

# Child Safeguarding Policy

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## Summary Version

### 1.0 Statement of Commitment to Keeping Children Safe

Right To Play is an international humanitarian and development organization that uses sport and play to educate and empower children and youth to overcome the effects of poverty, conflict, and disease in disadvantaged communities. Right To Play's vision is to create a healthy and safe world through the power of sport and play. We recognize that we have a fundamental duty of care towards children and we are committed to our responsibilities to keep children safe while engaged in our programs and activities.

We are committed to the welfare of children around the world. We oppose all forms of violence and abuse (including physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect), discrimination, exploitation, and manipulation of children as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).<sup>1</sup> See Section 7.0 for definitions.

#### Right To Play's Commitment to Children

We are committed to:

- **Responsibility:** Recognizing that child safeguarding is our responsibility, whether or not our individual roles involve working directly with children and youth;
- **Accountability:** Actively holding ourselves and other Right to Play Team Members accountable to Right to Play child safeguarding commitments and responsibilities;
- **Behaviour:** Acting as role models of child-friendly attitudes, behaviours and practices;
- **Equality:** Treating all children and youth equally with respect and fairness regardless of age, culture, caste, nationality, creed, ethnicity, health status (e.g. AIDS), physical and psychological ability, family situation, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and / or sexual orientation;
- **Participation:** Ensuring that children are able and enabled to express their views on all matters which affect them and their surroundings, they are listened to, are active in decision-making processes, and their views are acted upon;
- **Practices:** Encouraging positive discipline strategies to work with children; Prohibiting corporal punishment, offensive or abusive language (including teasing and taunting), and the use of gestures or symbols that could be interpreted as insulting or provocative;
- **Confidentiality:** Except where required by law, keeping details of the victims and alleged perpetrators of abuse in reported cases of abuse confidential;
- **Partnership:** Working in partnership with governments, communities, partner agencies, multilaterals, donors, children and families to promote the welfare, health and development of children, and to protect them from harm; and
- **Funding:** Ensuring adequate funding is available to realize our child safeguarding commitments.

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<sup>1</sup> The Convention on the Rights of the Child is a legally binding international instrument supporting children's rights to survival, development, participation and protection. The UNCRC was adopted in 1989, and has been signed and ratified by 194 countries.

## 2.0 Scope

This Child Safeguarding Policy (this “Policy”) applies to all Right To Play employees, consultants, contractors, coaches, leaders and volunteers employed by or working with Right To Play International, a Right to Play National Office, a Right to Play Regional Office, a Right to Play Country Office, a Right to Play Project Office (all such preceding entities collectively referred to as "Right To Play" or "RTP") and, where possible, to individuals employed by or working for an implementing partner<sup>2</sup> (all such persons collectively referred to as "Team Members"). This Policy also applies to Athlete Ambassadors, board members, and any other representatives of Right To Play who are visiting the field (collectively referred to as "representatives").

Right To Play encourages Team Members and representatives to take measures to protect all children; however this Policy is meant specifically to protect the children and youth with whom Right To Play works for any amount of time. It covers instances of violence, abuse and exploitation that occur inside and outside of project hours and locations, either witnessed or suspected by a Team Member or representative, or as disclosed to a Team Member or representative by a child or other party.

This Policy also applies to Partners, Funders and Vendors working with Right To Play, as part of a partnership agreement. See section 3.2.8 for further details.

## 4.0 Core Standards of Practice

### For all Right To Play Team Members Working with Children

- Respond to and report actual or suspected concerns, suspicions or violations regarding any kind of abuse or exploitation by a colleague, family member or community partner. These concerns must be reported in accordance with the systems and policies outlined in this Policy;
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given;
- Ensure that all Right To Play sessions are safe;
- Ensure that child rights are protected and that the ***Child Safeguarding Photography Guidelines*** are followed when photos or videos are being taken of children, or when interviews are being conducted with them;
- Always work in an open environment and avoid being alone with one child. Ensure any private conversation with a child is in plain view of others;
- Where possible, obtain written parental or guardian consent if Right To Play is transporting children to a play day event; and
- Where possible, secure parental or guardian consent in writing to act in the place of the parent or guardian, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

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<sup>2</sup> While RTP encourages all individuals working for implementing partners to abide by our Child Safeguarding Policy, in instances where we have limited contact with leaders of implementing partners, there are incidents where we cannot always hold them accountable.

