for child safety issues in SF, which includes overseeing all aspects of SF's Child Safety Program, leading the Child Safety Team and all responses to raised concerns.

Child Safety Specialists

The Child Safety Team Specialists will work under the direction of the Child Safety Advocate and collaboratively with the Executive Director on aspects of the Child Safety Program. The Child Safety Team Specialists will have taken the required training and will potentially serve as part of a response team when child safety concerns are raised.

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

A prevention strategy is a programmed activity that aims to reduce the risk of harm to children within SF's care. Due to the various factors that contribute to the increased risk to children, such as lack of awareness, poor recruitment procedures, lack of accountability and supervision of personnel or lack of understanding of the needs of individual families, no single strategy is effective. Therefore, SF's Child Safety Program requires multifaceted prevention strategies to promote child safety.

These strategies, integrated into SF's personnel and member care practices, aim to increase awareness and accountability while setting clear boundaries and promoting an organizational culture that encourages healthy adult-child interaction and the raising of child safety concerns.

I. CHILD SAFETY AWARENESS

Defining child harm is a difficult and complex issue within any setting. The World Health Organization [states](#), "Child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development, or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power."

It is recognized that local and/or national definitions of child abuse may vary, and there are racial, cultural, religious, and ethnic differences in child rearing and understandings of what constitutes child abuse. Therefore, the use of the term "harm" will be used instead of "abuse," "neglect," or "maltreatment." In this way, the focus is on the child and how he or she has been impacted rather than just the actions of the person causing the harm. It is recognized that parents may have differences in parenting styles and SF respects the views of parents regarding spanking their own children.

In order to safeguard those under its care, SF advocates using the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ([UNRC](#))([summary](#)), which actively safeguards children's interests, as well as the [United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), which articulates the fundamental rights and freedoms for all.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Abuse – The maltreatment of a child by another person or persons in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power, which endangers or impairs the health or welfare of a child.

Adult - Generally, a person of 18 or more years of age.

Children – A child is any human being below the age of 18 years. SF also recognizes the need to protect students who are over 18 years of age but still in full-time school up through high school.

Child Safety – Measures to protect the health, well-being and human rights of children, which allow them to live free from abuse. The goal is for people and organizations to work together to prevent and reduce the risk of occurrences and impact of harm to children.

Child Safety Team (CST) – Led by the Child Safety Advocate, the CST is a group of Child Safety Specialists within SF who develop and promote the Child Safety Program globally in preventative and response strategies. The CST works together to respond to concerns raised, working cooperatively with local leaders and Team Leaders while under the supervision of the Executive Director.

Harm – Action or inaction (intentional or unintentional) that may lead to serious injury, whether physical, emotional, or sexual. From a Child Safety perspective, using the term 'harm' instead of 'abuse' helps to focus on the effects on the child rather than the actions of the adult or the one causing the harm. This distinction becomes important when undertaking an assessment of the child's ongoing safety and well-being (harm or risk of harm), vs a misconduct assessment (abuse).

Synergie Francophone (SF) – A global community seeking to serve, equip, and connect the body of Christ to transform lives, communities, and nations.

SF Member – Any person employed, directly affiliated, or connected with the mission and its work.

Response Team – Led by the Child Safety Advocate, the Response Team works together to respond to safeguarding concerns raised, working cooperatively with relevant leaders. All Response Team members have received MinistrySafe training.

Respondent – An individual (adult or child) accused of causing harm to a child.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD HARM

AGE FACTOR

Adult-to-Child Cases: Any instance in which a respondent is 18 years or over will be considered adult-to-child harm.

Child-to-Child Cases: Interactions between two or more children which the organization sees as *inappropriate behavior*, up to and including actual *harm*. Should a child under the age of 18 experience maltreatment by another child under the age of 18, it will typically be considered

harm if there is a notable difference in responsibility, trust, or power and development. Child-to-child cases will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

TYPES OF HARM

Child harm and **child-to-child inappropriate** behavior are recognized under four categories: Physical Harm, Emotional Harm, Sexual Harm, and Neglect.

PHYSICAL HARM

Physical harm to a child refers to the inflicting of non-accidental physical trauma in which a child suffers or is likely to suffer serious harm from an injury or pattern of injuries inflicted by a child's parent or caregiver or any other person. This can include, but is not limited to, injuries that are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shaking (babies), bruising, lacerations, or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation, attempted drowning, or suffocating, or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child.

IMPACT OF PHYSICAL HARM

The impact of physical harm can include physical effects such as pain and medical problems from physical injury and in severe cases, even death. Impact of physical harm may also include emotional trauma that can lead to depression and other mental health concerns. Children who have suffered physical harm can often find it difficult to form lasting and appropriate friendships, as they often lack the ability to trust others. They may become over compliant or overly aggressive with others in social settings.

EMOTIONAL HARM

All types of harm and neglect can hurt children emotionally, but the term "emotional harm" specifically applies to behavior of a parent or caregiver, which damages the confidence and self-esteem of a child or young person, resulting in significant emotional disturbance or trauma.

Although it is possible for "one-off" incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the parental or caregiver behavior that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child. Emotional harm usually includes chronic patterns, acts or omissions by parents or caregivers that have caused, or could cause, serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental harm. Emotional harm can include a range of behaviors such as, but not limited to, extreme criticism, excessive demands on a child's performance, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation, or threatening behavior, conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only if they meet the needs of another person.

Emotional harm can also be the consequence of a child suffering neglect, sexual, or physical harm. Even when the source of sexual or physical harm is no longer present, the child can still suffer emotional harm that is a consequence of the original harm.

SEXUAL HARM

Sexual harm refers to a situation where there is any sexual activity with a child perpetrated by another child or an adult, whether there is criminal intent or not on behalf of the person causing harm, as the focus is on the impact on the child, rather than on the person who caused the harm. It can include, but is not limited to, indecent exposure, masturbation or sexual activity in the presence of a child, obscene communication, sending sexually explicit messages, solicitation to sexual activity, or sexual threats (whether in person, on the telephone, or via text messaging or the Internet), showing or providing pornography, voyeurism, touching private body parts other than for hygienic purposes, fondling, rubbing, holding, or kissing for the purpose of sexual gratification, statutory rape, rape, oral and anal sex, or incest. This also includes producing, viewing, or owning child pornography.

All children are at risk of sexual harm. Finkelhor (1994) explains that children are inherently more vulnerable to sexual harm simply because they are children. Children are more physically, emotionally, psychologically, and socially vulnerable to sexual harm than most adults. While all children are at risk of sexual harm, some children are at greater risk than others due to the presence of risk factors such as a child's age, social skills, previous exposure to sexual behavior, lack of age-appropriate supervision, and intellectual disability.

IMPACT OF SEXUAL HARM TO CHILDREN

It is generally accepted that sexual harm to children has the potential to result in serious, long-standing outcomes for a child, such as:

- Post-traumatic stress syndrome
- Mental health issues such as clinical depression
- Interpersonal relationship conflicts
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Risk taking behaviors
- Increased vulnerability to sexual harm

WHO CAUSES SEXUAL HARM TO CHILDREN?

Professor Smallbone (2012) suggests that there are four categories of people who can cause sexual harm to children within an organization. They are listed here from the most to the least probable:

1. **Other children.** Other children are the main source of sexual harm experienced by children in an organization. These circumstances can involve children acting out sexual behavior from previous exposure, sexual experimentation gone wrong, harassment, or bullying.
2. **An adult member in your organization who has not previously offended.** This person develops abuse-related motivation for the first time, having not previously sexually offended a child before joining the organization. For example, a teacher (male or female) engages in a sexual relationship with a student for the first time. While most adult offenders are male, female offenders (particularly in situations involving male students) are growing in number.

3. **An adult member in your organization who has previously offended.** This person has established abuse-related interest or motivations to sexually harm children. This person may not have any previous convictions for sexual crimes against children.
4. **A stranger to the child and to the organization.** Although this is the least likely, it is still a possibility and often the outcomes are extreme harm such as abduction and death.

WHERE DOES SEXUAL HARM OCCUR?

Child sexual harm can occur in many environments including domestic environments such as in a house, in the backyard of a home, or in a car; school environments such as in the classroom or on the playground; or in public environments such as public playgrounds, shopping centers, or public toilets/bathrooms.

The environment that appears to have become the most common environment for child sexual harm in the mission community is the 'mission compound'. This is when two or more houses share a common exterior boundary. Children are being exposed to sexual harm by other children and known and unknown adults on housing compounds for a wide variety of reasons including implicit trust between missionary 'neighbors' with one another's children, decreased adult supervision, and opportunities for children to be in secluded areas. While child sexual harm can occur anywhere, it often occurs in places that are usually considered child-safe such as homes, housing compounds and with other children.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL HARM IN CHILDREN:

- Child or child's friend telling you about it, directly or indirectly
- Describing sexual acts
- Sexual knowledge or behavior inappropriate for the child's age
- Going to bed fully clothed
- Extreme changes in personality or behavior
- Regressive behavior; e.g., drug dependency, suicide attempts, self-mutilation
- Child being in contact with a known or suspected pedophile
- Anorexia or over-eating
- Unexplained accumulation of money and gifts
- Persistent running away from home
- Risk taking behaviors; e.g., self-harm, suicide attempts

IN PARENTS OR CAREGIVERS:

- Exposing a child to prostitution or pornography or using a child for pornographic purposes
- Intentional exposure of a child to a sexual behavior of others
- Previous conviction or suspicion of child sexual abuse
- Coercing a child to engage in sexual behavior with other children
- Verbal threats of sexual abuse

CHILD TO CHILD SEXUAL HARM

While the community is generally aware of the risk of a child being sexually harmed by adults, it is only recently being recognized that most sexual harm of children comes from other children and can include sibling to sibling sexual harm. This harmful behavior may be recognized by the child, or the child may not recognize the behavior that they are engaging in with another child is harmful to them or other children. Therefore, while these matters generally do not involve intent to do wrong, and though children do not fall under the conduct expectations of adults, these matters still require assessment and intervention due to the safety implications to the children involved.

It is important to note that normal healthy development of children is characterized by curiosity, spontaneity and playfulness regarding gender differences and sexuality. Most interaction between children is entirely normal and age appropriate. However, the ubiquitous nature of public, explicit adult sexual images and digital pornography can distort children's perceptions and harm the healthy and normal interactions between children. Early interventions are necessary to address any harmful behavior and its causes. Any significant concerns should be passed on to the Team Leader, local leader, or Executive Director, who will consult with the Child Safety Advocate.

Because of the wide range of potential situations, all reports will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. An evaluation will consider such factors as context, age differential, power imbalance, seriousness of the offense, acknowledgment of responsibility, and future risk. A Child Harm and Risk Assessment (CHARA) will be used to determine the degree of harm, future risk, and a subsequent action plan. This may lead to the removal of the family from the field if it is determined that professional help needs to be sought or if statutory authorities are involved.

CHILD TO CHILD NON-SEXUAL HARM

This can include intimidation, physical and verbal bullying, cyber bullying, manipulation, power, and control. These situations are usually dealt with locally. If harm is severe enough for a report to be made to the Child Safety Advocate, a Child Harm and Risk Assessment (CHARA) will be carried out.

GROOMING

Grooming is befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes the family, to lower the child's inhibitions and to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual harm, sexual exploitation, or trafficking. This can be done face-to-face or online. This situation often results in the victims accepting blame, responsibility, guilt, and shame for the offense. Sexual harm requires far more secrecy than other forms of child harm, so it is more difficult to detect and/or report. SF has the responsibility and obligation to correct potential grooming behavior or actions which appear to be grooming.

