

IASIS Child Protection Policy (1)







IASIS Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding the Rights and
Well-being of Every Child

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Message from the CEO



Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Friends,

I am honored to share with you the updated Child Protection Policy of IASIS. This policy reflects our deep commitment to the safety, dignity, and well-being of every child we have the privilege to work with. As an organization dedicated to helping vulnerable communities, we know that protecting children is not just a duty but a core value that guides all our actions.

Our updated policy is designed with children at the heart of everything we do. It aligns with the highest international standards, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), to ensure that every child in our care is not only safe from harm but also able to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential. The policy outlines clear steps for identifying and reporting abuse, provides essential training for our team, and emphasizes our ongoing commitment to improving our practices and meeting legal standards.

At IASIS, we believe that every child deserves to be treated with respect and fairness, no matter their background. We've made sure our policy reflects this, focusing on a child-centered approach that recognizes and honors each child's unique needs and rights.

We're also dedicated to creating an environment that is inclusive and supportive, particularly for children with disabilities and those facing mental health challenges.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all our staff, volunteers, and partners for your dedication to these principles. Protecting children is something we all share responsibility for, and it is through our collective efforts that we can ensure every child feels safe and supported.

As we continue this important work, I encourage each of you to take the time to fully understand this policy, engage in our training, and always be mindful of the standards we've set. Together, we can make a real, lasting difference in the lives of the children and young people we serve.

Thank you for your commitment to this vital cause.

Warm regards,

Nikos Baltas

General Director

Background: A Commitment to the Welfare of Children and Young People

IASIS recognizes the profound responsibility and privilege of working with children and young people and considers them to be essential members of our community. Founded on the principles of care, respect and empowerment, our organization is committed to creating an environment where every child and young person can thrive, learn and develop in safety and security. This Child Protection Policy serves as a comprehensive framework that outlines our unwavering commitment to protecting children and young people from all forms of harm and exploitation. In line with international standards and guided by ethical principles, we aim to create an atmosphere that not only respects the rights and dignity of each individual, but actively promotes their holistic well-being. Through collaboration, education and continuous improvement, IASIS strives to uphold the highest standards of child protection and ensure a future where every child and young person can realize their full potential.

Introduction

IASIS, as an organization offering services (among others) to children and adolescents, values young people and children as being a vital part of the organization and desires to see them grow, mature, and be challenged in a healthy and safe environment.

IASIS is committed to upholding the principles outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and in accordance with Greek national legislation. Our commitment to child protection extends beyond childhood, recognizing that individuals up to the age of 35 also require protection in the ongoing transactional stages and the specific needs of children and young people with disabilities. We firmly believe

that ensuring the protection of rights, access to information and the provision of platforms for expression are critical to the development and well-being of young people. As part of our mission, we understand that individuals can only become empowered contributors to positive social change if they are protected from various forms of harm. Whether physical, sexual, emotional, or neglectful, safeguarding is paramount to fostering an environment where young people can actively engage, communicate effectively and shape their own lives. This protective framework enables them not only to overcome challenges, but also to contribute meaningfully to their families and communities.

At IASIS, our commitment goes beyond age categories. We recognize the unique challenges faced by young people up to the age of 35 and strive to create a safe space free from abuse and discrimination. By fostering an inclusive and protective environment, we aim to empower young people as agents of positive change, facilitating their holistic development and contribution to society.

The designated Child Protection Officer for IASIS is the Quality Manager, and a copy of this child protection policy will be kept with the Minutes of the Board.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the IASIS Children and Young People's Program is to offer a safe and welcoming environment with various services where children and adolescents can grow and learn.

2. Aims

- ⇒ **To Foster Holistic Development:** Provide a range of services that support the growth and development of children and young people, guiding them as they transition from childhood to adulthood, with particular attention to those from socially vulnerable groups.
- ⇒ **To Empower Self-Expression:** Create a safe and nurturing environment where children can freely express themselves, their thoughts, and their emotions.
- ⇒ **To Facilitate Community Integration:** Support children in becoming active and integrated members of their communities, helping them build social connections and a sense of belonging.
- ⇒ **To Cultivate Cultural Appreciation:** Encourage children and young people to recognize, respect, and celebrate the diversity of their own and others' cultures, fostering an inclusive and culturally aware mindset.

3. Core Values

At the heart of the IASIS Children and Young People's Program are our core values, which guide every aspect of our work. These values reflect our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where every child and young person can thrive. We believe in upholding the dignity, rights, and well-being of all individuals, ensuring that our approach is child-centered, respectful of diversity, and rooted in principles of integrity, safety, and social justice. These values form the foundation of our efforts to protect and empower the children and young people we serve.

3.1. Child-Centered Approach

IASIS is dedicated to a child-centered approach that prioritizes the best interests of the child in every decision-making process. We are committed to respecting each child's rights, dignity, and unique needs. Understanding the critical role of mental health, IASIS emphasizes the importance of nurturing emotional resilience and providing the necessary support for the psychological well-being and development of every child.

