



NEW HOPE UGANDA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT.

New Hope Uganda holds with conviction that we are simply stewards of the children God has brought to us. He is their Father and Defender, and we are to care for them according to His heart, ways, and standards. We acknowledge that we will answer to Him for how we have handled His children.

We believe that our Heavenly Father sees children as His image bearers, the apple of His eye, the ones for whom He died, His heirs, His beloved children, sinners in need of discipline, grace, correction, unconditional love, consistency, investment, training, and molding. And therefore, as stewards of His precious children, we must rely on His Spirit and His Word to guide us daily in how we care for them and do our best to do unto them as He would do unto them. Everything we do- be it comfort or discipline- must be done in love.

We acknowledge our own sinful hearts and our imperfections in dealing with children, and therefore choose to submit ourselves to oversight, accountability, and correction from those under us and over us, and to continually ask the Holy Spirit to enable us to love the children He has put under our care.

We are committed to the truth- whether or not it hurts, and to walking in the light in all of our dealings. We are committed to being above reproach in all of our dealings with children, and to honor and glorify our Lord and Savior by how we care for any child at New Hope or in the surrounding community.

New Hope Uganda will implement Uganda's Children's Act.

Our responsibility is to safeguard the welfare of children and young people and to protect them from abuse-irrespective of their race, tribe, social background, gender, skin colour, disability, religion or beliefs. It is never acceptable for a child to experience abuse or exploitation of any kind. Any person who has any knowledge of a potential child protection issue within the organization is to immediately contact a member of the NHU child protection team.

Kasana Children's Centre Child Protection Team should be made up of:

- at least 3 and possibly 4 senior trusted Ugandan staff members and at least 1 but possibly 2 senior trusted foreign staff members.
- It should be headed by a staff member equal to or above the head of Child Care in the organizational chart

- The head of child care should be the deputy head
- It should not contain more than 5 people

Musana Camps Child Protection Team should be made up of:

- At least 3 mature members of staff of which one must be a foreign staff member.
- At least one of the three should be on the Musana Camp Management Team.

Kobwin Children's Centre Child Protection Team should:

- Consist of at least 3 senior trusted members of staff
- be headed by a staff member equal to or above the head of Child Care in the organizational chart
- The head of child care should be the deputy head

Our child protection policies provide a safe and positive environment for children and are essential in the work we do (which is primarily focused on orphaned and abandoned children, but also reaches to staff children, community children, and the children of visitors to NHU sites.)

New Hope Uganda will ensure that children under its care are in an environment free from isolation, humiliation, shame, and fear. We will also maintain an environment at all NHU sites that encourages children to share their struggles and receive help from appropriate people, as well as equipping them with the understanding of how to get help in situations where a NHU staff member is not nearby to help them. (E.g. when children are away on holiday, they can run to an LC 1 chairman, Police, the community leaders, etc... for protection)

2. Definition of abuse.

Because of NHU's multicultural community, it is essential for us to clarify the meanings of certain words, for example abuse, and to make sure our children and staff understand these meanings and what different cultures might understand by the same word.

Abuse is any behaviour or action that is used to scare, harm, control or intimidate another person. It can come in different forms: physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, financial, or spiritual.

Abuse also refers to cruel and violent treatment of a person or animal.

Abuse is an attempt to control the behavior of another person in a detrimental way. It is a misuse of power which uses the bonds of intimacy, trust and dependency to make the victim vulnerable.

Abuse is not:

- Parents, guardians, or teachers taking godly authority over their child's life
- speaking the truth to a child, even if the child doesn't want to hear it
- correction and discipline done in a loving, godly way
- work
- training towards a good work ethic

Definition of child: A young human being below 18 years.

Physical abuse:

Physical abuse is the actual injury of a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child. It includes but is not limited to torture, poisoning, burning, and suffocating. This could result in wounds, burns, bite marks, cuts, head injury, internal injuries and broken bones. This may involve forcing the child to work in unsafe environments, or depriving the child of the necessities like food, water, air or sunlight.

Sexual Abuse.

Sexual abuse is the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. It involves encouraging, forcing or enticing a child to take part in or observe sexual activities that they may or may not comprehend. It includes any action with sexual intent towards children such as touching a child's genitals, asking a child to touch the genitals of others, encouraging the child watch or take part in pornography, or having sex with the child - whether or not they appear to be consenting. Any sexual advancement towards a child is wrong simply on the premise of the fact that they are still a child and underage. It includes rape, defilement, incest and all forms of sexual activity involving children such as pornography and prostitution. It is criminal behavior to involve children in any sexual behavior.