In the context of sexual harm, grooming is best identified using the following six steps or characteristics:

1. Identifying and targeting
2. Offering specialized attention
3. Manipulating the relationship to meet a child's needs
4. Isolating the child
5. Creating secrecy around the relationship
6. Initiating sexual harm

SELF HARM

Self-harm is when a child causes harm to themselves or engages in high risk-taking behaviors such as drug and alcohol abuse. It often results in the child causing deliberate harm to themselves in order to cope with intense emotional pain or trauma.

IMPACT OF SELF-HARM

Self-harm can become habitual and prevent the development of normal coping strategies. While most people who self-harm are using it as a coping strategy rather than an attempt to commit suicide, continued self-harming can lead to suicidal ideation. Self-harming is a serious safety concern that often requires professional support and guidance to assess and assist the young person to develop other coping strategies.

SPIRITUAL HARM

Although spiritual harm is not a category of harm currently recognized in statutory guidance, SF fully acknowledges that within faith communities, harm can also be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. Spiritual harm is generally defined as coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context including but not limited to:

- The misuse of Scripture, the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, with a requirement to be obedient to the abuser.
- Enforced accountability and pressure to conform.
- Requirements for secrecy and silence, with isolation from others external to the context of harm.
- Oppressive teaching.
- Censorship of decision making.
- Intrusive or forced healing and deliverance ministries or rituals.
- The denial of the right to faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.

HISTORICAL INCIDENTS OF HARM

Children sometimes do not disclose the harm they suffer, but in their adulthood are able to report their experience(s). For SF this may include an adult who reports harmful behavior they experienced as a child from a former or current SF member or another child.

NEGLECT

Neglect of a child refers to a situation in which a child's parent or caregiver consistently fails, refuses or is unable, for reasons other than poverty or war, to provide a child with the basic elements needed for his or her proper growth and development despite having the resources to do so, such as food, clothing, shelter, education, medical/dental care, and adequate supervision.

IMPACT OF NEGLECT

The impact of neglect on a child can range from immediate, such as a newborn baby not being fed and suffering starvation as a result, to a delayed impact such as the result of not providing adequate education. Neglect may result in death or serious ongoing emotional, physical, or social harm. The impact of neglect may also be an increased risk of harm rather than actual harm itself. Neglect such as lack of supervision, lack of education, or delay in providing social and medical needs may not in all situations directly result in significant harm to a child but can often create an unreasonable and unnecessary risk that a child may suffer significant harm.

TYPES OF NEGLECT

- **Emotional Neglect:** A consistent failure to provide the basic elements needed for a child's emotional development. This can include a range of behaviors such as, but not limited to, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, failing to protect a child from intimidation, or threatening behavior.
- **Psychological Neglect:** The failure to provide for significant psychological needs of a child, such as the need for a recommended psychological assessment or treatment due to the development of a mental health concern.
- **Medical Neglect:** The failure to provide for the medical needs of a child. This may include not obtaining required medical assessments, and/or medical treatment despite having the resources to do so.
- **Physical Neglect:** The failure to provide for the basic physical needs of a child such as housing, food, and adequate supervision. Adequate supervision is determined by the child's developmental needs and the risk associated with the child's environment. Failure to provide proper adult guardianship such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time.
- **Social Neglect:** The failure to provide the child with opportunities to develop appropriate social skills.
- **Educational Neglect:** The failure to provide for the basic educational needs of a child or failure to provide for a child's special educational needs.

CAUSES OF NEGLECT

Below are explanations of possible causes of neglect. It is important to note that SF does not consider it a failure (or misconduct) on the part of a parent if he or she is unable to meet the

needs of a child because of a situation beyond their control such as illness, but would still develop a safety plan, if required, to minimize the impact on the child.

- **Impairment of the parent:** A parent's failure to meet the child's basic needs may be caused by the parent's capacity to provide for the child being significantly impaired by factors such as medical or mental health issues or drug and alcohol abuse.
- **Not understanding the child's needs:** A parent's failure to meet the child's needs may be caused by the parents not understanding the child's needs, whether they are needs shared by all children or if they are special needs of a particular child due to the specific child's situation or environmental factors. A parent may also not comprehend the impact on the child if certain needs are not provided.
- **Lack of resources:** Much neglect worldwide is caused by poverty as well as geographical considerations. For instance, if the family does not have access to hospitals or counselors due to their location and transportation available, they may not be able to provide their child the care they need. The same is true if the parents are not able to afford medical care or adequate clothing.

II. SAFE RECRUITMENT

SF is committed to exercising proper care in the appointment and selection of all members. See [Appendix F](#) for a diagram of SF's Preventative Safeguarding Measures.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

It is recommended to have a statement outlining SF's commitment to practices that safeguard children on any relevant promotional material.

"Synergie Francophone is committed to excellence in child safety."

WEBSITE

Each SF website will have a link to SF's child safety page. The child safety web page will be a public-facing site on which will be SF's commitment to child safety as well as contact information for non-members.

RECRUITMENT

SF's recruitment process involves components designed to assess the suitability of applicants as representatives of SF, no matter the degree to which they have contact with children. In recruiting members and volunteers, SF employs strategies to maximize the likelihood that it recruits adults who will appropriately safeguard the welfare and safety of children, who have no history of harming children, and who will contribute to a transparent culture that promotes child safety.

If there are issues or concerns regarding an applicant's background check, application form or the interviews, the Child Safety Advocate should be informed and can help respond to the concerns, lending support in further assessing the situation.

APPLICATION / INTERVIEW

SF application forms should include:

1. The following two child safety questions:
 - a. Has there ever been any cause for concern regarding your conduct with children or young people?
 - b. Have you ever received a caution, reprimand, or warning (even if determined false), or been involved in an internal inquiry related to your conduct with children/young people?
2. References should include the following two child safety questions:
 - a. Has there ever been any cause for concern regarding the applicant's conduct with children or young people?
 - b. Do you know whether the applicant has ever received a caution, reprimand or warning (even if determined false), been involved in an internal inquiry or been convicted of a criminal offense related to their conduct with children or young people?

Additional areas to consider: Requirements for recruiting overseas missionaries Possible questions to add:

III. CHILD SAFETY TRAINING

SF is committed to ongoing child safety training and development opportunities for all members and volunteers to build awareness, trust and empowerment.

Child Safety Requirements

[Member]



Recruitment Requirements

- References with Child Safety questions from:
 - Someone in a church missions leadership role
 - Someone in an employer role
 - Someone who is a peer in ministry or business
 - Someone in a teaching role in your life
 - A close friend
- Church Endorsement
- Interview (includes Child Safety questions)
- Background Check
- Attend Pre-field trainings



Child Safety Requirements

- Attend interactive Child Safety Training
- Complete SF's LRC Child Safety Training
- Read and sign the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct
- Participate in SF's ongoing child safety training

ORIENTATION/CORE

The Child Safety Team will be responsible for providing and documenting the child safety orientation training in partnership with Member Care & Pre-field. All SF staff, childcare volunteers, and members will receive child safety training before their assignment starts.

Training will cover:

- MinistrySafe Training (to be viewed before acceptance when possible)
- SF's Child Safety Program
- Awareness of how children can be harmed and recognizing possible signs and symptoms of harm.
- Specific information relevant to the care of Missionary Kids (MKs) and cross-cultural, global safeguarding considerations.
- SF's Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct which includes child safety principles of **Visibility**, **Accountability**, and **Power** balance.
- Guidelines for how to respond when a child discloses harm. ([Appendix E](#))
- How to raise a concern.

PRE-FIELD

Before any SF member begins their assignment, the SF Introductory Child Safety Program must be completed. This includes: MinistrySafe Training, online SF CS video/training, a follow-up quiz, Reading: Guidelines for when a child discloses harm; VAP, signing the Child Safety Policy and the Code of Conduct.

ON ASSIGNMENT

In order to continue to develop child safety awareness and education, each year child safety training, developed by the CS Team, will be sent to every SF member for review. Members will sign the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct annually.

CHILDREN OF SF MEMBERS

The Child Safety Team will work in partnership with parents to ensure all SF members' children receive regular child safety training. SF members' children and parents will receive communication from the Child Safety Team once a year to remind them that SF cares for their safety and to include relevant.

IV. CONDUCT STANDARDS

POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

A Policy and Code of Conduct is a clear and concise guide of what is and is not acceptable behavior or practice when representing SF. Once SF members have signed the Policy and Code of Conduct, SF has the right and responsibility to hold members accountable to that standard. The SF Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct ([Appendix B](#)) must be reviewed and signed every year. The SF Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct will be explained during orientation and in on-going required child safety training.

MISCONDUCT

Misconduct is wrongful and improper conduct of SF members as defined by SF. Misconduct includes actions that may or may not also be defined as criminal actions by states or countries. All SF members are expected to fully cooperate in any response to a report of concern of misconduct and may be put on administrative leave during the process.

COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA USE CONDUCT

SF members shall ensure that they adhere to local and passport country laws in regard to communication and media usage (such as photos and videos) including data protection such as General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), data storage and informed consent. Any communication or media usage should represent children, their local culture and environment in a manner of honesty, dignity, and respect.

V. CHILD SAFETY RECORDS

As part of SF's commitment to on-going child safety training and development opportunities for all members, a record will be kept of the child safety training that all SF members undertake. Training records will be appropriately documented by Child Safety and accessible to the Executive Director and the Child Safety Advocate.

Records will include:

- Attendance at child safety training during orientation, and possibly during selection.
- Confirmation that the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct have been read and signed.
- Any other ongoing training determined by the Child Safety Advocate or Field Leader.

VI. CHILDCARE

SF's Childcare Policy and Code of Conduct and Childcare Program Risk Assessment and Checklist (Appendix G) is to ensure clear standards, expectations, and best practices are in place when SF is responsible for a childcare program. SF's childcare definition is when children (under 18 years old) are cared for by those other than their parents, not overnight, while their parents are nearby and/or accessible at an SF conference, ministry or function. This childcare policy does not include parents' private childcare arrangements.

Prior to the start of the childcare program the SF's Childcare Policy and Code of Conduct must be signed by childcare workers as well as the Childcare Program Risk Assessment and Checklist completed and signed by the Childcare Program Coordinator and the Director/Supervisor overseeing the SF function/conference. These documents will be easily accessible to all SF leaders in the Child Safety Resources.

SF's Childcare Policy and Code of Conduct includes the following points:

- Application
- Training and awareness
- Childcare conduct principles
- Media guidelines
- Age-appropriate bathroom/changing guidelines
- Challenging behavior response
- Raising a concern

SF's Childcare Risk Assessment and Checklist includes the following points:

- Personnel
- Compliance
- Venue
- Program
- Transportation
- Environment
- Food
- Emergencies

VII. RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES

COMMITMENT

SF is committed to:

- Placing children's rights and needs first throughout the response process. This includes confidentiality and ensuring that as few people as possible know about the report.
- Recognizing, reporting, assessing, and responding to child safety concerns whether current or historical.

- instilling a culture of openness and accountability that leads to an organizational environment that eliminates or reduces the risk of harm to children.
- Implementing a clear reporting mechanism that enables and encourages its members to report any concerns immediately, even without proof, in order to ensure a child's safety.