3.2. Respect

IASIS places great importance on respect as a core value. We are dedicated to creating a culture of mutual respect among our members, volunteers, and the broader community. We believe that treating everyone with dignity and consideration is crucial to the well-being of children. Our commitment includes teaching the value of respecting different perspectives and opinions. By promoting respect, we aim to create an environment where young people can appreciate differences, engage in positive dialogue, and contribute to a more understanding and inclusive society. Through these efforts, IASIS strives to provide a safe and nurturing space where children can thrive while embracing the diversity within our community.

3.3. Respect for Diversity

IASIS values and embraces the diversity of all children and young people, recognizing differences in culture, ethnicity, religion, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and background. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. We especially value neurodiversity, ensuring that children with different mental abilities are treated with equal respect and provided with the same opportunities for growth and development. IASIS will tailor its child protection practices to respect the cultural backgrounds of the children in its care. This includes understanding and integrating cultural norms, languages, and traditions into our programs and ensuring that staff are trained in cultural sensitivity. By recognizing and valuing the diverse cultural identities of children, IASIS promotes a more inclusive and supportive environment.

3.4. Integrity

At IASIS, integrity is a core value in our approach to child protection. We are committed to upholding the highest ethical standards and believe that honesty is essential in safeguarding children's welfare. Integrity is the foundation of our organization, and we emphasize the importance of accountability and responsibility in everything we do. By promoting these values, we aim to build trust among our members, volunteers, and the broader community. We recognize that integrity is crucial for effectively implementing our child protection policies, ensuring that every action is guided by strong ethical principles. Through this commitment, we create a safe and transparent environment where children can grow and thrive.

3.5. Safety and Protection

The safety and protection of children and young people is our top priority. IASIS is dedicated to creating a safe environment where children are free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and any form of harm. We also place special emphasis on protecting the mental health of children, ensuring that our practices support their emotional safety and well-being.

3.6. Privacy and Confidentiality

IASIS understands the importance of respecting the privacy and confidentiality of children and young people. We will only share information about them when it is necessary and with the proper consent, following legal and ethical guidelines. This includes keeping mental health information private, following strict privacy laws and ethical standards to protect sensitive data. Any concerns about child protection will be handled carefully to ensure the highest level of confidentiality and respect for the child's privacy.

3.7. Social Justice

IASIS is committed to social justice as a key part of our child protection policy. We work to ensure fairness and equality in all areas, understanding that a child's well-being is closely connected to creating a just and inclusive society. Our efforts go beyond protecting individual children; we strive to address the root causes of inequality. We encourage young people to become active citizens, empowering them to speak up about the issues that matter to them. By promoting social responsibility, IASIS aims to give the younger generation the tools and knowledge to build a more just and equal society. Our goal is to help create a world where every child, no matter their background, has the rights and opportunities they deserve, fostering a future of compassion and equality.

3.8. Mental Health Inclusion

IASIS is dedicated to creating an inclusive environment that values mental health. We work to raise awareness, reduce the stigma around mental health issues, and ensure that mental health is considered in all our policies, programs, and activities.

3.9. Accessibility for Children with Disabilities

IASIS believes that children and young people with disabilities, including those with mental health challenges, have the right to fully participate in all our programs and activities. We are committed to providing the necessary support and accommodations to ensure they can take part equally with their peers.

4. Rationale for Implementing a Child Protection Policy

IASIS is committed to the safety and well-being of children and young people, recognizing the importance of having a strong child protection policy. Here's why we believe it's crucial:

- ⇒ **Child Protection:** Some children are especially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and mistreatment by caregivers, staff, or anyone with access to their personal information. Many have already faced trust violations or abuse, including physical, emotional, or sexual harm. IASIS is dedicated to creating an environment that protects children from such dangers.
- ⇒ **Youth Protection:** We recognize that young people, especially those in difficult situations, are also at risk of abuse and exploitation by those in authority or peers. Our policy aims to address the unique challenges young people face, providing support to ensure their safety and well-being. We focus on empowering young people, building resilience, and preventing any form of abuse that could hinder their development.
- ⇒ **Staff Protection:** IASIS is committed to upholding every child's right to be free from violence, abuse, and exploitation, as outlined in the UNCRC. We ensure that all our activities, policies, and programs are designed to be child-safe, minimizing risks posed by staff and promoting practices that protect children.
- ⇒ **Legal Compliance and Ethical Responsibility:** The IASIS Child Protection Policy is fully aligned with Greek national laws to ensure that our practices are both ethical and legally compliant. These laws include specific provisions addressing child abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, and the protection of children's rights (**Law 3500/2006, Law 3727/2008, Law 4531/2018, Law 2101/1992, Law 4800/2021**). Staff and volunteers at IASIS will receive training on these legal requirements, and our policy will be regularly updated to reflect any changes in the law.