Organized Abuse

Organized abuse involves adults acting together or with other children to abuse a child/children using an institutional or cultural framework or position of authority to control. It includes, but is not limited to, child trafficking, child labor, ritualistic abuse, child sacrifice, and sexual abuse.

Neglect (Abuse through intentional neglect)

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs or failure to protect a child from danger. It is any action that deliberately neglects to give a child what they need to live, to learn, to participate in appropriate family or social activities, and to speak. Neglect is likely to result in serious impairment to a child's health and development. It may involve a caregiver failing to protect a child from starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care.

Emotional Abuse.

Emotional abuse is persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection of a child which is likely to have an adverse effect on a child's emotional and behavioral development. It includes any action (gestures, words and behaviors) that deliberately causes children to feel afraid, anxious, in danger, corrupted, exploited or discouraged. It involves neglecting to give enough love and attention, not making the child feel secure and worthy, verbally insulting the child by belittling and threatening, and unnecessarily instilling fear in a child.

Psychological abuse.

We acknowledge that emotional and psychological abuse are very connected. However, psychological abuse is any act that provokes fear, diminishes the child's dignity or sense of self-worth, and/or intentionally inflicts psychological trauma as a means of exerting power and control over the child's mind and thinking. These may include, but are not limited to, on-going criticism, intimidation, humiliation, overly sarcastic comments, passive/aggressive control, harassment, threats to harm self or others, forced indoctrination, sharing children's negative personal stories to unnecessary audiences, and posting pictures or names of children negatively on social media.

Bullying among children

Bullying involves physical, psychological or emotional harm or intimidation. It may include racist, sexist, or gender related bullying, manipulation, isolating or exclusion.

Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual abuse is coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The target experiences (whether they realize it or not) spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack. This abuse may include manipulation and exploitation, brainwashing, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of Scripture or the pulpit to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation from others- especially those external to the abusive context.

Financial Abuse

Financial Abuse is the unauthorised and improper use of funds, property or any resources belonging to an individual or organization. Those who financially abuse may be people who hold a position of trust, power, and authority or have the confidence of the child at risk.

Examples of financial abuse:

- exploiting children or their stories in order to get funds or benefits
- withholding or giving money or possessions to influence a child's behavior or to control them
- misappropriation of funds designated for children
- Using gifts, offers of trips abroad or further education, etc... to entice a child or draw them into relationship with them

3. Provision for children in Uganda's legal system.

New Hope Uganda submits to the laws of Uganda as stated in the

- The Children Act, Cap 59
- National Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children's Policy, 2004.

4. Communicating about child abuse

As New Hope Uganda we believe children should understand that God's desire for them is to be safe and cared for, and that that is our heart for them as well. Therefore we commit to raise awareness for our children in an appropriate manner, to help them learn to recognize abusive behavior, protect themselves and to forward concerns they have to a responsible adult. (If any adult is confided in by a child about abuse, that adult must immediately inform one of the Child Protection Team members.)

The following are the ways in which we will raise awareness of abuse, and equip the appropriate adults to protect and safeguard our children:

- To have ongoing training and raising of awareness for all NHU staff (support staff, volunteers, full time staff and anyone who interacts with children) in child protection
 - o All new NHU Staff will receive training in this as part of their orientation
 - o All NHU Staff will have a refresher training once a year
- Parents and Guardians of incoming children will be trained in the NHU Child Protection Policy and will be equipped to discuss such issues with the children under their care
- We will provide the policy to visiting teams, short term staff, and NHICF students, which they are expected to read and sign

New Hope Uganda recognizes that families have the responsibility for bringing up their children. Therefore we commit to teaching family parents, foster families and adoptive family parents to protect children from abuse.

We commit to discussing child abuse with the communities with which we work (including churches and on the radio), believing that involving communities will make children safer. We will do this by:

- Providing training through local churches and other community forums
- Providing schools with support and training especially regarding issues around orphans and vulnerable children.
- Involvement with other stakeholders in sensitization and protecting children who are orphaned and vulnerable.

- New Hope Uganda is committed to provide family wherever possible for orphaned and vulnerable children.

We also believe the government has responsibilities to protect children. We appreciate the efforts the Ugandan government has made to raise awareness and provide protection for children in our area and we will continue to work alongside them. We also commit to pray for our leaders and those who make the laws in our land. We will also raise our voice for and along with children to call to account those in positions of power and authority who make and implement laws and policies to ensure those policies do not abuse, ignore or take advantage of children at risk.

We will demonstrate family and the Fatherhood of God to the fatherless in a practical sense to influence the mind set of our policy makers, leaders and other community members towards orphaned and vulnerable children.

