



Darfur International Socio Development Agency

DISA

Child Protection Policy

Helping children break the cycle of poverty is more than providing health care and education. It's about working toward the complete well-being of each and every child — and that means keeping them safe.

DISA operates off of these five basic **Guiding Principles of Child Protection**:

1. Having zero-tolerance for child abuse.
2. Protecting children's rights and their best interests.
3. Placing the child as the first priority when dealing with all identified or suspected cases of child abuse.
4. Empowering and educating children on their rights, personal safety and steps they can take, if there is a problem.
5. Integrating child protection into all aspects of our organizational strategy, structures and work practices.

Child protection policy

Children International's Child Protection Policy is made up of several components, all with the goal of keeping children and youth safe. It includes agency-specific child protection protocols, guidelines for reporting incidents, steps for preventing abuse, training for CI staff and volunteers, the rules we follow for using information in print and web materials and safety measures for sponsor-beneficiary interactions.

Child protection protocols

Each field office is required to have its own child protection protocols based on DISA's overarching Child Protection Policies and Guiding Principles. These protocols include local laws on child abuse, procedures that are required by local law, a list of local

authorities to whom child abuse cases are reported, as well as a list of partner organizations to contact that can provide the appropriate support services for victims.

Reporting incidents

For all reported child-abuse incidents, DISA requires that the child's best interest be the first priority. In addition, all incidents must be dealt with promptly, and they must be handled in a confidential manner that does not harm the victim or the person reporting the abuse.

Preventing abuse

Of course, preventing abuse entirely is the ultimate goal for any child-aid organization. DISA believes that we must do everything in our power to reduce cases of abuse as much as possible to help ensure children's safety. The key to our strategy is education:

- Training children, staff and volunteers on how to identify and prevent child abuse.
- Giving children the opportunity to participate in programs that educate them on their rights, personal-safety techniques and steps they can take in case of a problem.
- Encouraging and supporting children, staff and community members to report cases of abuse.
- Incorporating child protection information into other DISA programs. In this way, we reach a broader audience and reemphasize the importance of protecting children.
- Allowing all children and teens the opportunity to participate in programs regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity or religion.

DISA staff and volunteer training

All field staff and volunteers attend mandatory annual trainings on our Child Protection Policy and agency-specific child protection protocols. All new employees and volunteers are also trained and commit to following the policy and protocols.

DISA communications

As you read through our web and print materials, you may have already noticed some of the measures we take to protect children. These include:

- Telling the truth of the story. This means never using manipulated or sensationalized text and/or images, and certainly not employing discriminatory or degrading language.
- Never using images of inappropriately clothed children.
- Not publicly disclosing a child's last name, personal address or other information that could be used to locate a child within a country.
- Not publishing health information, unless the family or individual has given us written consent.

Additionally, children, youth and individuals featured in our materials must consent (or their parents or guardians must consent) to us using their image or story prior to publication.

Interaction between sponsors and beneficiaries

It's a sensitive subject, to be sure, but we absolutely must look out for the safety and best interests of our sponsored children and youth. Because of this, we have measures in place to make sponsor-child interactions safe:

- We monitor communications between sponsors and children.

- All letters between sponsors and children are reviewed before being delivered. We check for things like inappropriate language and topics, promises of money or gifts and sharing personal contact information.
- Sponsors and children agree not to connect via social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- All visitors must sign and follow the visit guidelines, which include rules such as:
 - No unannounced visits.
 - Visits are supervised by DISA field staff at all times.
 - Visitors are expected to follow culturally acceptable standards of conduct and dress.
 - We require a background check for anyone 18 and older who will be meeting any children and youth in person, for the safety of the children. Information is kept confidential and secure.

What is abuse?

Sadly, abuse can take many forms, and we work hard to recognize and deal with any situation that can adversely affect a child's mental or physical health, development or dignity. The four main types we monitor are physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Approved by: Secretary General, DISA

Name and Signature:

Date: