

Child Protection Policy

Last Reviewed April 2015

One Sky Child Protection committee:

Name	Position	Duty for Child Protection
Napapun La-the	Senior staff 0810074888	One Sky foundation child protection committee
Wiwat Thanapanya	Director 0852897589	One Sky foundation child protection committee
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Natthawut Buaprthum	Board member and technical adviser for child protection 0819199122	Senior adviser and child protection lead member on One Sky board

This child protection policy is reviewed annually. Membership of the Child protection committee is reviewed before that time if any member is no longer available.

Purpose

As a children support organization, One Sky Foundation has a responsibility to ensure all children are protected from forms of abuse, exploitation or neglect. This policy should conform to the general principles of UN Convention of the Rights of the Child as follows:

Best Interests of the Child: All decisions and alternatives should be carefully considered to ensure that the best interests of the child are served, e.g. that the child receives the maximum benefit possible from services provided and that the positive impacts of any course of action outweigh any negative impacts.

Non-Discrimination: All children are protected and assisted regardless of gender, nationality, religious or political beliefs, family background or economic status, physical or mental health or criminal background. All children are entitled to enjoy equal rights and to receive equal benefit, fair treatment and the respect and value due them as human beings.

Participation and Self-Determination: All children (and their legal guardians where appropriate) should be given the opportunity to express their ideas and views on matters affecting them, and to have them considered carefully (according to their maturity) in the decision-making process. All clients have the right to self-determination and the right to refuse services.

The following guidelines protect both the adult from false accusation and the child from abuse.

1. The Duty and Responsibility of One Sky Foundation

1.1 This policy and its required standards seek to reduce risk to all children involved in or assisted by One Sky staff and programs. It shall therefore apply to:

All beneficiaries under the age of 25; One Sky staff, independent contractors, advisers, volunteers/interns and board members who assist or have access to children.

1.2 One Sky Foundation is responsible to ensure that the Internal Child Protection Policy is explained and read by all staff and that all staff, acknowledge their receipt and understanding of the policy.

1.3 One sky Foundation is responsible to revise and update the Internal Child Protection Policy as needed (and at least annually) in order to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

2. Personnel Recruitment, Screening and Orientation

2.1 All prospective employees, board of director candidates, independent contractors, advisers and volunteers/interns are to be informed of One Sky Foundation's Internal Child Protection Policy during any recruiting process.

2.2 Basic screening of applicants for positions of those likely to work with or have access to children (such as monitors, medical staff and social workers) will include a written application, personal interviews and reference checks (2 if possible). During the interview process, applicants should be asked about previous work with children. The same requirement for background checks, where possible and permissible by local law, also applies to existing One Sky Foundation staff members, consultants, board members and volunteers/interns, as deemed necessary by the Chair of the Board and/or Director.

2.3 One Sky Foundation reserves the right not to hire or terminate an applicant if background checks reveal that the person is not suitable to work with children or for any reason might put children at risk.

2.4 Policies and behavioral standards are reviewed during new staff orientation, including procedures for reporting suspected abuse and any disciplinary / legal actions that could be taken as a result of an investigation. All new personnel shall acknowledge in writing their receipt and understanding of the policy, with signed copies of their acknowledgement kept in their personnel files.

3. Behavior Standards for One Sky Foundation Personnel

3.1 Behavior Standards are guidelines of appropriate and proper behavior for One Sky Foundation staff when interacting with children. They are designed to protect children but are also intended to protect staff from false accusations of inappropriate behavior or abuse.

3.2 One Sky Foundation personnel must be concerned about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with children. This is especially true in male staff interactions with female children that are particularly susceptible to suspicion and accusation of sexual misconduct. Extra care should be given to protecting the reputation of both female children and One Sky Foundation staff by ensuring that language and behavior at all times reflect appropriate male-female relationships, which are respectful of and in line with all local

culture and customs.