All concerns, regardless of their level of seriousness, credibility or validity must be reported to the SF Child Safety Team for assessment. The aim of a response is to determine if:

- A child is at risk or has suffered significant harm and to create an appropriate safety plan to minimize the risk of future harm.
- Improvements need to be made in SF's policies, procedures, or practices.
- Any SF member, whether by action or inaction, caused a child to suffer harm or placed a child at risk of harm, or breached the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

RAISING A CONCERN

Child Safety concerns could include:

- Disclosures by children of harm
- Concerns for the safety of the child
- Unusual or concerning sexual behavior of a child
- Allegations or concerns that any adult or child has harmed a child
- Any report that an SF member or ex-member has been charged or convicted of any offenses
- Breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Inappropriate or especially close relationships developing between SF members and a child
- Historical reports of past harm

If SF members have any concerns regarding the safety and well-being of a child, the SF member must pass the concern on to their SF supervisor within 24 hours, who will immediately contact the Child Safety Team. If SF members would like to express the concern directly to the Child Safety Team, please email directly to childsafety@synergiefr.org.

For further advice regarding what to do when hearing a child disclose harm, please refer to ([Appendix E](#))

SF members should not carry out their own response or investigate a concern or suspicion of harm. Please do not attempt to interview children or adults.

If the child is in life-threatening danger, immediately contact the police or child protective services and/or respond as necessary.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the relevant child safety agencies or statutory authorities. However, we ask our members to follow SF's required procedures for reporting. International child safety situations can often be complicated. Every country has its own laws and abilities in child safety. Therefore, it is important that SF members trust the SF Child Safety Team.

If SF members need any support as a reporter or in any child safety situation, they should let their SF supervisor know within 24 hours or contact the Child Safety Team directly at childsafety@synergiefr.org.

MISCONDUCT CONCERNS

If SF members have any concerns regarding misconduct of another SF member toward a child, the SF member must pass the concern on to your SF supervisor within 24 hours, who will immediately contact the Child Safety Team for advice. If you would like to express the concern directly to the Child Safety Team, please email directly to childsafety@synergiefr.org.

MISSIONARY KID SCHOOLS & INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

If SF members are working at a school for the children of missionaries or have children attending a Missionary Kid or International school with its own child safety protocols and reporting system, please follow those reporting mechanisms. However, if the reported concern involves an SF member or an SF member's child, also report the concerns to SF. If support is needed SF members should contact their SF Field Supervisor, leader, or the Child Safety Team at childsafety@synergiefr.org.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

If a child is in immediate danger, SF members must first prioritize the safety of the child and then let your SF supervisor know within 24 hours. If SF members are serving in a country with police and child protective services, please phone their emergency number right away.

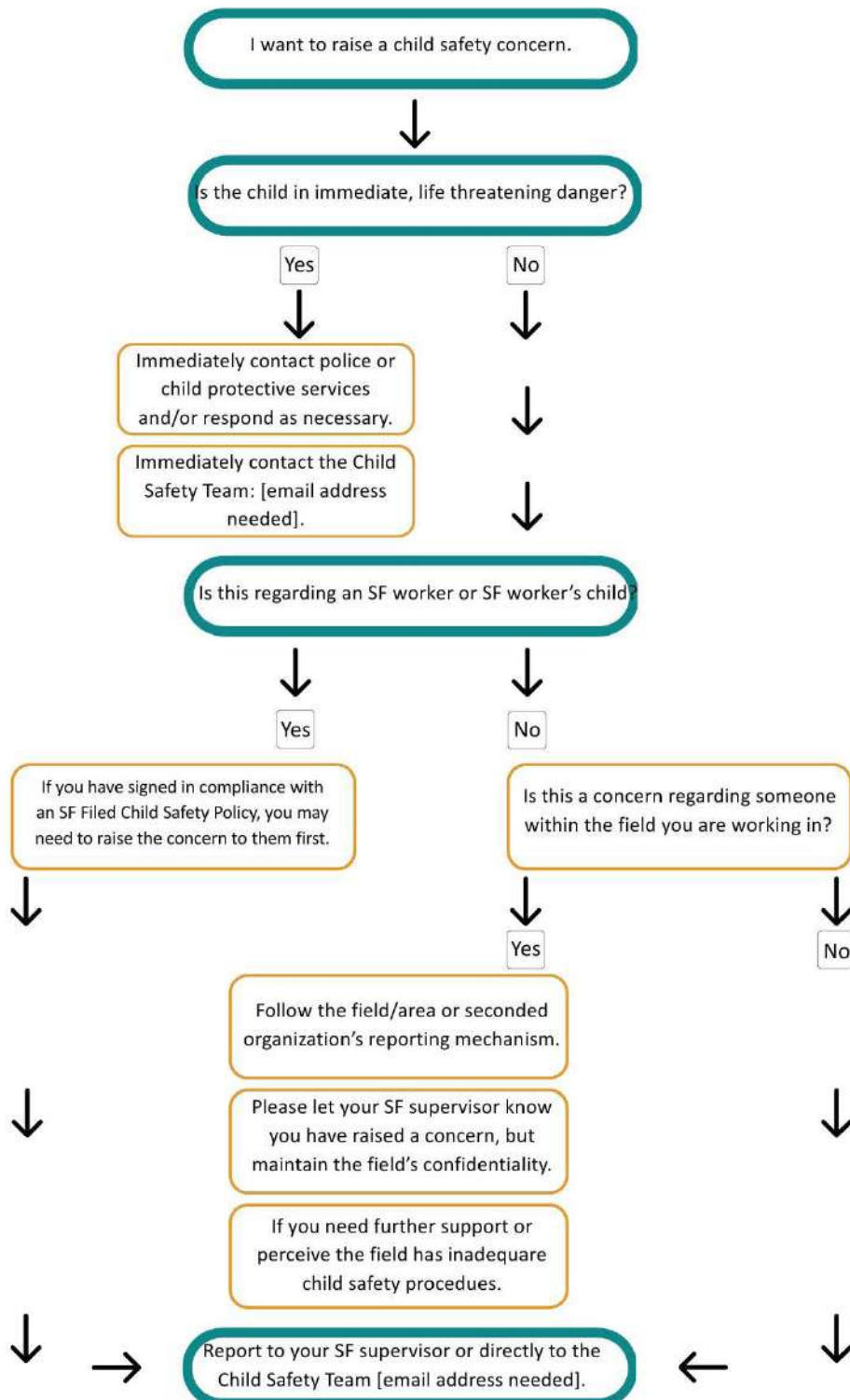
CONTACTING THE CHILD SAFETY TEAM

- Email childsafety@synergiefr.org.
- SF's Contact Card on the SF website goes immediately to the ED's inbox.

RAISING A CONCERN FLOWCHART

This flowchart is a principle-based guideline to help you determine how you should raise your concern. Remember every situation is different, unique, and often multi-faceted, so please do contact childsafety@synergiefr.org for any query.

Raising a Concern

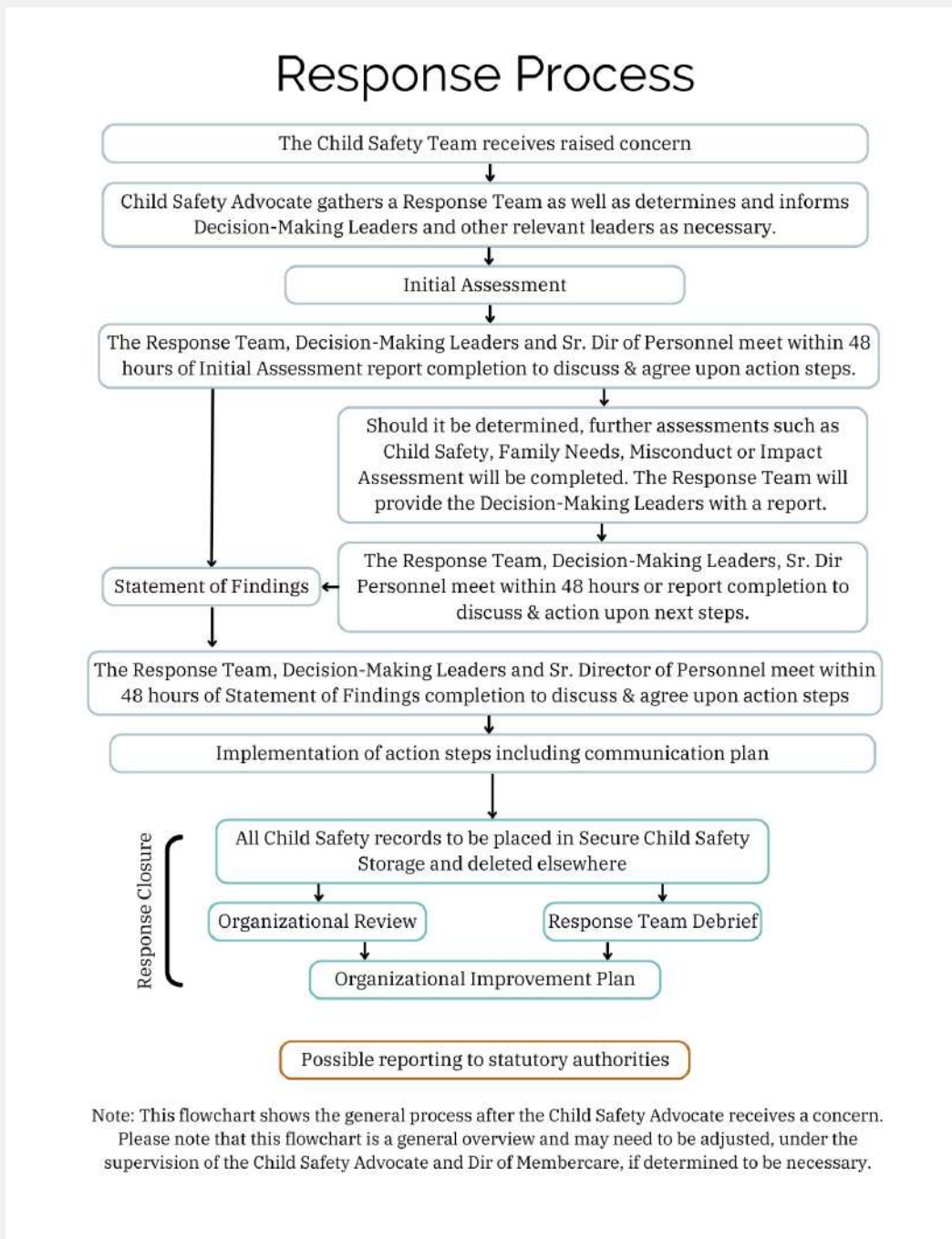


RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF CONCERN

Throughout the response process SF commits to ensuring that care and safety for all children harmed or impacted is paramount.

SF supervisors should always communicate every concern, even minor reports, to the Child Safety Team within 24 hours. SF supervisors/leaders will receive further training to understand this process.

RESPONSE PROCESS FLOWCHART



When a concern is raised to the Child Safety Advocate, the Executive Director will be informed and, in cases of serious concern, the President. The Child Safety Advocate will gather a Response Team of at least two people who have received response training. The Response Team will review all reports and determine an appropriate response. If the Child Safety Advocate is not available to lead the response, he/she will appoint a Child Safety Specialist to lead in his/her stead.

At this time, or during the Initial Assessment, the Child Safety Advocate will inform the member's supervisor who will act as the 'Decision-Making Leader'. After consulting with the Decision-Making Leader, the Child Safety Advocate may need to inform other involved leaders. Limited information will be given, depending on the situation, to maintain confidentiality and protection for all involved, particularly children. It is imperative that the circle of those who know about the initial raised concern remains small and all are aware of the strict need for confidentiality.

