



YOUTH WITH A MISSION

**YWAM INTERNATIONAL
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Definition:

The YWAM International Child Protection Policy is a set of principles and guidelines that provide the basis for planning activities for missionaries and volunteers of the organization, aiming to prevent, defend, help children and adolescents in situations of violence and abuse, safeguarding them from hazards that may develop in order that these children and adolescents that are attended by the organization may have a healthy and wholesome development.

Article 1. Statement of commitment:

1.1. YWAM is committed to the welfare of children and youth worldwide. YWAM students, missionaries and leaders are expected to engage in positive supportive relationships with children, adolescents and adults in all aspects of our mission.

1.2. YWAM opposes all forms of child exploitation and child abuse. YWAM believes that all children have a right to protection from abuse irrespective of race, social background, age, gender, skin color, disability, religion, nationality or beliefs.

1.3. YWAM is committed to protecting the rights and welfare of children. This includes the Conventions of Children's Rights UN, the convention of the minimum age for working children No. 138, 1999; the Declaration of the meeting of World leaders on children in Stockholm in 1996 and the World Congress in Japan in 2001.

1.4. YWAM believes that all children have value, worth and dignity as they are made in the image of God. Thus we believe that all children should be treated with respect and cared for in ways that honor God.

1.5. YWAM believes that child abuse and exploitation is wrong. Keeping silent is also wrong if it is known beyond reasonable doubt that a child or an adolescent is being abused or exploited.

1.6 YWAM believes in the importance of child protection and that preventative measures should be made to not only to protect children and adolescents from abuse by any YWAM missionary, students, volunteers and visitors but also to protect any involved with YWAM and the organization's integrity.

Article 2. Guiding principles of this policy

Based on the policy of protection of children and adolescents, with the legal parameters of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Brazilian Constitution of 1988 and the Statute of Children and Adolescents (Federal Law 8069 of July 13 1990), YWAM adopts the following principles:

- **The Child's well-being**

All actions concerning children and adolescents in the organization should consider primarily the interest & well-being of the child and assure his/her protection, taking into account the rights and duties of parents, guardians or other people responsible for them. (Article 3 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child)

- ***The Child and adolescent have rights and capabilities***

Every child and adolescent has his/her story, his/her personality and individuality, which must be respected by the missionaries, volunteers and collaborators of the organization. Every child and adolescent has capabilities that must be taken into account and strengthened in order to become co-participator with the adult in order to ensure the protection system and promote their rights as children.

- ***Absolute priority***

The family, society and the State must ensure, with absolute priority, that no child or adolescent is the victim of neglect, discrimination, exploitation, violence, cruelty or oppression.

- **Respect**

Every relationship with children and adolescents should be permeated by respect, given the due attention and expressed in clear communication. Limits should be placed with respect.

- **Participation**

YWAM believes that children have the right to speak and be heard. Therefore, when appropriate, children will also be included as stakeholders and in baseline surveys. There is always a need to take into account what the children, adolescents and their families have to say throughout the process of implementing, monitoring and the evaluation mechanisms of protection. These parties need to be trained and informed in order that they can get hold of information of this policy and the support required for the prevention of any possible violence or abusive situation.

Children, as individuals can and should express their opinions on issues that affect them. Their opinions should be taken into account in the political, economic or educational agenda of a country. Thus, it creates a new type of relationship between children, adolescents and those who decide for the state and society (The International Convention on the Rights of the Child).

- **Non-discrimination**

The protection of children and adolescents should be ensured without discrimination in economic, ethnic, gender, religion, political of any kind.

3. Universal categories of abuse

3.1 Physical abuse: "Any action, single or repeated non-accidental (or intentional), committed by an adult agent (or older than the child or adolescent), without visible consequences, causing slight damage or extreme damage as in death "(Claves - Latin American Center for Studies on Violence and Health).

3.2 Mental & Emotional Abuse: A set of persistent attitudes, words or actions to shame, reproach the child : as threats, humiliation, screaming, rejection and isolation, may cause severe adverse effects, real or likely, in the emotional and behavioral development of children and adolescent.

Mental & Emotional abuse is anything that may cause psychological, emotional, moral and ethical distress. By it's subtlety, this type of abuse is one of the most difficult to be proven and therefore has been one of the hardest to be combated. All types of abuse involve a mental abuse component.

- Ex: It is expressed by insults, threats, provocation of fear, depreciation of the image of the person, blocking their efforts to create healthy self- esteem.

3.3 Sexual Abuse: Every act of a sexual nature that aims to stimulate or use the child or adolescent for sexual pleasure and / or material gains, such as using obscene language, exposing genital organs (exhibitionism), observing the child (voyeurism), pornography , fondling the genitals and rape.

Actual or likely exploitation of a child or adolescent involving them in activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate social taboos or family rules.

3.4 Abandonment: Abandonment is characterized by the absence of a responsible adult. Partial abandonment is considered on cases of temporary absence of parents exposing the child to risky situations. Total abandonment is considered when the child is left homeless, helpless, exposed to various forms of danger.