- 3.3 As human rights advocates One Sky Foundation personnel are also expected to respect the rights of children in their own homes and communities, upholding the rights and principles contained in the UNCRC at all times whether on or off duty.
- 3.4 One Sky Foundation personnel must not stay alone overnight with one or more children, whether in the staff member's house, project premises or elsewhere unless a parent or relative is present at all times. The exception to this is temporary or emergency foster care or in rare cases when this is in the best interest of the child. This must only happen with foster care families already known and prepared by One Sky Foundation. At least two members of the One Sky foundation child protection committee must be involved in all decisions regarding temporary or emergency foster care. Written permission from at least one parent or guardian should be obtained for temporary foster care except when a child is being removed from the parents for their own safety. This action can only be taken by One Sky staff who hold the relevant government qualification and whenever possible should only happen after notification to the provincial 1300 team.
- 3.5 One Sky Foundation personnel should not employ children unless the One Sky foundation child protection committee:
 1. Agrees that the child's age and the working conditions are appropriate.
 2. Agrees that there is clear benefit to the child and that the arrangement is in the child's best interest.
- 3.6 One Sky Foundation personnel must not fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch children in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way (reflecting the sensitivities of all local cultures). Under no circumstance should any physical contact have the appearance of being sexual in any way. To avoid misunderstanding, it is recommended that a child be asked for permission before touching or holding hands if necessary during the course of work.
- 3.7 One Sky Foundation personnel must not hit, slap, pull, or use inappropriate physical force of any kind on a child.
- 3.8 One Sky Foundation personnel should be aware that they might work with children who may, because of the circumstances and abuses they have experienced, use a relationship with an adult to obtain 'special attention'. The adult is always considered responsible for his or her response even if a child behaves seductively. Staff should be alert for such behavior and avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position.
- 3.9 Where possible and practical, the 'two-adult' rule, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities where children are involved and are present at all times, should be followed. If an adult is having an individual conversation with a child a, another adult must be within visual contact. In cases where individual counseling is deemed appropriate, the counselor must inform another adult/ supervisor in advance that this will happen, and where. If this is not possible, One Sky Foundation staff members are encouraged to look for alternatives such as accompaniment by relatives or community members during visits to children. One Sky personnel should never leave a child in their care with a third party such as a driver.
- 3.10 Every child is to be respected and listened to. Their views and opinions are vital for their healthy development. Every staff must show they value the child's individual choice. Participation and expression of views and feelings must be encouraged at all times, including decision making on issues that affect their futures. Their legal guardian will be included in all decisions concerning that

child's future (except in exceptional circumstances when this is not safe). With the mixture of cultures and languages in Sangkhlaburi special attention must be paid in this area. If in any doubt whether a child understands them due to speaking a different language One Sky staff must involve a translator.

- 3.11 No child will be forced into a decision he / she is not comfortable with, unless his / her refusal may result in harm, abuse or place the child in a life threatening situation.
- 3.12 Every child must be empowered by being given adequate knowledge of his / her own rights. A translator must be used if there is any doubt that the Child does not understand fully due to language differences.
- 3.13 Staff must ensure they make every effort to ensure children receiving services from One Sky Foundation feel safe and protected at all times.
- 3.14 All staff must act as a positive role model for the children they work with and for the adults who see the way staff work with children. They must treat each child with kindness, respect, dignity and sensitivity
- 3.15 Staff must not act in a way that is emotionally abusive (e.g. shouting, humiliating or shaming a child, this includes scolding and negative language).
- 3.16 Staff must not neglect children- failing to meet their needs through inadequate care. Particularly when responsible for younger Children who are unable to care for themselves, One Sky staff must ask for help and advice from the One Sky foundation child protection committee if they feel unsure or inexperienced in providing adequate care.
- 3.17 Inappropriate conduct toward children, including failure to follow the behavior standards stated above is grounds for discipline, up to and including dismissal from employment, volunteer/internship or board membership.
- 3.18 All One Sky Foundation staff are expected to take a proactive approach to the protection of children including discussing all doubts or concerns with their line manager or a member of the One Sky foundation child protection committee no matter how small.

4. Reporting and Investigating Abuse or Suspected Abuse

4.1 Child Abuse in all its forms, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse that occurs within an organization, is a serious offence that threatens the well being and reputation of the child, the accused staff and of the organization itself. Child abusers are not likely to remain in an environment where workers are trained to identify and report suspicious behavior. For these reasons, **all personnel** are responsible for reporting suspected child abuse or exploitation of any kind.