Throughout this response process, the Response Team may seek legal advice and will follow all local workplace laws as necessary. If criminal action is found, SF will report it to all relevant statutory authorities.

In the case of a joint response with another organization, it may be necessary to work together to respond to a concern. In the case of a joint response, it may be necessary to sign a confidentiality agreement or other legal agreements between SF and the other organization.

The Response Team may then complete the following assessments. If the Response Team is responding in partnership with another organization or school, their relevant leader or Child Safety Lead may also be informed of and involved in the process below.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

An Initial Assessment gathers and analyzes the relevant information surrounding a raised concern or disclosure to determine an appropriate response. An Initial Assessment report will be written, which may contain recommended action plans such as further assessments. This document will be submitted to the Executive Director, and if necessary to the President of SF.

Any decisions will be made by the Executive Director and if necessary, the President of SF. If it is deemed that other leaders need to be involved, for example the member's SF supervisor, then the level of information given needs to be agreed upon and documented by the Response Team.

The Response Team will remain in communication with the decision-making leaders with the understanding that a meeting will need to occur between the leaders and the Response Team (normally within 48 hours after the Initial Assessment report is completed. This meeting will clarify any outcome decisions and determine next steps.

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENTS

If deemed necessary, the following assessments may be conducted, and recommended outcome decisions provided to the relevant decision-making leaders.

- **Child Safety Assessment:** The purpose of the Child Safety Assessment is to focus on the safety and well-being of a child and determine the needs of the family, school and community, and to provide for the child's identified need. The Child Safety Assessment helps create a safety plan that addresses the harm or safety concern, and/or minimizes the likelihood of future safety concerns to an individual child. The assessment therefore seeks information such as vulnerability factors and protective factors of the child, family, and context in order to address any factors of concern, thereby reducing the likelihood of that factor causing a safety concern to child(ren) in the future.
- **Misconduct Assessment:** The purpose of a Misconduct Assessment is to determine if a member of personnel has breached a Code of Conduct and therefore has engaged in misconduct as defined by SF. Following this determination, recommended action steps (if any) will be provided to the decision-making leaders of the response in the Misconduct Assessment Report.
- **Impact Assessment:** The purpose of an Impact Assessment is to assess the impact of a child safety concern on a community and/or individuals in order to determine an appropriate and compassionate administrative response. This assessment can be used in the event of historical concerns, which could include reports that an adult was harmed during their childhood while their parents were members of SF, or they were harmed by a member of SF.

FURTHER RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS

- During the reporting and response process, it is important to prioritize the safety of all children involved. The nature of the report may necessitate that a member be relieved of duties and be put on administrative leave until the response is concluded.
- If any child is particularly traumatized, the Response Team will bring in relevant professional and /or specialists so that the child's rights and needs can be addressed.
- The Response Team is committed to treating any information disclosed with discretion and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of all parties involved. Parents will usually be informed if their child is involved in a response. If the Response Team believes that notifying the parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice may be sought first from relevant authorities or professionals.
- All SF members are expected to fully cooperate in any response. Anyone who conceals information or knowingly provides false or misleading information will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

After gathering all relevant and necessary information the Response Team will submit a Statement of Findings to the Executive Director, and if necessary to the President of SF. This document will include a summary of the gathered information, analysis thereof and recommended action plans. The Response Team will remain in communication with the relevant decision-making leaders throughout the response and with the understanding that a meeting will need to occur between the leaders and the Response Team (normally within 48 hours after the Statement of Finding is completed).

All final decisions will be made by the local and/or Team Leader and the Executive Director.

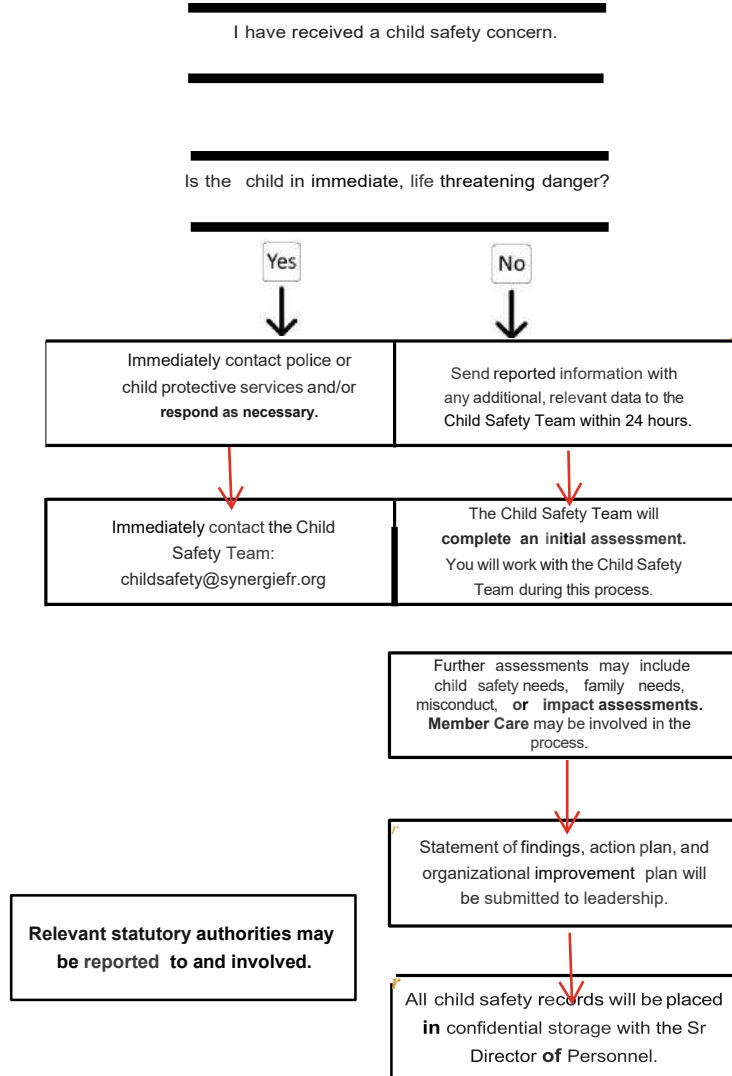
The Response Team, working with relevant SF leadership, or counselors, will ensure all action plans and communication plans are followed and outcomes documented.

SUPPORT FOR THOSE IMPACTED BY A RESPONSE

Support for the impacted person(s) is an integral and important part of SF's duty of care. Before, during or after a response to a raised concern, people involved may be impacted and need intentional and specific support. This might involve the person who raised the concern, or children, adults, families, friends or leaders impacted, or the SF Response Team members. If needed the Response Team will connect each individual with relevant counselors, professionals, medical personnel and/or SF Member Care.

SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSE

Child Safety Process for Supervisors



This flow chart shows the general process to follow after an SF supervisor receives a concern. SF supervisors must always communicate every concern, even minor reports, to the Child Safety Team within 24 hours. SF supervisors will receive further training to understand this process. Please note this flowchart illustrates one example, but changes may be necessary because every response is usually multi-faceted.

At the conclusion of a response, outcomes determined by the Designated Leaders sometimes involve mandated action plans that require the member, should they wish to continue in their role, to complete. For example, these could include counseling, professional development or a medical or psychological assessment. The action plans in the final documentation will clearly state who is responsible for organizing and monitoring each action plan. Local leaders may be involved in this process.

FURTHER REPORTING

SF will not investigate crimes – that is the role and responsibility of statutory authorities. However, the Child Safety Advocate will respond to all concerns of harm whether past or present. This may involve reporting to police, child services and other relevant authorities including unions, teaching credential agencies and embassies.

HISTORICAL HARM

SF is committed to taking all reports of harm to children seriously whether past or present and will respond to reports no matter how old. Individuals who choose to come forward can do so knowing that the Child Safety Advocate will listen to whatever experience they choose to share and will always take them seriously and respond in the appropriate way. SF will commit to reporting crimes to the relevant statutory authorities if possible.

RESPONSE CLOSURE

RESPONSE TEAM DEBRIEF

The Response Team, led by the Child Safety Advocate, will have a meeting to debrief the response. Any improvements and/or changes that need to be made will be documented by the Child Safety Team and submitted to the Senior Director of Personnel (currently the Executive Director for review.

ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW

A joint, and/or individual meeting(s) led by the Executive Director, may occur with the Child Safety Advocate, the Response Team, the Area Director, Senior Director of Personnel, and if necessary, the President of SF after a response is completed. The response process and organizational concerns will be discussed with suggestions given as to what needs to be improved or changed to mitigate against any future child safety risks. If necessary, auditing from an outside child safety consultant or legal counsel will be conducted.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Recommended organizational improvement plans will be collated and submitted by the Child Safety Advocate to the Executive Director for final determination through the Executive Leadership Team. These organizational improvements may come from the Response Team Debrief and the Organizational Review meetings. Organizational improvement action steps will be documented including the person designated to monitor each action step. Relevant people will be notified by the person designated to monitor each action step.

CHILD SAFETY SECURE STORAGE

All documentation from a response will be kept safely and securely in an electronic folder by the Director of Operations (the guardian of personnel archives). These records will include current and historical responses and any response completed in partnership with another organization. Only the Executive Director, the Director of Operations, and the Child Safety Advocate will have access to these documents.

The Child Safety Team will keep a very brief summary of each folder in the team's electronic database. No confidential information will be stored therein.

APPEAL OR COMPLAINTS

SF members can appeal any administrative decision that concerns themselves, including the outcome of a child safety response that concerns themselves or their children. All appeals or complaints should follow SF's Disciplinary Procedures. SF members who want to make a formal complaint or appeal should contact their SF supervisor.

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APPENDIX A

Child Safety and Protection Network

A BIBLICAL BASIS FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Written by Joahna K. Koning M.Ed.

As believers we often take for granted that children are a blessing and heritage from God. We believe that God created them intentionally and that we are to care for them and allow them to come to Him without hindrance. In most of our cultures “it is simply taken for granted that the innocence and vulnerability of children makes them beings of particular value and entitled to particular care.”¹ These ideas are not, however, lived out consistently in the world even where adults agree in word they often do not in deed.

This view of children is in fact a historical oddity. As the historian O.M. Bakke points out in *When Children Became People*, in ancient cultures, children were considered nonpersons.

Back then, the entire social worldview was under girded by a universally-held, if implicit, view: Society was organized in concentric circles, with the circle at the center containing the highest value people, and the people in the outside circles having little-to-no value. At the center was the freeborn, adult male, and other persons were valued depending on how similar they were to the freeborn, adult male. Such was the lot of foreigners, slaves, women... and children. (Bakke, 2005)

In many places in the world today not much has changed. The concentric circles of value may be slightly different but in the outer circles and outside the circle you will still find vulnerable children – especially those who are isolated, unseen, and unheard. Third Culture Kids are not immune or exempted from this impact of a world that tends to use and take advantage of the vulnerable. In fact, current research shows that TCK's are at a higher risk than mono-cultural kids to have adverse childhood experiences and developmental trauma.

For those of us who are followers of Jesus and who serve internationally amongst missions, schools, camps, and other kinds of ministries, rightly understanding God's view of children and our responsibility to care for them must under gird everything we do. Taking the Gospel and reflecting the life and work of Jesus to those who have not heard and do not know Him – which includes all children everywhere – requires that we make the safety and wellbeing of children a priority.

The following short study is not an exhaustive review of all God has said or that applies to children, but it is a place to begin. We invite you to make some time and space to work through this study beginning with a time of prayer to ask the Spirit of God to show you where and how you can begin applying the principles and Truth He reveals to you through His word as your Teacher.