## 5.0 Procedure for Responding to Violence against Children and Child Abuse

### 5.1 Procedure for a Team Member, or representative, reporting suspected child abuse

If you witness or suspect child abuse, or if a child discloses abuse to you, follow the legal obligations of your country (including any reporting obligations that may exist), and report the incident to your Manager/Director. The Manager/Director to whom you should submit your report will be the Manager/Director at the highest level where you work. In many cases, this will be the Country Manager. If you are a Right To Play Coach/Leader/Teacher, the incident should be reported to your Supervisor. Any response beyond reporting the incident to your manager will vary depending on the local procedures that have been developed for your country or region.

When violence or abuse is suspected, witnessed or reported, the following steps are to be taken:

#### Step 1: Ensure Safety of the Child

Put the child first. If a child reports an incident:

- Listen to him/her calmly and take him/her seriously;
- Never be alone with the child. If the child prefers to discuss the situation with one individual, ensure a secondary adult is in close vicinity;
- Consider if the perpetrator of abuse is male or female when determining who will speak to the child;
- Reassure the child that he/she is not to blame;
- Be honest. Do not promise confidentiality. Explain that you may have to share their secret with someone who will be able to help them. Inform the child of the steps you will take. Tell the child you believe them and are glad that they told you;
- Make sure you are clear about what the child says before you report it;
- To ensure trust and comfort of the child, do not write/ tape record information while speaking with the child. When the child is no longer in your presence record what the child said in clear and accurate detail; and
- Maintain a level of confidentiality; only discuss the matter with those necessary to protect the child, do not disclose unnecessary details.

#### Step 2: Where required by law, report the incident to local child welfare services and/or the police. In all cases, report the incident to your Manager/Director using the ***Child Safeguarding Reporting Form***

- Complete the ***Child Safeguarding Reporting Form*** in detail and send it to your Manager/Director within 24 hours.

Or

- If you are not comfortable reporting the suspected incident of abuse to your Manager/Director, or if you do not have a RTP Manager/Director (e.g. athlete ambassador) you should report the incident through the anonymous Clearview Reporting System via **xxxxxxxxxxxxx**, or phone using the **Clearview Right To Play Canada/US dedicated toll-free number: xxxxxxxxx** or the **Clearview Right To Play International Collect Call number: +xxxxxxxxxx**.

#### Step 3: Manager/Director receiving the report clarifies information as necessary and then reports

the incident by sending the **Child Safeguarding Reporting Form** to Headquarters immediately (not beyond 12 hours of the incident). If the child is in serious danger the Manager/Director's first step is to take immediate necessary action to ensure the safety of the child.

- The Manager/Director submits the report directly to the Human Resources Child Safeguarding Focal Point at Headquarters by email at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx or if necessary, reports via phone to xxxxxxxxxxxx. Only the HR Child Safeguarding Focal Point at RTP HQ will have access to this email and phone line. Except as required by law, he/she will ensure that the privacy of any victim of abuse and alleged perpetrator shall be respected, and will treat any information relating to any victim of abuse as highly confidential of all child safeguarding reporting forms.

**Step 4:** The most senior level Manager/Director of the country where the incident of abuse was reported takes investigative action with support of their Regional Director, where applicable, and HQ. The nature of the investigation will vary, depending on who the alleged perpetrator is, as outlined in the options below. Where allegations suggest a crime has been committed against a child, statutory authorities (e.g. police, social services) will be notified.

**Option A: If the alleged perpetrator is a Right To Play Team Member who is not an employee, volunteer or representative of an implementing partner:**

**Execute Appropriate RTP Protocol**

- The Country Manager where the abuse took place, in collaboration with the Regional Director, where applicable, will organize a child protection investigation, which may involve interviewing the accused, as well as witnesses or community members involved. RTP will cooperate with relevant statutory authorities when conducting its investigation.
- Appropriate action is taken based on the results of the investigation, as per the "Consequences" section of this policy.

**Option B: If the alleged perpetrator is an employee, volunteer or representative of a partner agency:**

**Execute Appropriate Partner Protocol**

- Country level pre-established inter-agency child protection procedures are followed that may include using mechanisms such as the UN Focal Point network. See the partnership agreement to determine procedures.