We will also continue to liaise with other organizations that work with children either through attending trainings/workshops they offer or offering trainings and advise where we are able.

5. Behavior Protocols.

New Hope Uganda expects any one interacting with children on its behalf to abide by the rules and procedures outlined in this Childcare Policy and the guidelines laid out in Uganda's Children Acts of 1996.

Our behavior protocols apply to all: board members, directors, staff, support staff, visitors and teams, volunteers, donors, sponsors, parents/guardians of the children, prospective foster and adoptive parents. All are expected to treat children with respect and dignity.

The appended guidelines include regulations covering the types of discipline that can be used with children.

Negative attitudes and behavior in children must be dealt with according to NHU childcare policy. All those interacting with children must speak life-giving words to them, affirm them, encourage them to do what is right and never instill shame or fear in them.

Matthew 18:6 states, "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea." We believe that causing a child to sin through abuse is of extreme gravity and spoken of very strongly by our Lord Jesus Christ.

While we believe that each person, child or adult, is responsible for his or her own behavior, an adult must never blame a child for his or her own behavior, even if the adult believes the child provoked or seduced them. This said, we do expect children to act respectfully towards their parents and caretakers.

Any individual knowing or suspecting that these protocols or their regulations are being

broken and children are being abused is required to report that behavior to a member of the Child Protection Team immediately. They must not handle the situation on their own.

If the protocols above or regulations of New Hope Uganda are broken, the person involved will be disciplined according to the NHU Terms and Conditions of Service and management has the right to immediately terminate employment or voluntary service. All applicants for employment and voluntary work will be made fully aware of these requirements before they are accepted as a staff or a volunteer working with children.

Staff and children will not be disciplined or dismissed for reporting suspicious behavior even if those suspicions are not found to be justified, so long as the reporting is done in good faith. Staff and children bringing abusive behavior to the notice of the relevant people will be regarded as acting responsibly and positively. The Child Protection team will do all they can to protect the identities and confidentiality of staff and children who brought claims of abuse. However, in the situations where confidentiality will need to be broken for the purpose of bearing witness, the Child Protection team will continue to offer protection to the witness.

Each individual staff member must sign a copy of this policy stating that they have read it and understood it, that they respect it, and that they understand the consequences for not adhering to it.

In order to make sure adults treat children lovingly, staff will be encouraged:

- To actively listen to our children and take their views into account.
- To treat all children equally as unique with different gifts and abilities- one is not more precious than the other.
- To seek advice and counsel when they are not sure how to best care for a child

6. Media

New Hope Uganda is also aware of harmful information that can be received by the children through various forms of media including the internet, TV, DVD's, music, radio, newspapers, magazines and books. Therefore New Hope Uganda, to the best of our ability, is committed to screen any media access our children have and also equip them to make wise decisions in how to use each of these media appropriately.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring all computers are placed in a supervised area, such as offices.
- Post received will be screened prior to distribution to children.
- Post sent by children will be screened prior to mailing.

- Working together with the childcare team to ensure TVs, Radios, DVDs, and any printed material will be monitored to ensure they are age-appropriate and God-honoring materials.
- Staff will talk to our children, from an early age, to appropriately expose them to the dangers of media and train them how to use it wisely and for the glory of God.

7. Project Partners.

New Hope Uganda will inform our partner organizations of our Child Protection Policy and Procedures, outlining that these documents are confidential and not for public knowledge or to be passed on without prior consent. We will encourage and help any other projects to also introduce a good child protection policy.

8. Recruiting and Screening.

New Hope Uganda is committed to carefully screen any people who want to interact with the children in our care before they are allowed to do so. People will only be allowed access to children after specific information has been gathered and judged upon.

All new staff will be screened by NHU Personnel Department through:

- Face to face interviews.
- Two pastoral/relational/job-related references (Should not be family member)
- References from the LC 1 Chairman and Chief of Police from their home area, or the area they have lived most recently, stating they have no criminal record
- Written interviews.
- Supervised period of probation.

On applying to work with children, all applicants will be made aware of the child protection policy of New Hope Uganda and will be required to fill out the relevant declaration and clearance forms with the Personnel Department. Failure to complete such forms will deem the applicant unsuitable to join the team. Before being brought on staff, new workers must read through the Child Protection Policy with their supervisor or a Personnel Officer and be asked to sign in acceptance. The child protection officer will ensure that all forms are kept in their personal files. No staff member may interact with children on NHU's behalf before this document has been signed by them.