Father, we want to reflect your heart and your love more and more in every aspect of our lives. In this area of how we see and make space for children to come to you unhindered we ask that you teach us through your word. Show us how we can best reflect you to the children around us and for whom we are responsible.

In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

:(Bakke, 2005)

“To say that God called my parents to reach the unreached is a justification for the harm I endured and the lifelong stumbling blocks I have to navigate in my relationship with Him, others, and myself not only goes against everything Jesus said and taught, it makes a mockery of missions. You can’t sacrifice children on the altar of calling and mission and speak for Jesus.”

Adult TCK

CHILDREN ARE A PART OF GOD’S PERFECT CREATIVE PLAN TO REVEAL HIS CHARACTER AND WORK IN THE WORLD.

Children aren’t an afterthought or an accident. They are not a byproduct of people living fulfilling and meaningful lives. “God gives children to the church not because they are carefree – but because God has a purpose for children. God gives children to the world so that God may be known. (Mark 9:37)” (Mercer, 2005)

Read the following verses and note what they reveal about God’s plan for children in the world.

Genesis 1:27-28

As image bearers of God (Genesis 1:27) children are intended to grow up to reflect the attributes of God. Each child is perfectly designed by God for a purpose that reflects and reveals who He is. As children grow and flourish, they create, build, restrain and empower, craft and design in order to display God’s dominion and rule – His work in the world (Genesis 1:28). This was God’s intention for all humanity and children are the means by which humanity flourishes on earth.

How does an understanding of the role of children in God’s plan to reveal and reflect Himself to the world change the way you think about children?

CHILDREN ARE OF GREAT VALUE AND ARE GIFTS FROM GOD TO PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES.

Read the passages below and note what they say about the value of children to their parents and communities.

Psalms 139:13-14

Psalms 127:3-5

Proverbs 17:6

Every single child is individually designed and formed by God in a wonderful way. God sees the child before it is formed and ordains every single day of its life. A child is an inheritance, a heritage, and crown to its family and community.

It is said that you can tell what you believe by the way you act in everyday life. The way you make decisions, allocate resources, and think about things all reflect what you believe better than what you say. With this in mind, how would you assess the value and worth you place on children personally and organizationally? How can we assess the value and worth an organization places on children?

CHILDREN ARE VULNERABLE AND NEED PROTECTION AND GOD EXPECTS US TO INTENTIONALLY CREATE SAFE SPACES FOR THEM.

It follows that having and caring for children is an honor and responsibility. We stand beside Him to shepherd their growth and development, to advocate for them and provide for their needs. We must recognize and accept that children have limited abilities cognitively, physically, emotionally, and psychologically to protect and provide for themselves. They are vulnerable and without attention, access, and provision they are easily overlooked and suffer harm. Read and note how these passages inform your understanding of God's expectations related to child safety.

Numbers 32:17

Matthew 25:40-45

Ephesians 6:4

I Timothy 5:8

Proverbs 22:6

Proverbs 29:17

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Protecting and providing for children's growth isn't just about physical safety – it includes their whole beings. God blessed and commanded humans to both be fruitful and to multiply. Victoria Rationi notes in her introduction to *The Christian Perspective on Protecting Children from Violence and Harmful Practices* that the word "fruitful" implies growth.² Fruit is a product of growth and development. God didn't just tell Adam and Eve to multiply He also told them to grow or develop.

God's word gives us several examples of a child growing up in a healthy way. Read and note the aspects of healthy, embodied growth mentioned in each of these passages and what that might include:

Samuel 2:26

Luke 1:80

Luke 2:52

²(Rationi, 2016)

We can see that being fruitful – growing and developing encompasses the whole child integrating the physical, mental, social, psychological, and spiritual. While parents own the primary responsibility, God also speaks very clearly to His followers about His expectations of them related to children.

GOD RECEIVED CHILDREN AND WARNED HIS FOLLOWERS NOT TO DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD CAUSE THEM TO STUMBLE

These three passages record some of the countercultural and astonishing things Jesus said and did while on earth and they involved His view and teaching on children. Read and make some notes about insights you have about our Lord's interactions and words about children in these passages? How does this apply to our own interactions with children as followers of Christ and as organizations that represent Him?

Mark 9:37

Mark 10:13-16

Matthew 18:6

Joyce Ann Mercer writes that Jesus' welcoming or receiving of children "referred not to superficial activities in the domestic sphere but to a deep tradition of hospitality and welcoming strangers." Jesus' language reminded those He was teaching of the weight of all the Old Testament teaching about welcoming, receiving, caring for and protecting those who were vulnerable and at the same time squarely placed children in the category of people for whom we must show this divine hospitality. It "had a particular connection with children, of welcoming and providing for those who were the most vulnerable of the vulnerable, orphans," but now it was expanded to include children in general.³

Judith Gundry Volf notes that when Jesus took these little ones in His arms the word used is "enangkalizomai" which in Hellenistic writing of the time always referred to a tender and protective embrace, that at that time normally was used to depict a woman taking a child in her arms. In contrast, Jesus redefines the tender protective embrace of children as a sign of greatness for His followers. His caring for children superseded talking with important religious leaders, and put it alongside other practices like healing, teaching, proclaiming, and exorcism that were meant to reveal and reflect God's heart for the world.⁴

We also see in Matthew 18 a sobering warning to everyone listening both then and now. Jesus made it clear that anyone causing a child to stumble or fall in their relationship with Him would face His wrath. He had already grown indignant at the disciples' refusing access to the children and then he clearly warned of causing children spiritual injury.

³(Mercer, 2005) p 51, location 1236

⁴(Gundry-Volf, 2001) p. 44

⁵(Schuetze, 2015)

If there is any doubt in your mind that childhood harm and abuse cause children to stumble in their faith, you need only review the overwhelming evidence of international research that indicates otherwise. Significant harm and child abuse “cause children to stumble in their faith in many ways,” writes John Schuetze. “Later in life it can trigger sinful behavior to cope with painful memories. It often confuses the person spiritually and theologically... .”⁵ In a review of thirty-four studies reporting on a total of 19,090 adult survivors of adverse childhood experiences, trauma, and maltreatment, researchers noted that these experiences damaged the faith of children, often by damaging the child’s view of and relationship with God.

Spiritual injuries such as feelings of guilt, of being evil or bad, self-blame, anger, grief, despair, doubt, fear of death, and a belief that God was unfair, or unreliable are reported over and over again by survivors of childhood harm and abuse. These injuries significantly impact the child into and throughout adulthood. Adult survivors of adverse childhood experiences often lack purpose, feel soulless, and struggle with disbelief even when they want desperately to believe.⁶

There are many other passages and areas related to developing a fully rounded Biblical Basis for Child Protection within Christian international organizations that you could delve into such as:

- Justice and mercy
- Care of vulnerable adults
- Christian response characteristics
- Rightly valuing and reporting to legal authorities
- Restoring Shalom

This short study is only a beginning to what God’s word teaches us about an effective child safety program. Just remember that the basis for everything we do and the way we do it grows out of who God is and should be a reflection of His character and intentions for the children we serve.

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APPENDIX B

This SF Policy and Code of Conduct is the document that all our SF members are required to read and sign every other year. It is essentially a summary of our child safety manual.

Synergie Francophone CHILD SAFETY POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

COMMITMENT

As a Christian organization, SF believes our work is to be done to the highest of Christian standards. We want members not only to have a great impact but to honor and reflect God through their service and behavior. God calls on his people to protect the vulnerable. Vulnerable people, such as children, are at a greater risk of being harmed and therefore require intentional safeguarding to provide for their safety and well-being. The objectives of SF's child safety program are to reduce the risk of harm to children that come under our care and to ensure SF members model healthy adult-child interactions.

Child safety is a term used to denote measures to protect the health, well-being, and human rights of individuals, which allows children to live free from harm. The focus is on people and organizations working together to prevent and reduce the risk, occurrences, and impact of harm.

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

To achieve these principles SF will implement:

- 1) Preventative strategies which include safe recruitment procedures, child safety awareness training and a Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct to provide clear expectations and monitoring of SF members.
- 2) Responsive strategies including guidelines for raising concerns and responding to child safety concerns, disclosures, or allegations.

Children: A child is any human being below the age of 18 years. SF also recognizes the need to protect students who are over the age of 18 but still in full-time school up through high school.

AWARENESS OF HARM TO CHILDREN

Defining child harm is a difficult and complex issue within an international setting. It is recognized that local and/or national definitions of child abuse may vary, and there are racial, cultural, religious, and ethnic differences in child rearing and relating to children and understandings of what constitutes child abuse.

Therefore, the use of the term “harm” will be used instead of “abuse,” “neglect,” or “maltreatment.” Thus, the focus is on the child and how he or she has been impacted rather than just the actions of the person causing the harm. Harm is focused on the impact on the child, regardless of the intent of the person who caused the harm. We recognize that harmful behaviours can exist between children, whether the intent is to harm or not.

Physical Harm: Physical harm to a child refers to a situation in which a child suffers or is likely to suffer serious harm from an injury or pattern of injuries inflicted by a child's parent, caregiver, or any other person.

Emotional Harm: All types of harm and neglect negatively impact children emotionally, but the term 'emotional harm' usually applies to behavior of a parent or caregiver (including teachers) which damages the confidence and self-esteem of a child or young person, resulting in significant emotional disturbance or trauma.

Sexual Harm: Sexual harm refers to a situation where there is any sexual activity with a child perpetrated by another child or adult, regardless of whether the person causing harm has criminal intent. Sexual harm can be through:

- Non-contact interactions such as communication or indecent exposure including the use of images.
- Contact interactions where inappropriate touching is involved.
- Grooming is befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes the community, to lower the child's inhibitions and to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking.

Neglect: Neglect of a child refers to a situation in which a child's parent or caregiver fails to provide a child with the basic elements needed for his or her proper growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, education, medical/dental care, and adequate supervision.

Self-harm: Self-harm is when a child causes harm to themselves or engages in high risk-taking behaviors such as drug and alcohol abuse.

Spiritual Harm: Spiritual harm is generally defined as coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context.