3.5 Negligence: Failure to protect the child or adolescent from harm of any kind and therefore this leads to the degradation of the health or development including non-organic development of the child or adolescent. (Cultural education).

Warning signs and a few forms of negligence:

- **Physical negligence**

A. Frequent infectious or parasitic diseases.

B. Damage to health by an irregularity in monitoring the standards of prevention, such as immunization/ vaccine calendar.

C. Neglect such as unexplained delay in seeking medical facilities, inadequate treatment, not following recommendations and irregular monitoring of patients with chronic disease.

D. Skin lesions or repeated diaper dermatitis (without treatment).

E. Dental caries (untreated).

F. Growth deficits and development without any health problems that warrants the situation

G: Malnutrition without apparent underlying cause.

H. Carelessness or lack of hygiene in the preparation of meals

I. Obesity due to lack of care in the area of nutrition

J. Neglect in the area of hygiene

K. Lack of a system that offers protection against accidents and violence by others.

L. Lack of protection against bad weather.

M. The use of inferior clothing compared to other siblings, or even by the parents or guardians.

- Neglect in the area of education:

A. Lack of education accompaniment.

B. Permitting the child/adolescent to not attend school regularly for no apparent reason and failure to act on this.

C. Not registering the child in school at an appropriate age.

- Emotional Neglect

A. Disregard to the needs of affection, love and protection.

B. Domestic violence against other family members.

C. Permission, encouragement or omission towards the use of alcohol or other drugs for minors.

D. Induction to a sedentary lifestyle or inactivity.

E. Impediment to socialization and / or leisure time.

F. A minor left under the custody or care of others, without supervision of those who are responsible.

H. Expulsion or refusal to provide housing, to not go after a runaway and refusal to consider the reacceptance of a minor once he or she shows a genuine interest in returning.

Article 4: Behavioral protocols:

4.1: YWAM expects all its missionaries, students, short-term volunteers, friends and visitors to show respect and treat the children & adolescents associated with the work of YWAM with dignity.

4.2: All YWAM missionaries, students, short-term volunteers and friends visiting program sites must sign a statement to say that they have read the policy, will respect it and understand that action will be taken in cases of inappropriate behavior.

4.3: Visitors to YWAM projects and program areas will not be left unsupervised.

4.4: YWAM students, short-term volunteers, supporters and visitors should not be left alone with beneficiary children who are not their own offspring or related to them in a private place that cannot be readily seen by other responsible adults.

4.5: YWAM missionaries, student, short-term volunteers, visitors and supporter will not touch a child in a way that is against the Convention on the Rights of the Child or expose them to inappropriate materials such as pornographic videos and literature (A general guideline is not to touch children inappropriately in areas that would normally be covered by shorts and t-shirt, but also includes kissing and tickling in an inap-

propriate way.)

4.6: YWAM missionaries, students, short-term volunteers, supporters and visitors will not discipline a beneficiary child in a humiliating way and no verbal abuse such as swearing or the use of demeaning language is accepted.

4.7: YWAM missionaries, short-term volunteers, visitors and supporters should not violate the rights of a child according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

4.8: YWAM drivers will not take a beneficiary child without at least one other person being present in the vehicle, unless the child is a family member or have the guardian's consent in writing.

4.9: YWAM missionaries, students, short-term volunteers, friends and visitors will not receive a beneficiary child alone at his/her own home.

4.10: Adults will always be held in account for their behavior and even if the child provokes or acts in a seductive manner.

4.11: If protocols are broken, the person involved will be disciplined and may no longer be part of YWAM and may be subject to criminal proceedings.

Article 5: Recruitment and screening:

5.1. All YWAM missionaries, students and short-term volunteers will be screened according to local standards, with a minimum of 2 reference checks during their recruitment period, including a police check wherever possible.

5.2. When new information surges that casts doubt on a team member's trustworthiness with children, the correct procedure is to firstly inform the base leadership and then, the next level of leadership (regional). Such information would be treated as confidential and disclosed to the individual team member for appropriate action.

5.3: All YWAM students, short term volunteers and missionaries will be carefully and properly screened during their recruitment period using an updated application form, which includes a page to be signed agreeing to the Child Protection Policy and stating that there have been no previous convictions for abuse against children, violent behavior or other convictions that would raise concern about behavior towards children and adolescents.

5.4: YWAM projects will ensure that all the references of all the missionaries will be checked and recorded in the missionaries' files, before the new missionaries member is invited to take the position.

5.5: Information on the Child Protection Policy must be introduced before and on acceptance.

5.6: YWAM projects will not accept any children or adolescents under the age of 18 as short term volunteers, except in the case as "monitors" in holiday's camps like King's Kids Camps, but with the supervision of an adult and previous written consent for the parents.

5.7: YWAM projects will not employ any children below the age of 16 as domestic help.

Article 6: Responses to allegations:

6.1: YWAM missionaries, students, short-term volunteers, friends and supporters will be encouraged to be open in discussing the potential of abuse within the organization.

6.2: YWAM prohibits any retaliation against any missionaries or one employed in an YWAM related program who, in good faith, has registered a complaint under this procedure.

6.3: There will be a designated regional team responsible for dealing with child protection issues within the organization.