- ⇒ **Empowering Youth Advocacy:** We believe in the power of young people to advocate for their protection. Our policy is designed to empower them by creating an environment where they can actively participate in shaping policies, share their concerns, and contribute to our commitment to their safety.
- ⇒ **Victim-Centered Approach:** IASIS is committed to focusing on the needs of victims. In cases of child abuse, our response prioritizes the victim's well-being and ensures they receive the necessary support and interventions.
- ⇒ **Tailored Youth-Centered Approaches:** We understand that adolescents face different challenges than younger children. Our policy is developed with age-specific needs in mind, ensuring that our safeguarding measures address the unique vulnerabilities of adolescents and young adults.
- ⇒ **Youth Participation in Policy Development:** IASIS values inclusivity and actively involves young people in developing our policies. We seek input from young beneficiaries, volunteers, and representatives to ensure their perspectives shape our protection measures.
- ⇒ **Life Skills and Resilience Building:** Our policy promotes the development of life skills and resilience among young people. We include programs and initiatives that equip them with the knowledge and skills to cope with risks and challenges in life.
- ⇒ **Continuous Improvement:** Implementing our child protection policy is an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. We regularly review and update the policy to adapt to best practices, legal requirements, and new challenges in child protection.
- ⇒ **Promoting Trust and Accountability:** A strong child protection policy builds trust among stakeholders. It shows our commitment to accountability, transparency, and ethical conduct, which are crucial for maintaining trust with beneficiaries, donors, and the wider community.
- ⇒ **Organizational and Reputational Protection:** IASIS emphasizes the importance of having robust child protection policies to protect the organization from false or malicious allegations of abuse. Without these safeguards, allegations can seriously damage our reputation and impact fundraising efforts, as well as the broader reputation of the child rights NGO sector.

4.1. Scope of the Child Protection Policy

The IASIS Child Protection Policy applies to:

- î All staff, board members, interns, and volunteers.

- î Anyone representing IASIS, such as members, consultants, or trainers.
- î All adults who accompany children to IASIS-organized events and activities.
- î All participants in IASIS events and meetings involving children, including journalists, sponsors, donors, and policymakers.

IASIS ensures that this policy covers all aspects of its operations, highlighting a shared responsibility to create a safe environment for children. This policy applies to everyone connected to IASIS NGO, including contractors, visitors, and partners who interact with children.

4.2. Distribution of the Child Protection Policy

Upon joining IASIS, each responsible adult will receive a comprehensive copy of the Child Protection Policy. This distribution process is essential to promote a shared understanding and commitment to uphold the principles of the policy.

4.3. Training

Training is a crucial component of the IASIS Child Protection Policy, ensuring that all individuals involved with the organization are well-equipped to uphold the highest standards of child safety. We are committed to providing comprehensive training for all staff, volunteers, board members, and anyone acting on behalf of IASIS.

This training includes understanding the core principles of child protection, recognizing signs of abuse, and learning the appropriate procedures for reporting concerns. Regular refresher courses will be offered to keep everyone informed of any updates in policies, best practices, or legal requirements.

Through this training, we aim to create a knowledgeable and vigilant community within IASIS, where every person understands their role in safeguarding the well-being of children and young people.

4.3.1. Purpose

Training is essential for making our child protection efforts strong and effective at IASIS. This section stresses the importance of regular training for all staff working with children and highlights the key role everyone plays in staying up-to-date with important courses.

4.3.2. Importance of Training

Regular training is crucial for improving the skills of child protection workers. It gives them the knowledge and tools they need to handle new challenges and helps ensure that their practices keep getting better.

4.3.3. Acknowledgment and Training Documentation

To make sure all workers and volunteers understand and follow this Child Protection Policy, we will set up a system for them to confirm they have read and agree to the policy. We will keep records of the training sessions that everyone attends. Training for all staff, volunteers, and partners will include required sessions. Attendance and completion of these sessions will be tracked and reviewed each year.

4.4. New Workers

Workers and volunteers are the most valuable asset in our work with young people. To ensure we select the right people, we will follow these steps:

- **Application:** Candidates must complete an application form.
- **Interview:** A panel of three members from the Management Team will conduct an interview and make the final decision.
- **Employment Gaps:** We will investigate any gaps or inconsistencies in the applicant's employment history.
- **Identity Verification:** We will check the applicant's identity using documents like a passport or driving license.
- **References:** References will be obtained before the candidate starts working.
- **Background Checks:** Criminal record checks will be carried out through approved local agencies.
 - **Criminal Records:** If a candidate has a criminal record, we will seek appropriate advice before making a decision.
 - **Supervision:** No one will have unaccompanied access to children until all these checks are complete.
 - **Probation:** New workers and volunteers will have a 3-month probationary period.
 - **Ongoing Supervision:** Regular supervision will be provided for all workers and volunteers.
 - **Training:** We will ensure that all staff follow good practices by providing proper training and guidance.

4.5. Accessibility and Distribution

This Child Protection Policy will be easily accessible to all stakeholders, including parents, guardians, workers, and volunteers. Summarized versions will be distributed for quick reference, and the full policy can be obtained upon request.

5. Understanding and Identifying Abuse

This section covers the key concepts of child protection, explaining the terms related to abuse, the different types of abuse, and the signs that might suggest abuse is happening. It aims to give the reader a strong understanding of how to recognize and understand various forms of abuse within the framework of the IASIS Child Protection Policy.

5.1. Incorporate Child Rights Definitions

IASIS strongly supports the international definitions of child rights as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These rights include protection from abuse, access to education, and the right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives.