RAISING A CONCERN

Child Safety concerns could include:

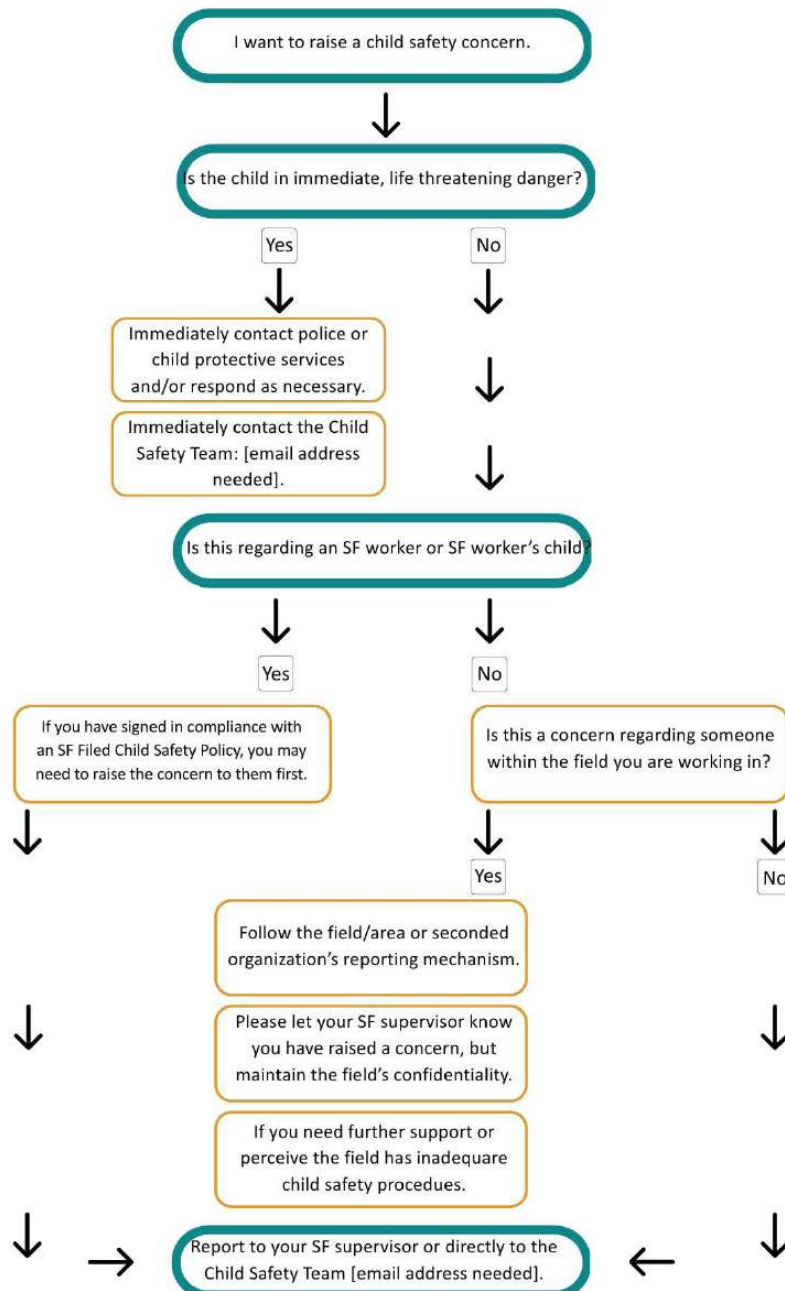
- Any disclosures by children of harm
- Any concerns for the safety of the child
- Any unusual or concerning sexual behavior of a child
- Any allegations or concerns that any adult or child has harmed another child
- Any report that an SF member or ex-member has been charged or convicted of any offenses
- Breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Inappropriate relationships developing between an adult and a child
- Historical reports of past harm

If you have any concerns regarding the safety and well-being of a child or the conduct of an SF member, these concerns must be passed on to your SF Supervisor within 24 hours of being made aware. If you would like to express the concern directly to the Child Safety Team, please feel free to email directly to childsafety@synergiefr.org. Under no circumstances should an SF member carry out their own response or investigation into a concern or suspicion of harm. Please do not attempt to interview children or adults.

Emergency situations: If a child is in an immediate life threatening or dangerous situation, SF members must first prioritize the safety of the child and take appropriate action, then immediately report the situation to your SF Supervisor. If SF members are serving in a country with police and child protective services, please phone their emergency number immediately.

Raising a concern: This flowchart is a principle-based guideline to help you determine how you should raise a concern. Remember every situation is different, unique and often multi-faceted so please do contact childsafety@synergiefr.org with any questions.

Raising a Concern



*Note: If your concern is regarding an SF member or an SF child attending an MK school and you have signed your compliance with the school's child safety policy, you may need to report to both your SF Supervisor and to the school administration.

Misconduct concerns: If SF members have any concerns regarding misconduct of an SF member, SF members must pass the concern on within 24 hours to your SF Supervisor who will immediately contact the Child Safety Team for advice. If SF members would like to express a concern directly to the Child Safety Team, please email childsafety@synergiefr.org.

Historical Harm: SF is committed to taking all reports of harm to children seriously whether past or present and will respond to reports no matter how old.

CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

The Child Safety Code of Conduct details the expectations of all members who are placed by SF or who represent SF in any capacity. This Code of Conduct is applicable at all times, in all places and in relation to all children. The Code of Conduct must be signed BEFORE any member begins their assignment or represents SF.

In any settings where children are present, *at least one* of these child safety conduct principles should be implemented and as many as possible should be followed. These safeguards are applicable for in person and online interactions.

Visibility

"Is it possible for others to see me?"

Accountability

"Do others know where I am or what I am doing? Am I promoting a culture of transparency and accountability?"

Power Balance

"Do children feel safe in my presence?"

Visibility: *"Is it possible for others to see me?"* When interacting with children, adults position themselves in a place that is visible to other adults. This can be accomplished by such things as

planning activities in areas where other adults are present, staying within view of the window in the door, or keeping doors open.

Accountability: *“Do others know where I am or what I am doing?” “Am I promoting a culture of transparency and accountability?”* One-on-one interactions with a child, physically or online, should only occur in situations when permission has been given by the parent or supervisor.

Power Balance: *“Do children feel safe in my presence?”* Adults, by virtue of their age, size, strength, and authority, exert control over children. Balancing control enhances child safety. This can be accomplished by avoiding one-on-one situations as much as possible, being aware of your body language and ensuring that touch is always in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult.

SF Member Commitment:

Please **check every box**, sign and date below. Any questions email childsafety@synergiefr.org.

I understand that:

- ☐ as a Christian organization, our work is to be done to the highest Christian standards. We want SF members to not only have a great impact but to honor and reflect God through their service and behaviors. SF calls its members to be obedient, self-controlled, without complaint, and blameless witnesses for the Lord.
- ☐ Children are at a greater risk of being harmed and therefore require intentional care and support to provide for their safety and well-being.
- ☐ Child Safety is everyone’s responsibility.
- ☐ If I have ever had a concern, complaint or allegation made about me regarding harming a child in any way, whether intentional or unintentional, regardless of the outcome, I have notified my SF Supervisor or the Child Safety Team.
- ☐ SF takes child safety seriously and harm towards a child, in any form, will not be tolerated.
- ☐ SF will work with any relevant statutory authorities necessary.
- ☐ Breaches of this policy and code of conduct may lead to disciplinary action or termination of my employment or service with SF. During a response I may be put on administrative leave.

I will:

- ☐ Comply with SF's Child Safety Program Manual, read the SF Child Safety Policy, and complete all required trainings.
- ☐ Promote the safety and well-being of all children whether in SF or outside the organization.
- ☐ Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children (verbally or non-verbally) particularly if they communicate that they do not feel safe or well.
- ☐ Consider and respect the diverse background and needs of children and their families and will not discriminate against any child or their family members.
- ☐ Follow the child safety conduct principles of visibility, accountability and/or power balance (VAP) in all my interactions with children, modelling healthy and safe adult-child relations.

- ☐ Communicate and use media following child safety conduct principles (VAP) and legal requirements, and representing children, their local culture, and environment in a manner of honesty, dignity, and respect.
- ☐ Fully and truthfully cooperate in any response if concerns are raised.
- ☐ NOT engage in any activity that is likely to physically, emotionally or sexually harm a child, whether through contact or non-contact interactions.
- ☐ NOT engage in any unlawful activity with or in relation to a child.
- ☐ NOT use inappropriate language in the presence of children or show or provide children access to inappropriate images or material.

If I have a concern, current, or historical, that a child is unsafe or that a member has breached the code of conduct, I will immediately follow SF's child safety 'raising a concern' guidelines within 24 hours. I agree to abide by this code of conduct during my employment or service with SF.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

Possible Child Safety Interview Questions

Purpose: Employ strategies to maximize the likelihood that SF recruits exclusively adults who will appropriately safeguard the welfare and safety of children, who have no history of harming children, and who will contribute to a transparent culture that promotes child safety.

[Choose from the lists below. Questions in italics may be relevant for candidates being interviewed for leadership positions.]

MOTIVATIONS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN

- Why do you want to work with children?
- How do you think your own childhood may have influenced your career choice? What was the impact or result of this?
- How would you motivate children and young people?
- What has working with children taught you about yourself?
- When working with children, what do you consider to be your biggest strengths and areas to improve?
- Can you give an example of how children have benefited from contact with you?
- *As a leader, if you notice that some of the members you are responsible for seem to be having all their emotional needs met from their students, how might you respond?*

UNDERSTANDING OF CHILD SAFETY PRINCIPLES

- What are your attitudes to child protection/safety and safeguarding?

- What do you think are some challenges facing adults who work with children today? How did you deal with them and what did you do to avoid them?
- What would you do if you were concerned about a colleague's behavior towards children?
- What are your feelings about children and young people who make allegations against staff members?
- What would you do if you were concerned about a child's behavior?
- Can you spot the signs that a child is suffering or being harmed? What are these signs?
- What makes a school/mission setting a safe and caring place? How have you contributed to this in the past?
- What policies are important to support a safe environment? Why are these policies important?
- What challenges do you perceive in the country you are moving to in terms of being part of protecting children?
- *As a future leader, what attitudes and values towards child safety would you like to see in the members you are responsible for?*
- *As a leader, what steps would you take if a concern regarding the health and welfare of a child was raised to you?*

EMOTIONAL MATURITY AND RESILIENCE

- Can you tell me about a time when you worked with children and your authority was seriously challenged? How did you react to this and how did you manage the situation?
- Can you tell me about a person you have had some difficulty dealing with? What made it difficult? How did you manage this situation?
- Have you ever felt uncomfortable about a colleague's behavior towards children in a previous job? What did you do? How was this issue resolved?
- Have you ever been in a country, other than your passport country, and felt uncomfortable with some behaviors and practices towards children? How did you respond and why?
- What are your coping strategies for dealing with stressful situations?
- *As a leader, what child safety risks may present themselves if a member under your responsibility is extremely stressed and/or burnt out?*

BOUNDARIES AND INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

- Can you give an example of where you've had to deal with bullying behavior?
- Can you give an example of how you've responded to challenging behavior from children? How did this affect you emotionally? Why did you respond in this way?
- When do you think it's appropriate to physically intervene in a situation involving children and young people?
- How do you define an appropriate adult/child relationship? Can you give examples of what you would consider appropriate and inappropriate behavior between an adult and a child?
- Can you explain how you have dealt with a child with learning difficulties?
- *Many of our SF members work or live in close knit school communities with blurred boundaries. What child safety concerns may there be in contexts such as this and what would you do as a leader to minimize the risk of harm?*

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILIES (OPTIONAL)

Part of the role of the child safety team is to help safeguard our members' children. The next couple of questions are to help us to help you reduce the risk of harm to you, should you be accepted into SF, especially in the context of transitioning cross-culturally.

- Have you spoken with your children about the possible cross-cultural changes/transitions? If so, how
- do they feel about it?
- Are there any issues past or present, related to your children, that might hinder or make a transition more difficult?
- What do you think might be some of the potential challenges your children will face?
- What might be some practical ways to ensure that this change/move is a positive experience for your children?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS WHERE APPLICANT HAS ANYTHING CONCERNING, CURRENTLY OR IN THE PAST, THAT MAY AFFECT HIS WORK WITH CHILDREN

1. Has there ever been a concern raised or a complaint made against you regarding your conduct, whether related to child safety or any other matter?
2. Have you ever received a caution, reprimand or warning or been convicted of a criminal offence or investigated by any statutory authority?
3. Is there anything past or present that might hinder your interactions with children or young people, such as medical issues, mental/emotional health, addictive behaviors, pornography, drug use, alcoholism?

Do you have any questions for us?

Next Steps:

1. Required reading through the Child Safety Program Manual
2. Sign the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct
3. Required Child Safety orientation for members.

