



អង្គការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តកសាងកម្ពុជា

VOLUNTEER BUILDING CAMBODIA

Volunteer Building Cambodia – VBC Child Protection Policy

Volunteer Building Cambodia – VBC is a Child Safe and Child Friendly Organisation and as such, we have adopted a Child Protection Policy (CPP) that is in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have a duty of care to safeguard all children we support. All children have a right to protection, whether they are able-bodied, disabled, disadvantaged and/or in some way otherwise vulnerable.

Definitions

Throughout this document;

- “VBC” refers to Volunteer Building Cambodia, a house-building NGO based in Siem Reap, Cambodia
- “Child” refers to any young person in the care, supervision or contact of an employee or volunteer of VBC under the age of 18, as defined by the United Nations’ Convention of the Rights of the Child

We concur with Article 19 of the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC; <http://www.unicef.org>). We also adhere to ‘Setting the Standards; the United Kingdom’s guidelines on child protection for International Non Government Organizations’ (NGOs; <http://tilz.tearfund.org/webdocs/Tilz/Topics/Child/Protection/Policy.pdf>). To conform to the UNCRC and the Setting the Standard guidelines, VBC has endorsed this Child Protection Policy.

Child Protection Policy

We have adopted the following Child Protection Policy that must be read and signed by all persons employed by or offering their services as sub-contractors and/or volunteers to us. The signing must be witnessed by a member of VBC.

Aims of the Child Protection Policy

The major aims of the VBC Child Protection Policy are to convey that we are committed to ensuring children are provided with a safe and protective environment at all VBC locations.

- All staff and volunteers are equipped to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues
- All staff and volunteers working with VBC have a responsibility to uphold the Child Protection Policy
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, appropriately and formally recorded
- Volunteers must report any concerns to the VBC on-site Coordinator or a VBC Director

VBC Child Protection Policy statement

Introduction

Child exploitation and abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgment about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations. These can include parents and other family members, community members, teachers, tourists and volunteers/staff with different support organisations.



អង្គការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តកសាងកម្ពុជា

VOLUNTEER BUILDING CAMBODIA

(If you would like further information/advice on some common signs and symptoms of child abuse and possible signs of concern regarding adult behaviour, see the appendices at the end of this document.)

Recruitment of VBC staff and volunteers

VBC recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Pre-volunteering/employment checks will include the following:

- a) All volunteers/staff must read and demonstrate that they understand and sign the VBC Child Protection Policy in front of the VBC official prior to commencing work
- b) All volunteers/staff must declare any past child protection breaches and any criminal record. Only relevant convictions and other information will be taken into account so disclosure need not necessarily be a bar to volunteering or working with VBC
- c) Appropriate references/referees must be given if/when requested by VBC
- d) All volunteers/staff must answer any appropriate questions asked by officials of VBC.
- e) The evidence of identity (passport for international volunteers) must be shown to the nominated VBC official, who will take a photocopy/scan of the passport and your entry visa (for international volunteers) prior to commencing the volunteer or employee placement.

Interview and induction regarding child protection issues

All VBC employees and volunteers are required to undergo a brief meeting with the relevant VBC official prior to commencing work during which:

- Their identity is confirmed (and copies of passport and entry visa will be made)
- The job requirements and responsibilities will be clarified
- Child protection procedures are reviewed and explained
- Child protection responsibility for VBC volunteers and staff outlined

Good practice guidelines for all staff and volunteers

All personnel of VBC should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations.

Good practice means:

- Working in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations with children
- Treating all children and young people equally with respect and dignity
- Maintaining a safe, appropriate and respectful distance with children
- Striving to make all contact with children fun, enjoyable and fair
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to the guidelines in this document
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people and wearing appropriate clothing

In addition to pre-volunteering/employment checks, volunteers and staff of VBC should analyse their own practice and ensure their practice will not expose them to false allegations. Please ask for advice/help from the relevant VBC representative if you are unsure of any aspects of child protection.

Practices NEVER sanctioned by VBC

Under no circumstances must you ever:

- Engage in any inappropriate conduct with children
- Be alone with less than three children at any time
- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including over the top horseplay



អង្គការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តកសាងកម្ពុជា

VOLUNTEER BUILDING CAMBODIA

- Spend time alone with children away from others
- Escort less than three children at a time in any vehicle (unless in an emergency situation)
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Invite or allow children to enter your accommodation

Furthermore, VBC believes that all forms of paid-for sexual activity, even amongst consenting adults, perpetrates the problem of child exploitation and will not be tolerated.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the appropriate VBC representative:

- If you accidentally hurt a child
- If he/she seems unusually distressed in any manner
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done with the result that the situation could be construed to be in contravention of this Child Protection Policy
- If you suspect any form of child exploitation is occurring, regardless of the suspected perpetrator

Photography: Abuse and exploitation

All staff and volunteers with VBC must seek prior permission from the relevant VBC representative if they intend to take photos/video at their project. The resulting images/video **must be made available**, on request, for review by the relevant representative.

Shorter duration volunteers especially should remember that while this may be a unique opportunity for them to record images, VBC are not in favour of children being photographed time and again on a regular basis.

Procedures

If a disclosure is made to you, the following procedure should be followed:

- Remain calm and try to assume a non-judgmental attitude
- Report your concerns as soon as possible to the VBC representative on site
- Fill out the VBC Incident Reporting Form as soon as possible (**Appendix 3**)
- Seek a formal debriefing for yourself through the VBC representative

If there is a disregard for the VBC Child Protection Policy or a misconduct complaint is made against or by anyone working within the organisation, this will result in the immediate removal of the suspected person from the VBC project pending further investigation. Depending on the outcome of initial investigations, a report may be made to the appropriate authorities which may result in a criminal investigation and prosecution with the support of VBC.