5.2. Definitions

- **Child:** In accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), a child is characterized as an individual below the age of 18.
- **Child Protection System:** The definition of a child protection system, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), is as follows: “the set of laws, policies, regulations and services needed across all social sectors – especially social welfare, education, health, security and justice – to support prevention and response to protection-related risks. These systems are part of social protection, and extend beyond it [...]. Responsibilities are often spread across government agencies, with services delivered by local authorities, non-State providers, and community groups, making coordination between sectors and levels, including routine referral systems, a necessary component of effective child protection systems.” (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, n.d.)
- **Youth:** The IASIS NGO is a people-centered organization actively engaged with the group commonly referred to as "youth". This term encompasses a diverse range of individuals who share a stage of life characterized by transitions, development and unique challenges. The Convention on the Rights of the Child explicitly defines a child as every human being below the age of eighteen (CRC, §1). However, there is no equivalent convention for young people and no universally accepted definition of youth.

The United Nations defines youth as "...a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to the independence of adulthood. As a category, therefore, youth is more fluid and age-specific than other, more fixed age groups" (United Nations, n.d.). For statistical purposes, various resolutions define 'youth' as the age group

between 15 and 24 years (United Nations Development Programme, 2006). Similarly, the World Bank follows the same age group to define youth (Youthpolicy.org, n.d.), while the World Health Organization designates young women between 15 and 24 years (Greijer & Doek, 2016). The UN classification was established during the preparation of the International Year of Youth (1985) and later adopted by the General Assembly. However, in other documents and pronouncements, the UN specifies young people as those aged 13 and above (United Nations, n.d.). Within the youth category, it is essential to distinguish between adolescents (13-19 years) and young adults (20-24 years) due to the different sociological, psychological and health challenges they face. In addition, the American Psychological Association defines the onset of adolescence as the age of 10 (American Psychological Association, 2002).

A careful examination of these definitions reveals that while youth share a common age, the social, economic and cultural impacts they experience vary considerably. The age of maturity - and the process of entering maturity - which is a key element in defining youth, is thus called into question. The central focus of IASIS is to question the assumed and often overlooked concept of maturity, which tends to be taken for granted in discussions of youth transitions and development.

IASIS recognizes that the most common denominator for young men and women is their age. However, as noted above, the age characterization of the youth group varies and is not stable. IASIS recognizes that age alone is not sufficient to capture the diversity within the demographic population of young people and believes that additional factors such as gender, place of birth (whether abroad or within the country), disability and rural or urban residence can differentiate young people.

The primary focus of the IASIS policy is the 12-35 age group, in line with the Swedish government's categorization (The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs and the Department of Youth Services, 2010). This age range is chosen to cover critical developmental stages from early adolescence to the threshold of adulthood. However, IASIS recognizes that youth policies may extend beyond this primary age group and affect individuals in other age groups.

According to the latest available statistics from Greece, people aged between 10 and 19 represent 9.92% of the total population, those aged between 20 and 29 represent 12.49% and those aged between 30 and 39 represent 15.12%.

Essentially, people in this age group represent 37.53% of the country's total population, meaning that one in three people in Greece falls into this demographic group. These demographic patterns underline the need to include the concerns and issues of young people in the design of IASIS activities. Specifically, the IASIS

focus on youth-related issues includes priorities such as education, mental health, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, girls and young women, as well as the full and effective participation of youth in society and decision-making, in line with the UN Goals for Youth and Sustainable Development.

Important Note: When addressing issues related to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, it is imperative to provide clear definitions and explicitly state whether these terms include individuals up to the age of 18. This distinction is essential to ensure clarity when discussing such sensitive issues. Regardless of the terminology used, the legal framework and the term "child" remain in place to provide a protective shield for those under the age of 18.

5.3. Forms of Violence

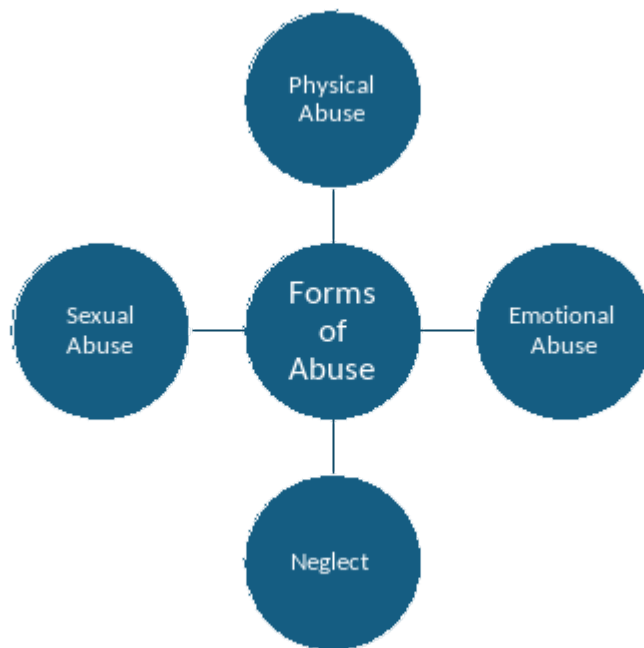
- **Bullying** (UNICEF, 2007): ..."repeated intentional and aggressive actions directed at a victim, characterized by an existing or perceived power imbalance, causing the victim to feel vulnerable and powerless to resist. The harmful behavior may manifest physically, involving actions like hitting, kicking, or property damage; verbally, through teasing, insults, and threats; or relationally, encompassing activities like spreading rumors and excluding the individual from a social group."
- **Child Maltreatment** (World Health Organization, n.d.) refers to the maltreatment and neglect of people under the age of 18. It includes various forms of physical and/or emotional harm, sexual abuse, neglect, abandonment and commercial or other forms of exploitation. These acts may result in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity within a relationship characterized by responsibility, trust or power.
- **Child Pornography**^[1] is any depiction, in any medium, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activity or any depiction of the sexual organs of a child primarily for sexual purposes. This includes various forms such as photographs, negatives, slides, magazines, books, drawings, films, videotapes, computer discs or files.
- **Child Sexual Abuse** (UNICEF, 2007): Engaging in sexual activities with a minor who has not reached the legal age for such activities under the relevant provisions of national law (excluding consensual intercourse between minors). It also includes engaging in sexual activities with a child where coercion, force or threats are used, where a recognized position of trust, authority or influence over the child, including within the family, is exploited, or where a particularly vulnerable position of the child, such as a mental or physical disability or a state of dependence, is exploited.