All applicants will declare any history of criminal or civil child abuse; if possible, police checks will be sought to confirm this. Permission to interact with children is dependent upon judging these declarations. Any false declarations will be a disciplinary matter and may result in the person losing their job.

If found by New Hope Uganda to be a risk to children, or if a risk is confirmed from another source, the applicant needs to understand they will not be allowed to work with children again in that project or any other branch of our ministry.

9. Volunteers (local church members, and visitors): Volunteers have a responsibility to New Hope Uganda and the children under our care to remain vigilant regarding the 'safeguarding' of our children. As someone only on temporary assignment, a volunteer will conduct them self in a manner which is above reproach at all times. New Hope Uganda will make sure that no visitor/s are ever left on their own with the children. Volunteers should always look for opportunities to affirm the father and mother figures in the life of a child and report any concerns that they might have, directly to the Child Protection Team (the supervisor or team leader should direct the visitor accordingly).

Leaders of all international visiting teams will submit to the Teams Coordinator criminal checks through their sending church or organization for each team member prior to their arrival in Uganda. Team leaders will carefully oversee and be responsible for the behavior of their team members.

Where children are placed within communities through our project activities, the greatest possible care will be taken to ensure their safety and adequate care. The character and behavior of those proposing to care for them will be checked before they are placed. Their welfare will be checked on at appropriate intervals after they are placed and any necessary education on the care of children will be provided for the prospective caregivers.

10. Response to allegations incidents:

New Hope Uganda staff members are required to refer all concerns of potential child abuse to the NHU's Child Protection Officer or member of his team immediately.

If the senior Child Protection Officer is implicated, then the concern should be brought immediately to the most senior member of staff within the Child Protection Team who will take responsibility to lead the investigation and to notify the site Manager and National Manager.

If one of the Directors or National Manager is implicated, the Senior Child Protection Officer must immediately notify the NHU Board Chairman who will remain in discussion with the Child Protection Team throughout the investigations.

(Refer to each site's appendix for the names of their Child Protection Team.)

In the situation of media attention, the site's Child Protection Team must communicate with the National Manager and NHU Directors who will be the communicators representing NHU, or will determine who those communicators will be.

New Hope Uganda is committed to being a place where adults and children can forward **genuine concerns or suspicions** without fear of reprisal. Neither will people be offended if

an allegation is made against them, however they will fully cooperate with investigations.

We stand committed to the truth, before God, regardless of whom it affects or

implicates. We actively encourage our employees, as a group and in one on one discussions to be open in discussing potential child abuse in our work place and to take precautions against it at all times.

New Hope Uganda is committed to treat both the victim and the alleged perpetrator with dignity and respect during the investigation. However, it is recognized that adults generally have a lot more power than children and may bribe or scare them to drop any allegations if they have unsupervised access to the victim following an allegation. Therefore, all investigations will be confidential and the child's word will be taken seriously and he/she will be protected from the alleged abuser as a full investigation is carried out, and thereafter as needed.

New Hope Uganda ensures that all staff know what to do if an allegation of child abuse is made, be it within the organization, the child's home or in the community. This procedure has reference to the response of the local law in cases of suspected abuse and includes working with the social services and police. This procedure also informs those reporting an allegation who to report to if senior personnel are suspected.

The safety of the child is vital for consideration at all times.

NHU Employees are required to report possible abuse in the following circumstances:

- a) If abuse is observed or suspected.
- b) When an allegation of abuse is made
- c) When a child discloses abuse

Adults and children can report a suspicion or concern by doing the following:

Always applicable:

1. Any disclosure of abuse must be reported immediately (within 24 hours) to the Child Protection Officer or team. The Senior Child Protection Officer will proceed with the case according to the guidelines of the NHU Security Procedure Policy and Uganda's Children's Act.
2. The child must receive immediate adequate medical and emotional care, and continued care as needed.
3. If there is potential imminent danger towards the alleged victim or anyone else, the Child Protection Team and the Manager will give the accused staff member immediate suspension. If the staff is willing to cooperate, the manager and Child Protection Team will also agree where the member of staff will be located during the investigations and what supervision will be in place over that staff member.

If the staff member is not willing to cooperate, his/her services at New Hope Uganda will be terminated immediately.

4. The Senior Child Protection Officer will notify the site manager, national manager and the supervisor of the accused of the allegations, and will continue to keep them informed as the investigations proceed. For transparency and accountability, and also to offer support to the accused staff member, the site manager will then notify the accused staff member's pastor and/or sending church or organization, and will keep them informed as the investigations proceed. The site and national manager must be informed before the police or social services are notified.

5. All allegations disclosed must be recorded in a Child Protection ledger kept by the Childcare Manager of New Hope Uganda and referred to in the child's personal file (without comment and details).