4.2 Any person who has knowledge of a potential child protection issue involving One Sky Foundation personnel should immediately contact his or her Team Manager, or alternatively, to a member of the One Sky foundation child protection committee. The report should be made within 24 hours if possible to allow for a timely investigation and/or early intervention as needed. Failure to report suspected child abuse or misconduct may result in disciplinary action. The One Sky foundation child protection committee will decide who needs to be informed about this situation. This will be on a strict *'Need to know'* basis in the best interests of the child in order to protect their child and their right to confidentiality.

4.3 The internal investigation, which respects the privacy and rights of the child as a priority, will

be initiated by the Director within 48 hours after receiving the report. The investigation will be conducted by the One Sky foundation child protection committee in consultation with the technical adviser for child protection. The chair of the One Sky Foundation Board will be notified of the investigation. All One Sky staff have the right to report any concerns about a potential child protection issue directly to the Director or technical adviser for child protection (as an external person) if they feel this is in the best interest of the children concerned. All staff must be made aware of this and encouraged to take this action as they feel appropriate. The technical adviser for child protection, in consultation with other board members can form an alternative child protection committee to carry out an investigation if they feel this is necessary.

4.4 The investigation must be treated with care and concern, particularly as a child may fear retribution and punishment while a staff member accused of child abuse will be concerned for his or her privacy and legal rights.

4.5 Generally, an employee accused of abuse or misconduct with a child should be temporarily suspended during the course of the investigation. The employee should be informed that charges have been made against him / her and given an opportunity to respond. They should also be informed that One Sky Foundation has an obligation to initiate an internal investigation. The employee is encouraged to participate in the investigation by providing information and the names of witnesses to be interviewed. Efforts will be made to provide assistance to an employee accused of misconduct with children, including counseling or other appropriate forms of support. Alternative accommodation will be found for any suspended staff who normally live at the One Sky office site in order that any investigation can take place quickly and fairly.

4.6 The rights and welfare of the child is of prime importance to One Sky Foundation. The investigation will make every effort to ensure that his or her privacy and safety are protected and that steps are taken to make the investigation child-friendly and minimize any potential trauma during the process.

5. Responding to Internal Investigation Findings

5.1 At the conclusion of the investigation, the employee, the child and/or his or her legal guardians as appropriate should be informed of the results of the investigation and what corrective action, if any, will be taken.

5.2 In the event an allegation is proven to be untrue, or even fabricated, appropriate steps will be taken for follow up with the person who has been accused, the child, and the person who reported the incident.

5.3 If abuse is proven by investigation or not, every effort will be made to assist the child in coping with any physical or emotional trauma he or she may be experiencing. This may include medical treatment, counseling or any other form of assistance deemed necessary and appropriate.

5.4 If the investigation includes that child abuse or misconduct has occurred or is suspected to have occurred which is NOT subject to criminal prosecution, staff will be subject to disciplinary action within One Sky Foundation, up to and including dismissal, at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee (Director, Adviser and Chair of the Board).

5.5 If the investigation concludes that abuse or misconduct has occurred or is strongly suspected to have occurred which is subject to criminal prosecution according to national laws, all findings will be reported to the relevant police authorities and full cooperation afforded them during an external investigation. If the accused is an expatriate, the relevant law enforcement authorities will also be

informed with due regard given to the potential for extraterritorial proceedings by the expatriate's country of origin.

5.6 In the event an employee is discharged for proven or suspected child abuse or misconduct, One Sky Foundation may disclose such information if requested by police, a prospective employer, etc. when such requests may assist in a legal investigation or the prevention of future abuse. Such disclosures will be made in accordance with applicable law and/or customs.

5.7A plan for dealing with media inquiries that includes a designated spokesperson will be developed by the Chair of the Board, Adviser and Director.

2 Visitors to One Sky Foundation

6.1 No visitor should be allowed to join a field visit without informing the One Sky Foundation director, manager or senior staff member, unless prior authority has been granted.

6.2 All visitors must be closely monitored by One Sky Foundation staff or volunteers.

6.3 NO visitor can be left alone, with or without children.

6.4 All media representatives and visitors to field sites to abide by media and visitor guidelines in the One Sky Foundation Media & Visitor Policy 2014.

I have read the complete One Sky Foundation Internal Child Protection Policy. I fully understand and agree to follow all procedures contained within.

If at any time I fail to follow the guidelines set forth by the One Sky Foundation Internal Child Protection Policy my employment may be terminated by the Director.

_____/_____/_____ Signature Date