Additional areas to consider

- Motivations for working with children
- Understanding of child safety principles
- Emotional maturity and resilience
- Boundaries and inappropriate behavior
- Concerns, currently or in the past, that may affect applicant's work with children
- Questions for families (optional)

APPENDIX D

PRIMARY SAFEGUARDS (VAP)

In any settings where children are present, at least one of these primary safeguards should be implemented and as many as possible should be followed. These safeguards are applicable for in person and online interactions.

VISIBILITY

“Is it possible for others to see me?” When interacting with children, adults position themselves in a place that is visible to other adults. This can be accomplished by such things as planning activities in areas where other adults are present, staying within view of the window in the door, or keeping doors open.

ACCOUNTABILITY

“Do others know where I am or what I am doing?” “Am I promoting a culture of transparency and accountability?” One-on-one interactions with a child, physically or online, should only occur in situations where permission has been given by the parent or supervisor. One-on-one social media communication with children should be avoided unless specific permission has been given by parents.

POWER BALANCE

“Do children feel safe in my presence?” Adults, by virtue of their age, size, strength, and authority, exert control over children. Balancing control enhances child safety. This can be accomplished by avoiding one-on-one situations as much as possible, being aware of your body language and ensuring that touch is always in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult.

APPENDIX E

GUIDANCE FOR WHEN A CHILD DISCLOSES HARM

Children can disclose abuse at any time. If the abuse is ongoing over a period of weeks, months or years, they may disclose while the abuse is happening. Others might disclose immediately after the abuse has ended or possibly years later.

**These principles and guidelines could also be applicable to an adult raising a historical report.*

There are several reasons for children to retract, delay their disclosure or not disclose at all, including:

- Pressure or threats from the person causing the harm
- Relationship to the person causing the harm
- Expected consequences of telling (e.g., physical injury/death, family separation, parental distress)
- Child does not realize they have rights or understand what is happening is harmful or abusive
- Cultural confusions
- Pressure from the child’s family
- Fear of negative reactions from parents or family
- Fear of not being believed
- Feelings of embarrassment and shame
- Self-blame
- Fears of stigmatization – being labelled a victim or being labelled homosexual (Alaggia, 2004; Alaggia, 2005; Hershkowitz et. Al., 2007; Malloy et al., 2011; Ullman, 2003).

Third Culture Kids (TCKs), Pastor Kids (PKs), or Missionary Kids (MKs) may also choose not to disclose due to false principles believed as a possible result of poor biblical teaching or taking bible verses out of context. Also, these children may have been brought up in, or assimilated into a culture with poor safeguarding norms or a culture that does not value women or children. These false principles may include:

1. The belief that God should and will always keep them safe from harm. “God said I am safe from harm but this person keeps hurting me so it must mean that God doesn’t love me. God doesn’t exist.”
2. Fear that if they disclose it could affect their parent’s visa/ministry/standing in the mission, etc.
3. Fear that if they report it could either affect people’s salvation or the church. “If I tell, someone might go to hell.”
4. Confusion because the person causing them harm is a missionary/Christian so what he/she is doing must be acceptable.
5. The belief that if they pray God will always answer them and take away the harm. “I’ve prayed and it’s continuing so I must be the one sinning. I am responsible.”
6. Fear about what their family’s supporters would think if they disclosed. Fear that disclosure could lead to loss in terms of status or finance. “Our supporters think we’re this perfect missionary family. If I say something they might stop supporting us.”
7. Fear that if they disclose, they will have to move countries/schools etc.
8. Fear that their parents already have too much stress in their lives. “My mum and dad have really struggled living here. I can’t burden them with another problem.”
9. The belief that the abuse must be culturally appropriate. “My friend says that all the kids here have their private parts touched. It’s just normal here.”

TO WHOM DO CHILDREN DISCLOSE?

Children are most likely to initially disclose abuse to either a parent or a same-aged friend (Priebe & Svenin, 2008; Shackel, 2009). It is important to remember that while it is your role to be a supportive listener, it is not your role to counsel the child or investigate his or her claims.

HOW DO CHILDREN DISCLOSE?

A child or young person’s disclosure is seldom straightforward, and they can disclose abuse in several ways. Many of the ways children and young people disclose abuse are indirect or accidental. Children sometimes attempt to alert adults they trust to the fact they are being, or have been abused, by changing their behavior or by making ambiguous verbal statements (Collings, Griffiths, & Kumalo, 2005; Shackel, 2009; Ungar, Barter, McConnell, Tutty, & Fairholm, 2009).

Children may disclose spontaneously (disclosure as an event) or indirectly and slowly (disclosure as a process). The child’s type of disclosure may be influenced by their developmental features, such as their age at the onset of abuse and/or their age at time of disclosure. For instance, younger children are more likely to spontaneously disclose than older children (Lippert, Cross & Jones, 2009; London et al., 2005; Shackel, 2009). Understanding disclosure of abuse as a process may help adults to be patient and allow the child or young person to speak in their own way and their own time (Sorensen & Snow, 1991). It also helps adults maintain an awareness of any changes in behavior or emotions that may indicate abuse

is occurring or increasing. If you have suspicions that the child is being harmed, even if you are unsure, it is better to report your suspicions than to do nothing.

WHEN A CHILD TALKS ABOUT BEING ABUSED THEY MAY:

- Feel confused, scared, guilty, ashamed, sad, angry, or powerless
- Believe they are to blame or worry that no one will believe them
- Not understand that the behavior may be abusive
- Want to protect the person responsible and be frightened for them
- Experience mixed emotions towards the person responsible
- Be worried about what will happen to them and their family
- Want to protect their family or their own reputation
- Have been threatened with more harm to themselves, others, or animals if they tell anyone about the abuse

WHAT TO DO DURING THE DISCLOSURE

It is important to remember that if a child has decided to speak to you, then there is a good chance they trust you. Simply by calmly and empathetically offering support, you are helping the child or young person.

- Give the child or young person your full attention.
- Respect the fact that the child or young person will disclose only what is comfortable.
- Maintain a calm appearance by controlling expressions of panic, shock and disbelief.
- Reassure the child or young person, it is right to tell.
- Recognize the bravery/strength of the child for talking about something that is difficult.
- Be calm, patient and listen carefully to what they are saying.
- Let the child or young person use his or her own words.
- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Tell the child or young person what you plan to do next.
- Do not confront the person causing the harm.
- Write some notes about what they have told you.

WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

- Fill in the story by giving them words or asking leading questions like "Did mum or dad hit you" or "Do they make you afraid?"
- Ask too many questions – leave the investigating and fact finding to the trained professionals.
- Express anger about the alleged abuser – they may be an adult the child loves and cares for. (Later on, this may be appropriate)
- Confront the person causing the harm – it could make things worse or unsafe for the child.
- Make promises you can't keep – such as promising you will not tell anyone.
- Pressure the child for information or for details beyond what they want to say.
- Questions that infer blame – like "Did you try to stop them?" or "Did you scream or call out for help?"

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO NEXT

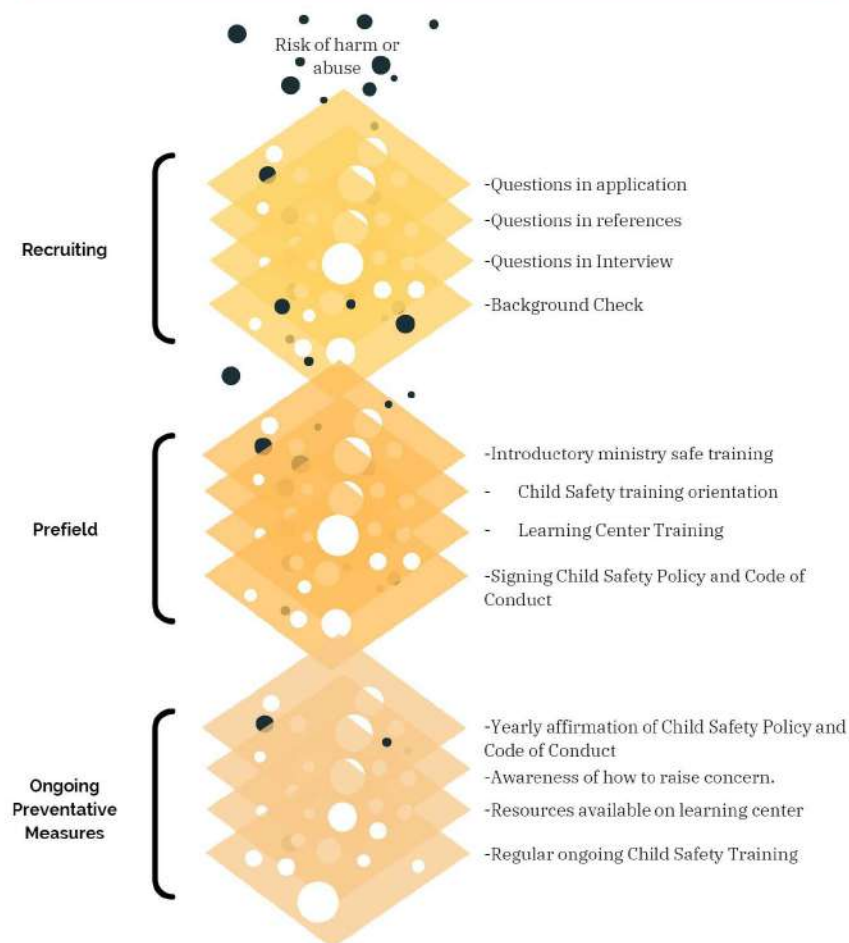
- Contact your SF supervisor or the Child Safety Team directly within 24 hours at childsafety@synergiefr.org.
- Respect the child's need for confidentiality and do not tell other people about the disclosure.
- Let SF know if you need further support.
- Hearing that a child or young person has been harmed is distressing, and this will be felt even more acutely if you are a friend or relative. It is possible that the person causing the harm is known to you and may even be a family member. By raising a concern to SF, we will be able to assess the need to provide support services to the family and yourself.

APPENDIX F

The Swiss Cheese Model of Preventative Child Safety Measures

Based on the Swiss Cheese Model of Accident Causation, Jame T. Reason (1990)

All layers are important, but each layer is not foolproof. Together they reduce the occurrence, risk and impact of harm to children and protect children from abuse.



APPENDIX G

CHILDCARE POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

*This policy works in tandem with SF's Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct and Childcare Program Risks Assessment and Checklist

*For use at any SF conference/function/ministry that includes childcare provided by SF

CHILDCARE DEFINITION

SF's childcare definition is when children (under 18 years old) are cared for by those other than their parents, not overnight, whilst their parents are nearby and/or accessible at an SF conference/function/ministry or function. This childcare policy does not include parents' private childcare arrangements.

APPLICATION

Any childcare worker responsible for children (other than their own) at any SF conference/function/ministry will be required to:

- Sign SF's Childcare Policy and Code of Conduct
- Complete SF's short term application process unless they are already SF members (see Child Safety Requirements Flowchart, SF Child Safety Manual p. 23).

Any childcare worker under 18 may be required to complete parts of the short-term volunteer application process. However, this needs to be determined by the supervisor and the Personnel office. All childcare workers under 18 will be required to read and sign this document. Childcare workers under 18 will always be supervised and be the responsibility of a screened and trained adult.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS

It is highly recommended that extra training is given prior to the conference/function/ministry reminding all about SF's Child Safety Principles and Code of Conduct. This can be provided by the Child Safety Team.

All childcare workers must be made aware of relevant information from the Childcare Program Risk Assessment and Checklist.