- **Child Sexual Exploitation** (UNICEF, 2007): Child sexual abuse transforms into sexual exploitation when a third party gains an advantage from sexual activities involving a child. This encompasses actions such as exploiting a child or adolescent in prostitution and/or the creation of material related to child sexual abuse. According to the Council of Europe Convention, it also extends to situations in which a child or another individual is provided or assured money or any other form of compensation, payment, or consideration in exchange for the child's involvement in sexual activity, even if the payment or remuneration is not fulfilled. Additionally, it includes the deliberate act, for sexual purposes, of causing a child who has not reached the age of sexual consent to witness sexual abuse or sexual activities, even without active participation.
- **Corporal Punishment** (UNICEF, 2007): Any form of punishment involving the use of physical force with the intention of causing some level of pain or discomfort, regardless of its mildness.
- **Emotional Abuse** (NSPCC, 2020) is characterized by ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child that has a significant and lasting impact on the child's emotional development. This form of abuse may include communicating to children that they are without value, unloved, inadequate, or valued only in terms of meeting the needs of another person. It may involve placing expectations on children that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. Emotional abuse could also involve consistently causing fear or a sense of danger in children or engaging in exploitation or corruption of children. Although it may occur independently, some degree of emotional abuse is present in all forms of child maltreatment.
- **Intimate Partner Violence** (UNICEF, 2007): Any behavior within a close relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to the individuals involved. Examples include physical violence, sexual violence, emotional (psychological) abuse and controlling behavior. The characterization of an intimate partner can vary across contexts and includes both formal relationships, such as marriage, and informal relationships, such as dating and unmarried sexual relationships. In some contexts, the composition of intimate partners may include married couples, whereas in others, more informal partnerships may predominate".
- **Neglect** (NSPCC, 2020) is characterized as the continuous inability to fulfill the fundamental physical and/or psychological requirements of a child, with the potential to cause significant harm to the child's physical or cognitive advancement.
- **Physical Abuse** (NSPCC, 2020) may encompass actions like striking, shaking, tossing, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or any other means of inflicting physical injury upon a child. Additionally, physical harm can result when a guardian or caregiver fabricates symptoms of illness or intentionally induces ill health in a child under their

care. This is often denoted by phrases such as 'fictitious illness by proxy' or 'Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.'

- **Sexual Violence** (UNICEF, 2007) : Any act of a sexual nature, solicitation of a sexual act, unwelcome sexual remarks or advances, or coercive conduct aimed at exploiting a person's sexuality, perpetrated by any person, regardless of their relationship to that person, in any environment, including but not limited to the home and workplace.
- **Violence**^[2], as per the definition outlined in the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence, encompasses physical, psychological (psychosocial), and sexual harm inflicted upon children. This harm may result from abuse, neglect, or exploitation, either through intentional actions or neglectful oversights, taking direct or indirect forms. Such acts pose a threat or cause harm to the child's dignity, physical well-being, psychological state, social standing, or overall development.
- **Violence Against Children** (UNICEF, 2007): "All forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse".
- **Violent Discipline** (UNICEF, 2007): A method of disciplining children involving physical (corporal) punishment and/or psychological aggression. "Psychological aggression entails actions such as shouting, yelling, or screaming at a child, as well as using offensive names like 'dumb' or 'lazy.' Physical punishment is defined as shaking the child, hitting or slapping them on the hand/arm/leg, striking them on the bottom or elsewhere on the body with a hard object, spanking or hitting them on the bottom with a bare hand, hitting or slapping them on the face, head, or ears, and repeatedly beating them as intensely as possible."

Infographic: Forms Of Child Abuse



5.4. Indicators of Abuse

Recognizing indicators of abuse is essential for early intervention and protection of children in our care. Although not exhaustive, the following list provides detailed indicators that may indicate potential abuse:

5.4.1. Physical Abuse

- Unexplained or frequent injuries: Repeated or unexplained bruises, fractures, burns or injuries inconsistent with the explanation given.
- Visible signs of force: Handprints, belt marks or other signs of physical restraint.
- Avoidance of physical contact: A child may flinch, shy away or show fear of physical contact.

5.4.2. Emotional Abuse

- Changes in behavior, mood or school performance: Sudden and noticeable changes in a child's behavior, mood swings, withdrawal or decline in school performance.
- Excessive fear or anxiety: Constant worry, fear or increased anxiety for no apparent reason.
- Verbal aggression: Frequent shouting, belittling or using derogatory language towards the

child.

