

Imagine Worldwide Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Purpose

Imagine Worldwide (Imagine) believes that everyone, especially children and vulnerable adults, has the right to be protected and to live free from all forms of harm including emotional and physical abuse, neglect, maltreatment, and sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment. This policy outlines how we will protect children and vulnerable adults from harm or risk of harm due to misconduct by Imagine staff or associated persons. In this, we give equal priority to keeping all children and vulnerable adults safe, regardless of any personal characteristic including age, sex, gender identity, ability, race, ethnicity, religious belief, or other aspects of their culture.

Imagine has zero tolerance for harm or abuse in any form to children or vulnerable adults by its staff, partners, or associated persons. This means that we will take seriously any concern raised and address it promptly and appropriately. It means we hold our representatives accountable for the highest standards of conduct, regardless of their position within the organization.

This policy should be read alongside Imagine's Protection from [Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment \(PSEAH\) Policy](#).

Scope

This policy applies to all Imagine employees, trustees, advisors, and visitors ("Imagine personnel") as well as Imagine grantees, contractors, sub-grantees, and sub-contractors ("contractual partners"). It applies during and outside working hours, every day of the year.

Key Definitions¹

Child/Minor: Anyone under 18 years of age.

Child maltreatment: the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Child protection: the prevention of, and response to, exploitation, abuse, neglect, harmful practices and violence against children

Safeguarding: action taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from physical and emotional abuse, maltreatment, neglect, and sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.

¹ WHO Fact Sheet on Child Maltreatment (September, 2022)

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment> ; United Nations Glossary on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (Second Edition), July 2017.; UNICEF Child Protection Strategy, 2021

<https://www.unicef.org/media/104416/file/Child-Protection-Strategy-2021.pdf> ;

Sexual abuse: actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. All sexual activity with a child is considered as sexual abuse

Sexual exploitation: actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, sexually, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Vulnerable adult: a person, 18 years or older, who by reason of disability, age, gender, social and economic status, illness, or the context they are in, may be unable to take care of or to protect him or herself against abuse, harm or exploitation.

Safeguarding Principles

Safeguarding is a requirement for all Imagine personnel and contractual partners and is applicable to all pilots, programs, research, implementations, and other activities undertaken or funded by Imagine (see Annex A Checklist). Imagine personnel and contractual partners will adhere to the following guiding principles:

Prevention - Awareness and training: promote awareness of the potential risks of harm or abuse to children and vulnerable adults and ensure all Imagine personnel and contractual partners receive training and support to prevent, report and respond to safeguarding concerns.

Prevention - Mitigation: through awareness raising, implementation of procedures and good practice, personnel and contractual partners will demonstrate an understanding of the risks to children and vulnerable adults within and across programs and operations, and engage effective strategies to mitigate harm, abuse, and exploitation.

Reporting: require that any breach of Safeguarding Policy or suspicion of a child or vulnerable adult being harmed or at risk of harm be reported promptly to a manager or to Imagine's Compliance Officer. Imagine will ensure that all staff and those who work with Imagine are clear on the steps to take where suspicions or concerns arise regarding allegations of abuse in places where it works.

Responding: respond to any reports in a timely, appropriate, and effective manner to ensure the safety and protection of the child or vulnerable adult. Imagine will not retaliate against any personnel or contractual partners who in good faith report violations or suspected violations of this safeguarding policy in its operations or activities.

Safeguarding Code of Conduct

We are committed to the highest standards of conduct at every level and depend on the personal and professional integrity of all personnel and contractual partners to uphold these standards. We expect all personnel and contractual partners to behave in ways that uphold our organizational values:

Children come first: we are child-centered, putting children's well-being above all else.

Integrity: we respect the communities in which we work and hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards.

Collaboration: we work together with our partners, governments, and communities to bring the best learning solutions to children.

Accountability: we hold ourselves accountable—individually and collectively—to deliver evidence-based and sustainable programs at scale.

Continuous improvement: we are flexible and innovative, incorporating lessons learned from our research and implementations to continuously improve the impact of our work.

The following behaviors related to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults are strictly prohibited:

1. Sexual or physical harassment, exploitation, assault, or abuse of a child or vulnerable adult.
2. Engaging in any sexual activity with a child regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally.
3. Engaging in any maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity
4. Emotionally abusing a child or vulnerable adult, including engaging in behavior intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade.
5. Condoning or participating in behavior that is harmful, exploitative, abusive, or unsafe.
6. Developing, encouraging, or failing to take action on relationships with children or vulnerable adults that could in any way be deemed sexual, exploitative, or abusive.
7. Acting in ways that may be violent, inappropriate, or sexually provocative.