6.4 : When there is an allegation made towards any YWAM missionaries, student, short-term volunteer or visitor , YWAM will take the appropriate action to deal with the situation, as outlined in the procedural plan of action for crisis situations.

6.4.1.: YWAM missionaries, students, short term volunteers, supporters or visitors are required to report suspected abuse to either the project or location leader. All reports of alleged abuse will be investigated. The investigation process will be documented and a written report of findings will be completed within 30 days of the allegation. Outside expertise or legal authorities may be involved. The National Director will be informed of all child abuse allegations within 3 days of the allegation. Any allegation of abuse involving a missionary will be reported to the Regional Director within 10 days of the allegation.

6.4.2.: Conclusion of investigation: If an investigation leads to the conclusion that abuse has occurred, then the appropriate legal authorities will be notified if they have not previously been involved in the investigation. If a YWAM missionary, student or short term volunteer has been proved to have caused the abuse, then they will no longer serve in the organization and will fill out & sign a termination document and be subject to criminal prosecution. Where there is no evidence of abuse, the informant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator will be notified.

6.4.3: The allegation will be kept confidential, with only those directly involved having the appropriate information.

6.4.4: YWAM missionaries, students or short-term volunteers who are found violating the confidentiality of allegations will receive a written warning.

6.4.5.: YWAM will work in cooperation with the Child welfare and legal organizations during the course of an investigation as appropriate.

6.4.6: Both victim and perpetrator will be treated with respect from the start of the process to the end.

6.4.7: YWAM will not dismiss a child's accusation of abuse without appropriate investigation, no matter who the alleged perpetrator is.

6.4.8: The alleged perpetrator will be treated without prejudice.

6.4.9: YWAM will work in cooperation with other organizations in a case where the child involved requires extra protection.

6.4.10: Records will be made of all facts related to the investigation and allegation, and these will be carefully and confidentially filed by the YWAM National and/or Regional Director.

6.4.11: YWAM will designate a point person to deal with the media and the police. Consideration will be made before an investigation is started by the national leadership team about how the police and media will be informed.

Article 7: In case of abuse committed by another child or adolescent who participate in a YWAM project

7.1. The bases of operation of YWAM who develop activities with children and adolescents in collective environment should have guidelines and rules of coexistence, what are expected behavior in child to child relationship, infant - adolescent, child - adult, and it should be revised with the participation of children and adolescents regularly as part of an educational process.

The verification procedures must be:

- 1) To ensure confidentiality on the person who communicated the situation;
- 2) Assemble a committee to check the facts and ethics (composed of at least three people including the supervisor of the child or adolescent involved) who will hear all the parties involved.

Important Note:

In cases of serious abuse or violence, we should not ignore the procedures of the Child and Adolescent Statute

in cases of violations of the law. An evaluation should be made of the child or adolescent's physical and emotional condition and seek alternatives to offer rehabilitation and reintegration of the minor. Or, if a po-

lice report is made, one should indicate on the report for treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration of the adolescent or child in question.

Article 8: In case of abuse or violence against a YWAM missionary, short term volunteer or student committed by a child or adolescent who participates in a YWAM project

8.1 There is a degree of risk involved in the activity of educators, short term volunteers or missionaries especially when making the option to work with children and adolescents in situations of vulnerability and who have experienced or be exposed to various forms of violence or abuse. Any act of violence or abuse committed by children, adolescent against the educators, missionaries or short term volunteer should be properly assessed. It is essential as a method to indicate the necessary qualifications of a missionary and educator to work in this area of treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration of children / adolescents and their families.

Important Note:

In situations in which the missionary or short term volunteer or educator is facing a serious risk to their physical integrity should be reported to the authorities, and will be the responsibility of the project where the missionary/educator/volunteer works to take the necessary actions and procedures to protect the person involved.

Article 9: Communication

9.1: YWAM's communication about children or adolescent will reflect an image that preserves their value, dignity and self-worth and are decent and respectful, not seeking to exploit their situation.

9.2: YWAM will take special care to protect children/adolescent's identities and specific geographic location in public relations materials. Therefore, to protect their identity YWAM will only post children's first names and will not distribute their last name or address.

9.3: Those speaking on the behalf of YWAM will make all possible efforts to ensure that the message communicated is that in all circumstances, children are made in the image of God, valuable, to be loved and honored that YWAM believes that all forms of child abuse is wrong.

9.4: Disclosure of information about past or present abuse of children and any of the persons involved should be limited to only the people who need to know.

Article 10: Declaration of commitment:

A declaration of Commitment will be signed by all those affiliated with YWAM International, including visitors and short-term volunteers. A copy will be kept on file at the appropriate personnel file.

I declare that:

1. I have read and understand the YWAM Child Protection Policy.
2. I will work within the procedure as laid out in the YWAM Child Protection Policy.
3. I have not been accused or convicted of any offence involving physical or sexual abuse of children or adolescent.
4. I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding the abuse of children while engaged in YWAM activities, the allegation will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities.

Complete Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

*****The following list has been reviewed by the YWAM International Executive Committee and approved by the International Council.**