- Sleep disturbance or nightmares: Frequent sleep disturbances, including nightmares or night terrors.
- Low self-esteem: A sudden decline in self-worth, self-confidence or persistent negative self-perception.
- Social withdrawal: Avoidance of social interactions, isolation or reluctance to engage with peers.
- Running away from home: A child who repeatedly attempts to leave the home environment, possibly seeking refuge elsewhere.
- Tendency to self-harm: Intentional self-harm, such as cutting or burning.
- Expressions of hopelessness: Frequent verbalisation of feelings of hopelessness or despair.
- Repeated health complaints without apparent medical cause: Frequent verbalization of physical complaints without apparent medical cause.
- Regression in developmental milestones: Reversal of achieved developmental milestones, such as loss of speech or toilet training.

5.4.3. Sexual Abuse

- Inappropriate sexual behavior: Engaging in age-inappropriate sexual activity, knowledge or explicit language beyond what is expected for their age.
- Sexualized play: Engaging in explicit or age-inappropriate sexual behavior during play.
- Regression to younger behaviors: Reverting to behaviors typical of a younger age.

5.4.4. Neglect

- Changes in eating habits: Significant weight loss or gain, frequent hunger or signs of malnutrition.
- Lack of supervision: Leaving a child unattended in an unsafe environment.
- Inadequate clothing for weather conditions: Failure to provide appropriate clothing for the climate.

5.4.6. Different Forms of Abuse

It's important to note that these indicators may not represent only one form of maltreatment but may overlap several categories. In addition, not all indicators may be

present, and their meaning may vary depending on the age, cultural context and individual circumstances of the child.

5.5. Digital Safety

In our digital world, it's very important to keep children safe when they are online. IASIS is dedicated to making sure that children and young people are protected in digital spaces. This includes the following:

- **Teaching Children About Online Safety:** We educate children on how to behave safely online. This means helping them understand why they should not share personal information and how to recognize dangers on the internet.
- **Setting Rules for Online Interactions:** We create clear guidelines for how staff and children should interact online to make sure that all communication is appropriate and safe.
- **Monitoring Digital Device Use:** During IASIS activities, we keep an eye on how digital devices are used to prevent things like cyberbullying, online exploitation, and access to inappropriate content.
- **Training Staff and Volunteers:** We make sure that all staff and volunteers are trained in digital safety. They learn the rules and know how to report any online incidents that might involve children.

6. IASIS Child Protection Policy Procedures

The IASIS Child Protection Policy Procedures outline the steps we take to ensure the safety and well-being of all children involved with our organization. These procedures are designed to protect children from harm and to respond quickly and effectively if any concerns arise.

6.1. Staff Guidelines and Responsibilities

This chapter outlines the overarching policies and responsibilities that apply to all IASIS staff. It includes the core principles, expectations and procedures relevant to child protection across all organisational functions.

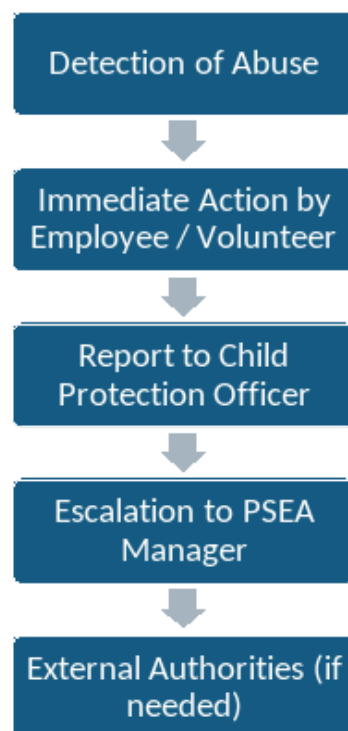
6.1.1. Reporting Procedures

- **Immediate action:** If an employee or volunteer suspects that a child is being abused, they have a duty to take immediate action. In particular, they should immediately report their

concerns to the designated child protection officer.

- Confidentiality and sensitivity: Reports of suspected abuse must be treated with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity. The identity of the reporter and the child involved should be protected and information shared only with those directly involved in the investigation and support process.
- Reporting to the PSEA Manager: Any suspicions or observations of child abuse should be reported to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Manager. This person is the designated point of contact for all child protection concerns within the organization.
- Reporting outside the organization: In cases where the PSEA Manager is involved or unavailable, individuals are encouraged to report concerns directly to appropriate external authorities in accordance with legal obligations and local regulations.

Flowchart for Reporting Procedures



6.1.2. External Communication Protocol

IASIS recognizes the importance of effective communication with external authorities in cases of suspected child maltreatment. The organization will cooperate fully with local

child protective services, law enforcement, and other relevant agencies during investigations.

6.1.3. Conflict of Interest

IASIS is committed to ensuring that individuals involved in child protection matters do not have personal or professional conflicts of interest that could compromise the investigation or resolution process.

6.1.4. Child-Friendly Language

IASIS acknowledges the importance of using child-friendly language when discussing child protection matters. Communication should be clear, age-appropriate, and sensitive to the understanding of the children and young people involved. All communications with children will be conducted in a manner that is age-appropriate and understandable. Materials and sessions will be designed to engage children actively in understanding their rights and the protection measures in place.