Roles and Responsibilities

Imagine's Board of Directors is responsible for

1. Ensuring that safeguarding policies, procedures and approaches are in place and being implemented.
2. Designating a member of the Board to work with the CEOs and Compliance Officer to handle serious incidents. The designated board member will also communicate to the Board of Directors on the investigation and resolution of safeguarding compliance issues.

Imagine's Senior Leadership is responsible for

1. Taking responsibility to meet our obligations regarding our duty of care towards children and vulnerable adults as described in this Safeguarding Policy.
2. Ensuring that safeguarding is part of onboarding of new staff and that all Imagine Personnel read, understand, and sign this Safeguarding Policy.
3. Carrying out periodic refresher activities for Imagine personnel on safeguarding policies and procedures.
4. Ensuring that all contracts with partners/suppliers/contractors include clauses on PSEAH, that capacity building for partners includes capacity to implement PSEAH measures, and that partner monitoring includes PSEAH measures and SEAH reports.
5. Respecting confidentiality and protecting sensitive personal data.

6. Treat any breach of this Safeguarding Policy as a disciplinary matter, which may result in immediate termination of employment or contract, as well as reporting to the police or relevant authority.
7. Developing specific procedures for implementing the Safeguarding Principles above as part of Imagine pilots, programs, research, and implementation activities.
8. Carrying out regular reviews of this Safeguarding Policy and related procedures and, where applicable, revise based on lessons learned.
9. Ensuring regular reporting to the Board of Directors on implementation of this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
10. Carry out an annual review of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and related procedures and, where applicable, revise based on lessons learned

Imagine personnel and contractual partners are responsible for

1. Reading, understanding, and committing to adhere to Imagine's procedures for implementing the Safeguarding Principles as part of a specific pilot, program, research, or implementation activity.
2. Placing the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults above all other considerations.
3. Making all efforts to minimize risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults involved in Imagine's pilots, programs, research, implementations, and other activities.
4. Immediately reporting any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child or vulnerable person.
5. Immediately reporting any concerns they may have about the behavior of an Imagine Personnel or contractual partner in relation to safeguarding.

Reporting and Response

Internal Staff Reporting

- Imagine staff members are required to report any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the Compliance Officer by sending an email to compliance@imagineworldwide.org.
- Confidentiality of the reporter(s) will be maintained throughout the reporting and response process.
- Staff members should provide detailed information about the concern, including relevant dates, individuals involved, and any supporting documentation they may have.

External Parties Reporting

- External parties may report compliance issues related to safeguarding or child protection using a survey available on our external website or by sending an email to compliance@imagineworldwide.org.

- The survey and the email are designed to ensure the confidentiality of the external party while gathering comprehensive information about the reported issue, including relevant dates, individuals involved, and any supporting documentation.
- The collected information will be sent to the Compliance Officer for further investigation.
- The Compliance Officer will review the complaint promptly and ensure that it contains sufficient information for investigation. If additional details are required, the Compliance Officer may reach out to the reporter in strict confidentiality for clarification.

Communication to the Designated Board Member

- All complaints, whether from Imagine staff or external parties will be received only by the Compliance Officer.
- Upon receipt of a safeguarding or child protection complaint, the Compliance Officer is required to inform the designated board member within 48 hours. This notification will include a summary of the complaint, the date and time of receipt, and any initial actions taken by the Compliance Officer.

Investigation and Resolution

- The Compliance Officer, in collaboration with the designated board member and any other relevant stakeholders, will conduct a thorough and impartial investigation of the incident.
- During the investigation process, the identity of the reporter, whether internal staff or external party, will be kept strictly confidential.
- The Compliance Officer will take appropriate measures to protect the reporter from any form of retaliation and ensure their safety.
- The findings and recommendations will be documented and communicated to the designated board member, who will oversee the implementation of corrective actions and ensure the safety and well-being of all involved parties.

Regular Reporting to the Board

- The designated board member will provide periodic updates to the board on safeguarding and child protection matters without disclosing specific details that could compromise confidentiality.

Signature

As the undersigned, I have read and understood, and commit to adhere to Imagine's Safeguarding Policy. I understand that any breach of this Safeguarding Policy may result in immediate termination of employment or contract, as well as reporting to the police or relevant authority.

Organization: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Annex A: Checklist for Imagine Worldwide Safeguarding Policy Issues

Actions	Yes/No
Partners	
Have partners/suppliers/contracts been vetted for their contact with children, vulnerable adults and affected populations and their capacity to implement safeguarding measures?	
Are safeguarding clauses included in all contract agreements?	
Is there a mechanism for delivering safeguarding training to partners/suppliers/contractors who will have contact with program beneficiaries?	
Programs	
Do Imagine programs identify and address potential risks of SEAH?	
Does program design include SEAH risk mitigation?	
Do program/project plans include activities on safeguarding awareness raising?	
Do program budgets include funding for capacity building and communications on safeguarding?	