CHILDCARE CONDUCT PRINCIPLES

As a childcare worker, at least one of the following SF Child Safety conduct principles should be implemented and as many as possible should be followed. The safeguards are applicable for both in person and online interactions.

Visibility: *"Is it possible for others to see me?"* When interacting with children, adults position themselves in a place that is visible to other adults. This can be accomplished by such things as planning activities in areas where other adults are present, staying within view of the window in the door, or keeping doors open.

Accountability: *"Do others know where I am or what I am doing?" "Am I promoting a culture of transparency and accountability?"* One-on-one interactions with a child, physically or online, should only occur in situations when permission has been given by the parent or supervisor.

Power Balance: “Do children feel safe in my presence?” Adults, by virtue of their age, size, strength, and authority, exert control over children. Balancing control enhances child safety. This can be accomplished by avoiding one-on-one situations as much as possible, being aware of your body language and ensuring that touch is always in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult.

Extra childcare principles to follow:

Rule of Three: Childcare workers should never be left alone with a child. There must always be at least three people (adults and children) present.

Two Adult Rule: Two SF screened and trained adults should be present during all programs and activities maintaining line of sight.

Adult-Child Ratios: While following the previous principles, appropriate Adult-Child ratios should be maintained as outlined below.

Age Group	Ratio
0-2 years	One adult to three children
2-3 years	One adult to four children
4-8 years	One adult to six children
9-12 years	One adult to eight children
13-18 years	One adult to ten children

More adult supervision than mentioned above may be required to be legally compliant in the country where an SF function/ministry is being held or if children in the childcare program have special educational needs or disabilities. When there is greater risk in an activity, such as swimming or playing near water, the ratio should be increased as determined by the Childcare Program Risk Assessment conducted prior to childcare.

In an unexpected situation where a childcare worker is concerned that the above principles have not been followed, they must practice accountability and inform their supervisor immediately.

PHYSICAL BOUNDARY EXAMPLES

One may need to adjust these physical boundary examples according to the emotional and developmental needs of a child (e.g. children with special needs) which may need to be discussed prior to the childcare function with the child's parents.

Appropriate Touch Examples	Inappropriate Touch examples
- Picking up children 3 years old and under. - Lap sitting for children 3 years old and under. - Handshakes - High fives	Never touch a child... ...in anger or disgust ...anywhere that would be covered by a bathing suit (unless changing a diaper)

• Walking hand in hand • A brief assuring pat on the back or shoulder • A one arm side hug (initiated by child or in response to the needs of a child) • Short, congratulatory, or greeting hugs (initiated by child or in response to the needs of a child)	• ...in a manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive • ...when he or she doesn't want to, unless you are using appropriate physical restraint when harm to the child or another child is imminent. • Avoid wrestling, rough housing and tickling. • Never kiss a child or coax a child to kiss you. • Never allow a child to touch you in any way that's inappropriate.
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MEDIA GUIDELINES

- Communicate and use media following safeguarding conduct principles (VAP) and legal requirements. Represent children, their local culture and environment in a manner of honesty, dignity and respect. Additional media and communication guidelines can be found in OC Child Safety Program Manual and SF's Communications Handbook.
- Cell phones should be kept out of sight and unused during ministry times, unless being used as part of the program.
- There will be a designated group photographer who will adhere to SF's media guidelines. While on the clock, no childcare workers should be taking pictures with their cellphones.
- Childcare workers should not initiate or approve friend requests on social media from children. Nor should pictures of children be posted on social media without a parent's written consent.

BATHROOM/CHANGING GUIDELINES

- When taking children to the bathroom, always go in a group of at least three (you + two). Childcare workers should never be alone with a child in a bathroom.
- If a child requires assistance, the childcare worker should call for a second adult to come. Prop open the stall door and/or leave the door open when assisting the child.
- It is recommended that parents always be the people to change their child's diapers or outfits and should be able to be easily contacted. However, if parents give consent or in an emergency situation two childcare workers should be present when changing a diaper or outfit.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR RESPONSE

One may need to adjust these challenging behavior responses according to the age, emotional and/or developmental needs of a child (e.g. children with special needs) which need to be discussed prior to the childcare function with the parents of the child.

1. Quiet Word: Have a quiet word with the child, communicating the concern, asking the child why they are behaving in this way and, if relevant, the need for correction.
2. Choice: If the behavior continues to be challenging give the child a choice. E.g. "You have a choice. You can choose to change your behavior or if not, we may need to remove you from the activity." (If the child is removed from the activity by the supervisor remember to ensure they stay in sight for the group).
3. Refer: Contact the supervisor – they will get the parents involved as needed.

RAISING A CONCERN

If childcare workers have any concerns regarding the safety and well-being of a child or the conduct of another childcare worker, they must immediately pass on the concern on to their supervisor, who will contact the Child Safety Team. If any childcare worker would like to express the concern directly to the Child Safety Team, please email directly to childsafety@synergiefr.org. Further information is in the required SF introductory Child Safety Training.

- I have understood and agreed to the specific procedures and risk assessments explained to me by my supervisor for this function.
- I have read and understood and agreed to abide by SF's Childcare Policy and Code of Conduct while serving at this SF function.
- I have completed SF's introductory Child Safety Training and signed the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

CHILDCARE RISK ASSESSMENT AND CHECKLIST

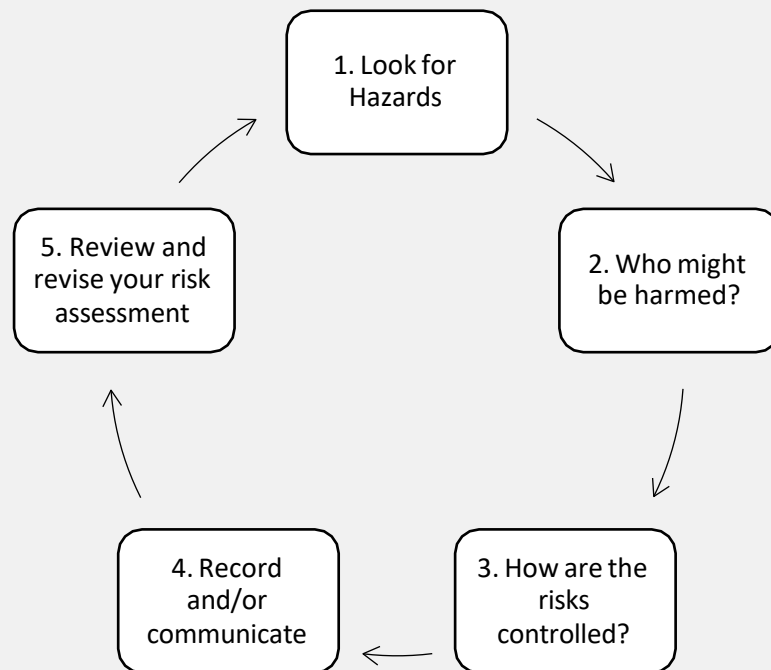
PREAMBLE:

This risk assessment and checklist is to be used to minimize the risk of harm to children in childcare programs at SF conferences or functions (such as camps, retreats, etc.).

It is the responsibility of all childcare workers to make sure all activities are conducted in a safe manner, minimizing the risk to the welfare of the children in their care. A large element of minimizing the risk of harm to children in childcare programs is being organized and asking the right questions during the planning process and while the program is underway. This Risk Assessment and Checklist covers common hazards and will help ask the correct questions to implement suitable control to reduce the risk of harm to children. After signing, this document is to be kept by the Director/Supervisor overseeing the conference/function/ministry. For additional support contact childsafety@synergiefr.org.

DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENTS:

While planning and running the childcare program, work through these five steps of risk assessment:



1. Look for hazards (what could cause harm).
2. Consider who might be harmed by the hazard (is it everyone, one specific age group or a child with a disability).
3. Decide how the risk can be controlled and possible actions needed.
4. As appropriate, record and /or communicate risk and control measures so other childcare workers can be aware.
5. Review and revise your risk assessment throughout your program and adapt your control measures as the conditions or circumstances change.

CHECKLIST: (TICK BOXES AS EACH POINT IS REVIEWED)

PERSONNEL:

- ☐ There is a designated person in charge who oversees the program, childcare workers, and children. This person carries the overall responsibility in completing this checklist and ensuring essential protocols are in place such as Child Safety compliance.
- ☐ The relevant parties in SF are aware of your childcare program such as Member Care, Child Safety Team, etc.
- ☐ Appropriate training, guidance and boundaries explained to childcare workers and children before/during the program provided.
- ☐ Adequate supervision – suitable childcare worker/child ratios as outlined in the Childcare Policy and code of Conduct.

COMPLIANCE:

- ☐ SF's Childcare Policy and Code of Conduct is being followed. This policy requires all childcare workers to:

- Complete SF's Associate Volunteer application process if they are not already a member (for childcare workers under 18 years old follow Application guidance in the Childcare Policy and Code of Conduct)
 - Sign and follow the SF Childcare Policy and Code of Conduct
 - Sign and follow the SF Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct
- ☐ Local legal requirements for running a childcare program understood and followed.

VENUE:

- ☐ Venue is suitable for the age of children in the program. (No bare electrical wires, equipment being used is in good condition, tables and chairs stored safely, reduced tripping hazards, fire alarms if applicable etc.)
- ☐ Safe access and exits identified – make sure fire exits are known and unobstructed.

PROGRAM:

- ☐ Clear system in place for the handover process between childcare workers and the child's parents/guardians including whether children can leave the program autonomously.
- ☐ All childcare workers understand boundaries and limits of the program (including expected behavior and areas where children are/aren't allowed).
- ☐ All activities are suitable for the age and ability of participants (with consideration of children with specific needs).
- ☐ Suitable supervision plan which maintains appropriate childcare worker/child ratio – including free time, headcounts, and check-ins.

TRAVEL: (IF APPLICABLE)

- ☐ Safety consideration and contextual legal requirements regarding seat belts, child restraints fitted, and booster seats followed.
- ☐ Vehicle(s) and/or driver(s) appropriately licensed and insured.
- ☐ Appropriate supervision while traveling.
- ☐ Safe area for embarking and disembarking identified.
- ☐ If using public transport, risk assessment is completed, and suitable control measures are in place to reduce risk of harm to children (including separation from the group).

ENVIRONMENT:

- ☐ Geographical hazards assessed (such as bodies of water, including swimming pools, ditches, roads, etc.).
- ☐ Risk of adverse weather conditions assessed.
- ☐ Risk of harm from wildlife assessed (such as spiders, snakes, scorpions, etc.)
- ☐ Risk of harm from sociopolitical risks assessed (such as gangsterism, political unrest and protests).

FOOD

- ☐ Appropriate information about allergies and dietary requirements of those in the program recorded and available.
- ☐ Clean water available which is suitable for drinking.
- ☐ Food hygiene practices followed.

EMERGENCIES:

- ☐ Emergency plan determined (including knowing emergency numbers, including parent's phone numbers).
- ☐ Medical and health details are available and appropriately held confidentially.
- ☐ First aid kit and trained first aid personnel available.
- ☐ Procedure in place in case a child becomes separated from the program.

OTHER:

- ☐ Additional insurance for the childcare program or activities planned determined if necessary.

Childcare Program Coordinator:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Director/Supervisor overseeing conference/function/ministry:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX H

CHILD SAFETY ADVOCATE

KATY DOEBLER

CHILD SAFETY SPECIALIST TEAM

Amy Lynelle
Rachel DeWitt
Lynn Lockwood
Hannah Hamilton
John Saucedo