6.1.5. Confidentiality

All workers and volunteers must respect the confidentiality of information regarding suspected or actual child abuse. Information should only be shared with those directly involved in the reporting and investigative process. Failure to maintain confidentiality may jeopardize the safety and well-being of the child involved.

6.1.6. Roles and Responsibilities

Each person involved in IASIS has specific tasks to make sure that children are protected and that everyone knows who is responsible for what:

- **Child Protection Officer:** This person makes sure that the Child Protection Policy is being followed. They guide the staff on what to do and are the main person to talk to if there are any concerns about a child's safety.
- **PSEA Manager:** This person focuses on stopping any sexual exploitation or abuse. They make sure that if there are any reports of such behavior, they are properly investigated and dealt with.
- **Volunteers and Staff:** Everyone who works or volunteers at IASIS must follow the Child Protection Policy. They need to report any worries they have about a child's safety and take part in regular training. Their job is to help create a safe place for children.

- **Management Team:** This group makes the final decisions about hiring new people and taking action if someone breaks the rules. They ensure that everything the organization does is in line with the Child Protection Policy.
- **Board Members:** They keep an eye on the overall implementation of the policy to make sure it is being followed correctly at all levels of the organization.

6.1.7. Parental/Guardian Involvement

Parents and guardians are very important in keeping their children safe. IASIS will make sure they are involved in the following ways:

- **Providing the Policy:** When a child joins any of our programs, we will give the parents or guardians a copy of our Child Protection Policy so they know what we do to keep their child safe.
- **Keeping Parents/Guardians Informed:** We will regularly inform parents or guardians about any changes to the policy or procedures, so they are always up-to-date.
- **Encouraging Participation:** We will invite parents and guardians to join workshops or information sessions where they can learn more about child protection and how they can help.
- **Clear Reporting Procedures:** We will ensure that parents and guardians know the steps to take if they have any concerns about their child's safety and how they can report those concerns.

6.2. Housing Facilities Protocols

This section is for staff working in housing facilities and outlines the specific guidelines, practices, and responsibilities unique to residential care. It covers the special challenges and duties involved in keeping children safe in housing facilities managed by IASIS.

6.2.1. Child Protection Representative

IASIS has appointed a child protection representative, whose name is displayed within the minutes dated/name, and contact details are to be given or on the notice board in the minutes' area. If any worker has any child safety concerns, they should discuss them with him/her. He/she will take on the following responsibilities:

- ⇒ Ensuring that the policy is being put into practice.

- ⇒ Being the first point of contact for child protection issues.
- ⇒ Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;
- ⇒ Bringing any child protection concerns to the notice of the Management Committee and contacting the Local Authority if appropriate.
- ⇒ Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;
- ⇒ Ensuring that everyone involved with the organization is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Representative.

6.2.2. Trips / Outings

The Child Protection Representative will also take on the following responsibilities:

- ⇒ When organizing a trip or outing, ensure that a trip/outing form is completed. This form should include details about the trip and a section for parents to provide their consent. These forms must be returned before the event takes place and must be brought on the trip along with the completed group information/consent forms.
- ⇒ Ensure that there is adequate insurance coverage for the work and activities.

6.2.3. Personal/Personnel Safety

- ⇒ A group of children or young people under sixteen should never be left unattended.
- ⇒ Avoid being alone with a single child or young person for an extended period. If you need to be alone with a child (e.g., to provide first aid or if the child is upset), ensure another worker is aware of your location and the reason.
- ⇒ Volunteers or workers from any external organization should never arrange to meet a young person outside of the activity without someone else being present.
- ⇒ Such meetings should be planned in advance and must have the approval of a Committee member.
- ⇒ Teenage assistants should always be supervised.

6.2.4. Child Safety

- Make sure that the area you are using for activities is fit for the purpose, e.g. remove furniture that could cause injury in energetic games.

- Make sure that all workers and assistants know
 - Where the emergency phone is and how to operate it
 - Where the first aid kit is
 - Who is responsible for First Aid and how to record accidents or injuries in the incident book
 - What to do in the event of a fire or other emergency
- Once a year, there should be a fire practice.
- Do not let children go home without an adult unless the parent has specifically said they may do so. Never let a child go with another adult unless the parent has informed you that this will happen.
- If private cars are used for an outing, the drivers must be approved by the committee, be properly insured, have rested before driving, and should have clean licenses. There should always be at least one other responsible person (16 or over) in each vehicle. All vehicles should be fitted with full seatbelts, not just lap belts. Full seatbelts should always be used.

Under normal circumstances, workers should only give a lift home to a young person from group activities if the parents of the young person have specifically asked for them to do so. (If workers are asked to give a young person or child a lift home, they are not obliged to do so, it is left to their discretion).

In the case of trips or outings, it should be made clear if workers' cars will be used and where the children or young people will be returned to.