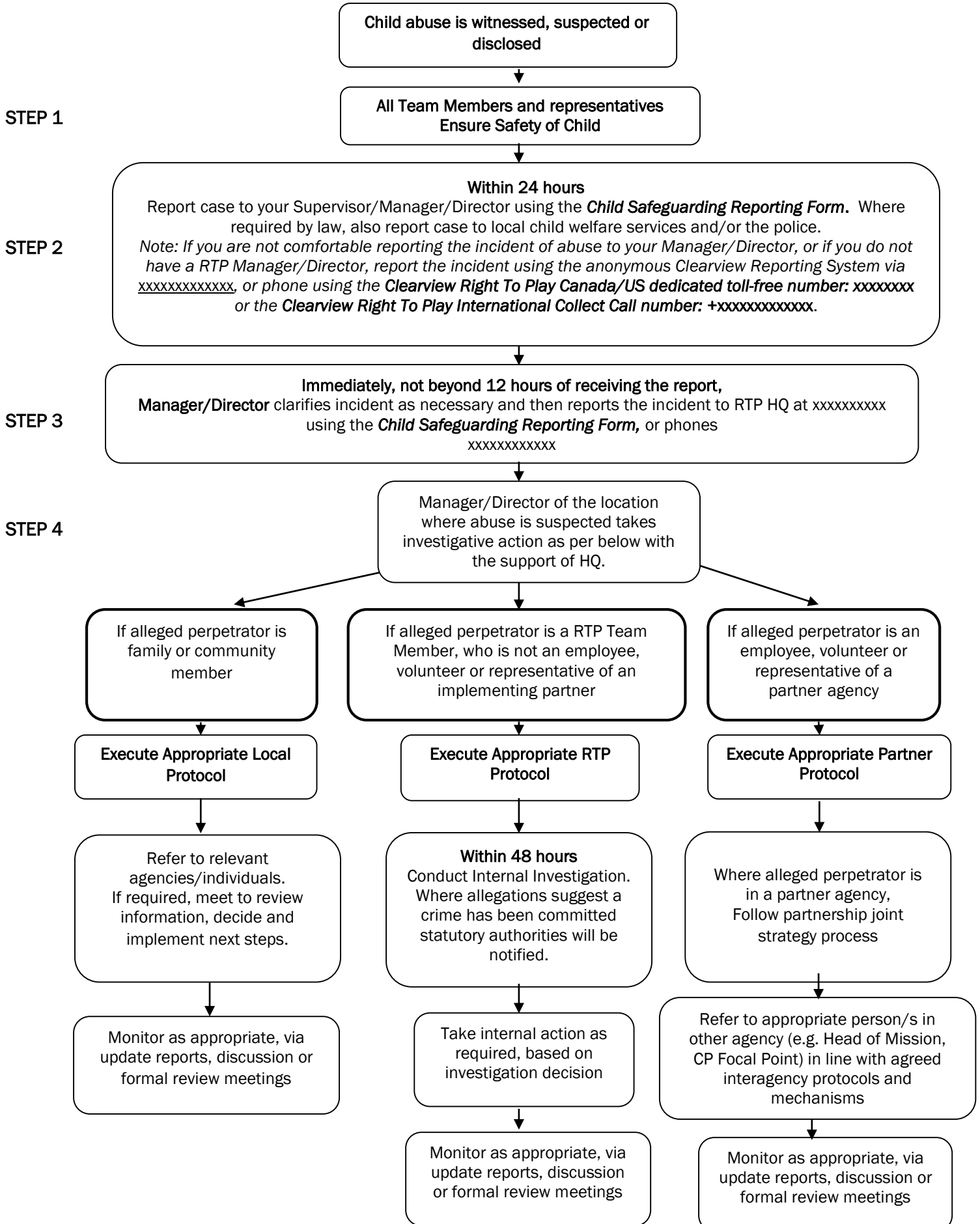
**Option C: If the alleged perpetrator is family or community member:**

**Execute Appropriate Local Protocol**

- Country/Community level Child Protection Procedures are followed that include referral of cases to credible informal or formal local child protection services and/or the police.

**See corresponding flowchart on the next page summarizing the reporting process.**

## Responding to Violence and Child Abuse Flowchart



## 6.0 Consequences of Violations of this Policy

If a Right To Play Team Member or representative contravenes this Policy, whether within or outside the context of our work, in ways that are criminal, grossly infringe children's rights, or contravene the principles and standards contained in this Policy, Right To Play will take immediate disciplinary action and any other action which may be appropriate to the circumstances. This may mean, for:

**Staff:** disciplinary action up to and including termination

**Coaches/Leaders/Board Members/Athlete Ambassadors and any other volunteers:** disciplinary action up to and including ending the relationship

**Partners:** possible withdrawal of funding/support

**Contractors:** possible termination of contract

In all cases, Right To Play will involve local authorities where appropriate, such as the police or child welfare agencies, to ensure the protection of children.

## 7.0 Definitions

- a) **Child:** In accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been signed and ratified by all countries where Right To Play currently operates, a child is defined as any person under the age of 18 years.
- b) **Child Abuse:** Consists of anything which individuals, care givers, care takers, duty bearers, institutions or processes do, or fail to do, which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood.

There are four major categories of abuse: emotional abuse, physical abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse. These categories are not mutually exclusive. For example, a child experiencing physical abuse is likely experiencing emotional abuse as well. For expanded definitions and information on how to recognize different types of abuse, please see the *Child Safeguarding Implementation Guidebook*:

1. **Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child which can cause severe impacts on the child's emotional development. This could include making a child feel worthless or unloved, inadequate or not valued. Potential examples of emotional abuse include: persistent failure to show any respect to a child; constantly humiliating a child by shaming him or her or telling the child they are useless; continually being aggressive towards a child making them feel frightened; or acting in a way which is detrimental to the child's self-esteem.
2. **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse is when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child. This could include deliberately hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise harming a child. Physical abuse may also occur where someone knowingly fails to take action to protect a child from physical harm.
3. **Neglect:** Neglect involves the deliberate, persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. As well as being the result of a deliberate act, neglect

can also be caused through the omission or the failure to act or protect. Neglect may involve deliberate failure to: provide adequate food, clothing or shelter; protect from physical or emotional harm or danger; meet or respond to basic emotional needs; ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate care-takers; ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment; ensure that the child's educational needs are met; or ensure the child's opportunities for intellectual stimulation are met.

- 4. Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in physically sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not they are aware of or consent to what is happening. This definition also holds whether or not there has been physical contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated or consented to, the behaviour. Examples of sexual abuse include: exposure to sexually explicit inappropriate language or jokes; showing a child pornographic material or using a child to produce such material; inappropriate touching; or sexual activity of any kind with a child.
- c) **Child Protection:** in the international context describes the work being undertaken to strengthen laws, policies, programs and systems, which are designed to protect children in a given country in his or her own family and community.
- d) **Child Safeguarding:** Child safeguarding is the responsibility that organizations have to ensure their staff, operations and programs “do no harm” to children and that any concerns the organization has about children's safety within the communities in which they work are reported to the appropriate authorities.
- e) **Discrimination of the child:** Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which is based on any ground such as, the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of all rights and freedoms.
- f) **Exploitation:** Child exploitation is the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. It covers situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization, oppression or ill-treatment.

**Economic exploitation:** The use of the child in work or other activities for the economic benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour. Economic exploitation implies the idea of a certain gain or profit through the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

**Sexual exploitation:** The abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes. This includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the exploitation of another as well as personal sexual gratification.

**Child trafficking:** Moving a child within a country, or across borders, whether by force or not, for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit, is a form of both economic and sexual exploitation.

- g) **Manager:** Includes any Team Member with direct reports.

- h) **Manipulation:** A type of social influence that aims to change the perception or behaviour of others through underhanded, devious and unfair tactics. Manipulation can be used to exploit and abuse children.
- i) **Partner:** Includes any organization with which Right To Play has formed a partnership agreement.
- j) **Representatives:** Athlete Ambassadors, board members, and any other representatives visiting the field.
- k) **Right To Play:** Includes Right To Play International, National, Regional, Country, and Project Offices.
- l) **Team Member:** Includes all Right To Play employees, consultants, contractors, coaches, leaders and volunteers employed by, or working with, Right To Play and, where possible, individuals employed by, or working for, an implementing partner.
- m) **Violence Against Children:** all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of trust, responsibility, or power.

## 8.0 RTP Child Safeguarding Policy Supporting Forms (Appendices)

1. Standards of Practice When Working with Children
2. Attestation of Commitment to Child Safeguarding Form
3. Child Safeguarding Self-Declaration Form
4. Child Safeguarding Reporting Form
5. Child Safeguarding Photography Guidelines
6. Photographer/Multimedia Agreement Form
7. Child Safeguarding Photographic/Media/Editorial Consent Form

## 9.0 RTP Additional Supporting Documentation

1. Whistleblower Policy
2. RTP Code of Conduct
3. Child Safeguarding Implementation Guidebook
4. Child Protection Community Mapping Toolkit

**\*\*\*Note: This is a summarized version of Right To Play's Child Safeguarding Policy. To learn about the comprehensive version (with confidential numbers and emails removed) for Right To Play Team Members which includes roles and responsibilities of Team Members and Managers, definitions, and supporting forms on attestation of commitment, reporting, standards of practice, and communications please email Right To Play's Child Protection Officer, Laura Wright, at [lwright@righttoplay.com](mailto:lwright@righttoplay.com).**