អង្គការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តកសាងកម្ពុជា

VOLUNTEER BUILDING CAMBODIA

Please Note

You must also declare that you have read and understood the Child Protection Policy of VBC and agree to abide by and uphold the policy throughout the duration of your placement.

Have you ever been convicted of an offence by the courts or cautioned, reprimanded or given a final warning by the police? Yes / No (Please delete as appropriate)

If yes, please give details of offences, penalties and dates:

Is your name on any country's prohibited persons list as being a person considered unfit to work with children and young people? Yes / No (Please delete as appropriate)

If yes, please give details:

I confirm that I have read the VBC Child Protection Policy and understand what is expected of me. I confirm that if I am unsure of information within the policy I will discuss this issue with the relevant VBC representative.

I confirm that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Important numbers

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| ChildSafe Hotline in Siem Reap | +855 17 358 758 |
| ChildSafe Hotline in Phnom Penh | +855 12 311 112 |
| ChildSafe Hotline in Preah Sihanouk | +855 12 478 100 |
| National Police Hotline | 1288 |

Please note that the information given on this form will be kept secure and remain strictly confidential.

Address Footprint Cafes, #681, Street 26, Wat Bo Village, Sangkat Sala Kamruek, Siem Reap, Cambodia

E-mail info@volunteerbuildingcambodia.org | **Website** www.volunteerbuildingcambodia.org

Fax +855 63 76 34 72 | **Phone** +855 63 76 38 18 | **Mobile** +855 12 33 99 13



អង្គការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តកសាងកម្ពុជា

VOLUNTEER BUILDING CAMBODIA

Appendix 1.

Exploitation of children and young people can take place in many forms. These include:

Sexual Abuse: Forcing or coercing a child into any sexual act including physical contact of penetrative or non-penetrative (such as oral sex) nature; partaking in or the watching of pornographic material/sexual acts; encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way.

Physical Abuse: Includes any act that physically harms a child including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.

Emotional Abuse: Any negative emotional ill treatment of a child causing them to feel inadequate, unloved, unworthy, frightened or in danger. This can include verbal abuse, imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations on the child or restricting their participation in age appropriate activities/normal social interaction.

Neglect: Is the persistent failure/denial to meet a child's physical and psychological needs. This can take the form of failing to provide food and water, shelter, supervision and medical care and/or failing to protect a child from physical, sexual or emotional harm or danger. (In Cambodia, poverty is persistent and all consuming, rendering many families unable to provide many of these necessities. This inability is not deliberate and unfortunately cannot be judged or dealt with in the same way as we do in the first world.)



អង្គការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តកសាងកម្ពុជា

VOLUNTEER BUILDING CAMBODIA

Appendix 2.

Possible signs of concern regarding adult behaviour

(Summarised from Child Welfare Scheme's Child Protection Policy; see <http://www.childwelfarescheme.org/news/sudhar/CPolicy05.pdf>)

- A person in whose presence a child becomes unusually distressed or agitated
- A member of staff, volunteer, parent, teacher, etc. asks a child to lie about anything (especially if it is about meeting that child)
- A member of staff, volunteer, parent, teacher, etc. asks another to lie about a situation involving a child
- Any person who fails to uphold and abide by the VBC Child Protection Policy
- Private meeting (i.e. outside of VBC premises) between a child and a member of staff, volunteer, teacher, etc.
- Explanation of an injured child offered by a member of staff, volunteer, parent, teacher, etc. that is not consistent with the injury



Appendix 3.

Child Protection Reporting Form

If you suspect that a child may be at risk of any form of abuse or exploitation; or an incident has occurred that was witnessed by you, please complete this form to the best of your knowledge in addition to reporting the matter to the VBC representative.

For confidentiality reasons, the report should be written and signed only by the witness (in the case of more than one witness, multiple forms should be completed individually) and handed directly and only to the appropriate VBC representative.

1. Please indicate what you are reporting

- a) I have concerns that abuse may be occurring
- b) I have received an allegation of abuse by another
- c) A child has told me that they are being abused
- d) I was involved in an incident with a child
- e) I was witness to an incident with a child

2. Important information

Your name:

Your contact details:

Name and gender of the child concerned:

Capacity in which the child is known to you:

Any other useful information regarding the child (e.g. date of birth, address, description if name is unknown):

Is the child aware of this referral? Yes / No (if no, please give details):

Are the child's parents or guardians aware of this referral? Yes / No (if no, please give details):



អង្គការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តកសាងកម្ពុជា

VOLUNTEER BUILDING CAMBODIA

Was the abuse observed, suspected or alleged by a child or third person (and if so, who)?

Date(s) and time(s) of the alleged incident:

Location of the alleged incident:

Name and or description of the alleged perpetrator:

Details of the allegation (please include all relevant information such as physical signs and symptoms, behavioural indicators, etc. Please distinguish between observed and opinion or hearsay. Use extra paper if necessary):

Please add any other information you believe is important or has not been covered:

Incident with a child: (please indicate which)

- I accidentally hurt a child
- A child misinterpreted or misunderstood something I have done
- I had to use reasonable physical restraint
- I was witness to one of the above

Please provide all necessary information concerning the above incident, including names, actions and reasons taken to rectify the situation so far:



អង្គការស្ម័គ្រចិត្តកសាងកម្ពុជា

VOLUNTEER BUILDING CAMBODIA

Reporter

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

VBC Representative

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

3. VBC Representative:

Please report your response to above incident and the action taken. Attach copies of identification and visa of every person involved.

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____