6.2.5. New Workers

Workers and assistants are by far the most valuable resource the group has for working with young people. When recruiting and selecting paid workers and volunteers, the following steps will be taken:

- Completion of an application form;
- An interview by three people from the Committee, who will take the final decision;
- Identifying reasons for gaps in employment and other inconsistencies in the application;
- Checking the applicant's identity (passport, driving license, etc.);
- Taking up references before the person starts work;
- Ensuring criminal record checks have been carried out through relevant local agencies approved by the Criminal Records Bureau;

- Taking appropriate advice before employing someone with a criminal record;
- Allowing no unaccompanied access to children until all of the above have been completed;
- A probationary period of 3 months for new paid workers and volunteers;
- On-going supervision of paid workers and volunteers;
- Ensuring good practice is followed in working with children and young people by providing appropriate training and guidance;

A nominated Child Protection representative on the Management Committee.

6.2.6. Recognizing Child Abuse

It's important to stay alert and notice any signs of child abuse. If a worker or volunteer thinks a child might be abused, they should report it right away to the Child Protection Representative.

6.2.7. Reporting Procedures

If a worker or volunteer suspects or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being abused, they must follow the established reporting procedures. The designated Child Protection Representative will oversee the reporting process, which may involve contacting local child protective services or law enforcement authorities.

Staff Responsibilities Checklist	Regularly review and update knowledge of child protection policies.
	Avoid conflicts of interest in child protection matters.
	Keep accurate records of incidents and training attendance.
	Follow procedures for reporting incidents to external authorities if necessary.
	Complete mandatory child protection training sessions.
	Ensure proper supervision of children during all activities.
	Use child-friendly language when communicating with children.
	Report any suspected abuse immediately to the Child Protection Officer.
	Maintain confidentiality of all child protection information.

6.2.8. Emergency Procedures

IASIS is committed to keeping children safe during emergencies. The following steps must be taken:

- **Fire Safety:** Regular fire drills should be held so everyone knows what to do. All staff need to know the evacuation routes and how to help children leave the building safely.
- **Natural Disasters:** If there is an earthquake, flood, or any other natural disaster, children should be quickly taken to designated safe areas where they will be protected.
- **Medical Emergencies:** All staff should be trained in basic first aid so they can help if a child gets hurt or sick. Emergency contact numbers should always be easy to find. Every incident should be written down in an incident book, and parents or guardians should be informed as soon as possible.

7. Regular Policy Review

IASIS emphasizes the importance of regular policy reviews to ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of our commitment to child and youth protection. This policy is not only reviewed on an annual basis, but is also revised as necessary, in particular to address emerging challenges and changes in the field of child and youth protection. In a unique approach, we actively involve the youth community in this process. We believe that young people's insights and perspectives are invaluable in shaping policies that directly affect them. Young people will be invited to participate in the review process and provide their comments and suggestions. In addition, we are committed to translating this policy into child and youth friendly language to ensure that it is easily understood by every child and young person associated with IASIS and to promote a sense of ownership and understanding of the safeguards in place.

Young people will have the chance to help review the policy in different ways, such as by joining focus groups, filling out anonymous surveys, and participating in feedback sessions. These activities will give children and young people a safe and supportive space to share their thoughts and experiences. What they say will be taken seriously and used to update the policy, making sure it meets their needs and takes their viewpoints into account.

8. Responsibility and Oversight: Monitoring and Evaluation of the Child Protection Policy

The primary objective of monitoring and evaluation of the Child Protection Policy is to draw lessons from practical case experience and to contribute to the refinement and updating of the Policy.

IASIS will systematically monitor the implementation of its child protection policy and procedures. The Child Protection Officers will report annually to the Board on progress, performance and lessons learned, and this information will be included in IASIS' annual reports. The evaluation process will assess the implementation of the standards set out in the Child Protection Policy and the effectiveness of the safeguards. This includes conducting a survey of IASIS staff, interns and volunteers to assess compliance with policy standards, effectiveness and areas for improvement.

In addition to routine monitoring and evaluation, reactive monitoring will be carried out after incidents have occurred to facilitate a learning process for IASIS and to trigger necessary adjustments to the child protection policy or reporting protocols.

IASIS will conduct an annual internal review of the policy, the results of which will be subject to approval by the Board.

Regular audits will be conducted. Feedback from children, parents, and staff will be incorporated into these evaluations to improve safeguarding practices continuously. IASIS NGO will establish clear accountability mechanisms, including a designated safeguarding lead responsible for overseeing the implementation of child protection policies and procedures. Regular reports on safeguarding issues will be submitted to senior management and the board of directors.

Monitoring will involve keeping track of specific things to make sure everything is working well:

- **Incident Reporting:** We will keep a record of how many incidents are reported, what types they are, and how quickly we respond to them.
- **Training Completion:** We will measure how many staff and volunteers have completed the required child protection training.
- **Feedback Surveys:** Every year, we will conduct surveys with children, staff, and parents to see how well the policy is working.
- **Policy Compliance:** We will regularly check to make sure that everyone in the organization is following the policy correctly.

9. Conclusion

IASIS remains dedicated to creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for children and young people. By adhering to the principles outlined in this Child Protection Policy, the organization aims to safeguard the well-being, rights, and dignity of all individuals within its programs. Continuous vigilance, education, and collaboration with relevant authorities will be maintained to ensure the effective implementation of this policy.

10. Document Version History

Version	Date	Author/s	Approved by	Review Date	Comments
1st		Stefanos Alevizos		31.01.2024	

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