6. Those who report the allegation are required to keep the information confidential and only discuss the situation with the Child Protection Officers or delegated investigator(s).

7. The site management team, along with the national manager, will determine the appropriate course of action in terms of the feasibility of the staff continuing to work for New Hope Uganda, pending and following any investigations or concerns. Any disciplinary measures will be implemented in line with New Hope Uganda policy procedure.

8. If the person accused is found guilty of abuse (but not criminal abuse), the site manager will notify his/her sending church or organization of the verdict and the decided course of action (consequences, termination of service, etc...)

Allegation against any staff member of criminal acts

If any staff member has been accused of an act that amounts to a criminal act/offense under the laws of Uganda against a child, the Senior Child Protection Officer will immediately contact NHU Senior leadership, who will in turn, immediately notify the NHU Board. A person assigned by NHU Senior leadership and the Child Protection team will contact the police for immediate action, and then proceed to inform the accused staff member's home church/or pastor and/or sending organization.

The site manager and the Child Protection Team (and police if present) will decide where the accused member of staff will be located during the investigations and what supervision will be in place over that staff member.

If the staff member is not willing to cooperate, his/her services at New Hope Uganda will be terminated immediately.

Once the police have been notified, all investigations will remain under police supervision.

New Hope Uganda has the right to inform any future employer about the incident.

Allegation against foreign staff or visitors

If a foreigner has been accused of criminal act against a child, the Senior Child Protection Officer will immediately contact NHU Senior leadership (who will in turn, immediately notify the NHU and NHUM Boards- if they are from the US). A person assigned by NHU Senior leadership and the Child Protection team will contact the police for immediate action, and then proceed to inform the accused foreigner's sending organization and/or pastor and the embassy of their home country.

Allegation against a child peer.

If an allegation is made against a child peer residing in the same family and there are continued threats to a child/children's safety, the perpetrator or the victim or both will be moved until the investigation is done and resolved.

In the situation of aggravated assault such as rape of a child, the following will happen to the child:

1. The child must receive adequate medical and emotional care immediately
2. Suspicions of child abuse must be discussed with a doctor.
3. Social services will agree to a plan to ensure the child's safety and provide support.
4. The police will be informed to undertake any criminal investigations and arrest.

We will offer support and appropriate after-care to the victim by:

- Ensuring, where possible, they remain within the community.
- Provide on-going counseling and support.
- Meet all medical needs.
- Endeavor to uphold confidentiality
- Protect from peer abuse following an incident.

10. Advocacy and net working.

New Hope Uganda is committed to working with other projects, community members, government officials and police to eradicate abuse to children. We commit ourselves to learn with others and speak up for children to receive justice and protection in our community. We commit to making people aware of the risks and abuse experienced by children and what we can do to protect them.

11. Confidentiality.

New Hope Uganda is committed to its workers as well as to its children. Therefore, only the Child Protection Team, and those deemed necessary to the process, will know information about any allegations and will continue to treat the accused with dignity throughout.

If a member of staff is found to have shared confidential information with people outside of the Child Protection Team, they will face disciplinary action in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct and Terms and Conditions.

In the event of a staff member being dismissed because of child abuse, or if the situation is naturally public and not able to be kept confidential, the situation will be communicated carefully to both staff and children- in a way that brings truth, but also does not belittle or shame the victim or the accused.

12. Good Practices.

New Hope Uganda does not desire to play a “policing” role with its staff, but expects each of them to walk in righteousness before God.

This policy needs to be reviewed at least every 3 years

Each NHU Site will create an appendix document to be updated annually (or whenever staff changes occur), that will include the names of their Child Protection Team and any additional guidelines needed for their site’s unique situation. This appendix must be presented annually to the National Team for approval and accountability.

New Hope Uganda

Personal Commitment to child Protection Policy

TO BE COMPLETED BY EACH PERSON WHO SERVES AT ANY NHU SITE

I _____ (Name) have read and understood New Hope Uganda's Child Protection Policy, and I commit before God, to act in accordance with the standards and procedures in it.

I commit myself to protect all children, both boys and girls, from any abuse.

I commit myself to report discreetly any suspicious activity or inappropriate behaviors noted towards children as according to the procedure set out in this policy.

I am aware that if found guilty of any form of child abuse as described in this policy, legal action either in Uganda or abroad may be taken against me by New Hope Uganda.

I have been honest with NHU Personnel of any personal history of criminal or civil child abuse, and have given them any documentation available to substantiate this information.

Name:

Signature:

Supervisor or Personnel Officer's signature:

Date: