



# **Child Protection Policy**

**Version 5.2**

**August 2016**

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Why Does ZOE Children's Homes (ZCH) Have a Child Protection Policy?**

- 1.1.1 ZCH is committed to the safety, welfare and protection of all children entrusted to its care. All paid part-time and full-time staff and volunteers at ZCH undertake to do everything in our power to create a safe, nurturing environment for children and to prevent all forms of abuse. ZCH is committed to acting at all times in the best interests of children, seeing these interests as paramount.
- 1.1.2 ZCH opposes all forms of child exploitation and abuse (see section 4.2, 4.3 for definitions of exploitation and abuse). Further, ZCH believes that keeping silent about known or suspected exploitation/abuse is wrong. ZCH believes that all children have a right to protection from abuse irrespective of race, social background, gender, skin color, disability, religion or beliefs.
- 1.1.3 ZCH desires to establish and have in place preventative policies and procedures to proactively combat all potential child exploitation and abuse. ZCH is aware of the need to make explicit our determination that our work and activities must promote the safety and security of children at all times. This policy will strengthen, enhance and highlight the integrity of ZCH.
- 1.1.4 ZCH also acknowledges the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) ratified by the Royal Thai Government in 1992. The CRC remains the centerpiece in Thailand's overall emphasis on child protection. The principles of the CRC such as "non-discrimination", "best interest of the child" and "child participation" are being incorporated into the new laws and in the new National Program of Action for the Survival, Protection and Development of Children.
- 1.1.5 ZCH adheres to Thailand's Child Protection Act of 2003.
- 1.1.6 ZCH acknowledges the fact that all children linked with ZCH are potentially at-risk from abusers drawn to visit and work with us.

## **2.0 Scope**

2.1 This policy applies to everyone coming into contact with ZCH children. This includes (but is not limited to):

1. Paid staff (full-time and part-time)
2. Volunteer (full-time and part-time)
3. Trainers and Tutors of ZCH Children

4. Contractors and Laborers
5. Overnight Visitors
6. Visitors And Guests (1 day or less)
7. Short-Term Teams (multiple day visits)
8. Interns

2.2 This policy will be posted on ZCH's website and made available to any interested parties who desire to know ZCH's commitment to child protection.

2.3 This policy will be subject to review and approval by the Board of Directors of ZOE International Foundation. The Board of Directors will hold ZCH accountable to the stipulations contained in this policy.

### **3.0 Purpose**

3.1 Articulates ZCH's commitment to the protection of all children from abuse and exploitation of all kinds.

3.2 Ensures that no person involved with ZCH and its activities is involved in or contributing to child exploitation of any kind.

3.3 Clarifies expectations of behavior and good practice when working with children.

3.4 Informs everyone involved with ZCH what should be done if they have a concern about a child or suspect that a child is being abused or exploited in any way.

3.5 Protects ZCH staff, team members, associates, volunteers, member agencies and visitors from false accusations and allegations.

3.6 Protects the reputation of ZCH as an organization.

### **4.0 Definitions**

4.1 Child – Individuals under the age of 18 years old.

4.2 Abuse

4.2.1 Physical Abuse – Actual or likely physical injury or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This includes (but is not limited to): deliberate hitting, beating, shaking, throwing, burning, drowning, suffocating or poisoning.

4.2.2 Mental / Emotional Abuse – Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioral development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. May involve conveying to the

child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate and cause children to feel frightened, in danger or corrupted.

- 4.2.3 Neglect – The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care resulting in the significant impairment of the child’s health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.
- 4.2.4 Sexual Abuse – Actual or likely abuse of a child representing the involvement of children in sexual activities. This includes (but is not limited to): touching a child’s genitals or private areas (i.e. breasts), forcing a child to watch or take part in pornography or coercing the child to have sex. It is considered abuse whether or not the child consents. Additionally, sexual abuse includes any form of suggestive behavior or flirtation towards a child.
- 4.2.5 Spiritual Abuse – When a religious leader or someone in a position of religious power or authority (whether organization, institution, religion organization or family) misuses their power or authority or the trust placed in them with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating, or dominating a child. Religion abuse is always about the misuse of power within the framework of religious belief or practice in order to meet the needs of the abuser at the expense of the needs of the child. Religion abuse results in religious harm to a child may be linked to other abuse, such as physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

#### 4.3 Exploitation

- 4.3.1 Sexual Exploitation – Contacts or interactions between a child and an older or more Knowledgeable child or adult (a stranger, sibling or person in a position of authority, such as a parent or caretaker) when the child is being used as an object of gratification for an older child’s or adult’s sexual needs. These contacts or interactions are carried out against the child using force, trickery, bribes, threats or pressure.
- 4.3.2 Commercial Sexual Exploitation – Criminal practices that demean degrade and threaten the physical and psychosocial integrity of children. There are three primary and interrelated forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC): prostitution, pornography and trafficking for sexual purposes. CSEC is the use of a child for sexual purposes in exchange for cash or in-kind favors between the customer, intermediary or agent and others who profit from the trade in children for these purposes (parent, family member, procurer, teacher). CSEC can take various forms including:
  - 1. prostitution of children;

2. child pornography;
3. child sex tourism;
4. trafficking and sale of children across borders and within countries for sexual purposes; and
5. other forms of transactional sex.

CSEC also potentially includes arranged marriages involving children under the age of 18 years, where the child has not freely consented to marriage and where the child is sexually abused.

4.3.3 Forced Labor / Economic Exploitation – Requiring any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Forced labor may include, but is not limited to:

1. prostitution;
2. domestic servitude;
3. debt bondage;
4. begging;
5. agricultural, industrial, or service labor;
6. trafficking and sale of children across borders and within countries for forced labor; and
7. military conscription or service.

## **5.0 Standards of Conduct**

5.1 All visitors, guests, and short-term teams are required to be escorted at all times by a ZCH paid staff or full-time volunteer that has passed screening process. Visitors and guests are required to sign-in and present a valid ID card. Visitors and guests will have sleeping accommodations separate from ZCH children. Refer to Visitor guidelines.

5.2 Individuals listed in Section 2.1 (**excluding** visitors and guests, and contractors and laborers) who will come into contact with ZCH children must sign a statement representing the following:

- 5.2.1 They have read and understand the ZCH Child Protection Policy.
- 5.2.2 They agree to all of the requirements as stipulated by this policy.
- 5.2.3 They submit to any investigatory or disciplinary actions that will result from an apparent or actual breach of any part of the policy.
- 5.2.4 They submit to screening as stipulated by Section 6.

5.3 ZCH children will be treated with respect and dignity.

- 5.4 ZCH children will not be touched or treated in a way that is against the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 5.4.1 The general guideline is not to touch children in areas that would normally be covered by shorts and t-shirt.
  - 5.4.2 No lap-sitting for extended periods of time.
  - 5.4.3 No inappropriate tickling
  - 5.4.4 Refer to the definitions of sexual and physical abuse in Section 4.2
- 5.5 ZCH children will be disciplined and corrected in a way that is consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Thailand's Child Protection Act of 2003. ZCH has no tolerance to any form of violence against children. Visitors shall not discipline any child. Any concerns of improper behavior by children shall be reported to staff.
- 5.6 ZCH children will be supervised by a minimum of either: 1) one paid staff; or 2) one school staff; or 3) one full-time volunteer.
- 5.7 A ZCH child aged 12 years old and under must NEVER be alone OR one-on-one with another ZCH child in any place that is not readily seen by responsible adults.
- 5.8 A ZCH child under the age of 4 can be one-on-one with a female full-time volunteer or female staff member.
- 5.9 ZCH children aged 4 years old and over are NEVER to be alone with an adult (one-on-one) in any place that is not readily accessed by others. Exceptions are as follows:
- 5.9.1 Medical conditions in which a child needs to be separated from other children and needs constant supervision. One-on-one supervision will be limited to female staff or volunteer only.
  - 5.9.2 Special exceptions may be made for members of the child's immediate family, i.e., the child's blood relatives.
- 5.10 Travel
- 5.10.1 **Children aged 12 years old and under** must NEVER be alone OR one-on-one with an adult. A second adult must accompany the child for travel.
  - 5.10.2 **Children aged 13 years old and over**

5.10.2 (a) **Private Vehicles/ZOE Vehicles** Two or more ZCH children of the same gender can be accompanied by one adult of the same gender for vehicular travel.

5.10.2 (b) **Public Transport** One adult can accompany ZCH children of the same gender on public transport.

5.10.3 **Exceptions** Life threatening medical emergencies.

5.11 No flirtatious, suggestive or inappropriate behavior or mannerisms toward a ZCH child is permitted.

5.12 Child protection will be heavily considered as part of the risk analysis and health/safety arrangements in all ZCH events and off campus activities. All events involving ZCH Children will be supervised by at least two adult volunteer or paid Thai staff with the exception of school-related activities.

5.13 NO photographs or video footage is permissible without authorization from the ZCH Child Protection Manager. The use and distribution of authorized photographs or video footage at ZCH is subject to regulations in Section 10 of this policy.

5.14 NO gifts or promise of gifts will be given to ZCH children without authorization from the ZCH Director. Example of gifts include (but are not limited to): money, cell phones, cell phone usage, candy, jewelry, personal items, alcohol, drugs, medications, or promise of any of the items listed.

5.15 NO pre-visit or post-visit contact (letters, e-mail, phone calls, text messages, video, packages, etc.) is allowed with our children without authorization from the ZCH Director.

5.16 Individuals listed in Section 2 must adhere to a modest dress code at all times:

- \* No see through tops or skirts without proper undershirts or slips.
- \* Shorts and skirts must come approximately to the knee.
- \* No cleavage, bra straps, underwear or tummies showing at any time
- \* Straps on sleeveless tops must be 2” wide
- \* No “extra tight” fitting tops or pants.
- \* Offensive tattoos must be covered.

## **6.0 Recruitment and Screening**

6.1 Individuals listed in Section 2 (excluding visitors and guests, and contractors and laborers) are subject to screening and a recruitment period. Screening may include completion of the following:

- 6.1.1 In-Person, Phone, or Live Video Feed Interview
  - 6.1.2 Detailed Application
  - 6.1.3 Reference Checks
  - 6.1.4 National Criminal Background Check via a Reputable Agency
  - 6.1.5 Signed ZCH's Child Protection Policy
  - 6.1.6 Physical Examination
- 6.2 All screening and related findings will be reviewed by ZOE's CEO and/or President, ZCH Founders or qualified designee (i.e. other ZOE officer).
- 6.3 Personnel records will be maintained confidentially at ZOE National headquarters.

## **7.0 Training**

- 7.1 The following individuals will be required to complete ZOE-provided training to implement the Child Protection Policy before signing the agreement pursuant to Section 5.2
- 7.1.1 Paid staff (full-time and part-time)
  - 7.1.2 Full-time volunteers (full-time and part-time)
- 7.2 The following individuals will be required to be briefed on the details of the Child Protection Policy before signing the agreement (briefing will be conducted before contact with ZCH Children):
- 7.2.1 Short-Term Teams
- 7.3 All ZCH Children will be continuously educated on the forms and nature of abuse and inappropriate behavior. Additionally, they will be educated and trained on this policy as necessary, with full policy training provided annually at minimum.

## **8.0 Evaluation and Monitoring**

- 8.1 ZCH is committed to the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of child protection procedures and behavior protocols pursuant to this policy. Further, ZCH highly encourages open communication between all individuals listed in Section 2.
- 8.2 At least once per year, the following individuals will be subject to evaluations directly related to standards set forth in this policy:

8.2.1 Paid staff (full-time and part-time)

8.2.2 Full-time volunteers (full-time and part-time)

Concerns, suspicions or allegations that arise from the evaluation and monitoring process will be handled pursuant to Section 9.

## 9.0 Responses to Allegations/Suspicious

9.1 ZCH recognizes that allegations (i.e. when a specific accusation of abuse is made against a named individual) and suspicions (i.e. when a concern is expressed about abuse that may have taken place) should always be investigated and acted upon swiftly making the welfare of children the paramount consideration.

9.2 ZCH will provide training and easy access for children to report misconduct/abuse or to talk with other responsible person(s) about concerns.

9.3 ZCH will provide at least one conduit (a locked box) to receive anonymous comments, allegations or suspicions to be investigated. Allegations relating to the safety or protection of the children will be compiled and personally addressed by the ZOE executives and/or Child Protection Manager. Additionally, the Board of Directors can request to review all anonymous comments, allegations, suspicions and related resolutions.

9.4 All allegations and suspicions will be investigated and responded to in a timely manner. Allegations and suspicions will be investigated by ZOE executives and/or child Protection Manager or designee. If CEO or President is the subject of the allegation or suspicion, the Board of Directors will investigate.

9.5 When an allegation or suspicion is communicated, the following procedures apply:

9.5.1 Allegations/Suspicious are communicated to the executives and Child Protection Manager. The information will be kept confidential except for those directly involved.

9.5.2 Investigations will be conducted and brought to resolution immediately by executives and/or Child Protection Manager and or designee.

9.5.3 All parties including the reporter, victim, and alleged perpetrator will be treated with respect and dignity from the start of the process to the end.

9.5.4 The reporter's identity will be kept confidential.

- 9.5.5 The alleged perpetrator will be separated from the ZCH Children during the investigation. The protection of the alleged victim during and after the investigation process will be considered of paramount importance.
- 9.5.6 Disciplinary action(s) will be based on the severity of the misconduct or crime(s) involved. Legal authorities and respective embassies will be involved if considered necessary or required by law.
- 9.5.7 If misconduct or abuse has been identified, ZCH will provide the appropriate support to the victim including external counseling if warranted.
- 9.5.8 Parents and/or caretakers will be notified of misconduct, crimes, and resolutions as appropriate.
- 9.5.9 The allegation/suspicion and all pertinent information (i.e. interview notes, resolution, disciplinary action, etc.) will be logged and maintained in a confidential file. Record of the allegation/suspicion will be kept in the appropriate personnel files.
- 9.5.10 Allegations/Suspicions and respective resolutions will be summarized for review by the Board of Directors on a regular basis.

## **10.0 Fundraising / Publicity Protocols**

10.1 ZOE highly values the protection of privacy, identity, and dignity of all children and survivors of human trafficking under its care.

10.2 All fundraising or publicity activities are subject to ZOE's Media Guidelines.

### 10.2.1 Summary of Media Guidelines

- \* No faces of children from the ZOE Children's Home can be shown in any media.
- \* At outings, schools, outreaches or ZOE Child Rescue prevention campaigns (when no ZCH children are present), children's faces are allowed in crowd shots only.
- \* Do not post individual photos of any children on social media.
- \* If there could be any misunderstanding as to whether a child or adult is or has been a victim of trafficking, the face must be concealed, unless the victim, having reached adulthood, has given written consent.
- \* Fundraising/Publicity protocols apply to all print materials and media that depict or describe children whether or not they are under ZOE's care.

- 10.3 Fundraising/Publicity protocols apply to all print materials, electronic media, and presentations that depict or describe child victims of human trafficking or any child under ZOE's care.
- 10.3.1 All Print Materials: Photos, brochures, newsletters, flyers, business cards, post cards, etc.
- 10.3.2 All Electronic Media: Television, radio, computer, internet, web-sites, blogs, social networking sites, e-mails, photos, videos, etc.
- 10.3.3 All Presentations: All presentations whether electronic, printed, or oral.
- 10.3.4 These protocols extend to all materials, media, and presentations whether ZOE-sponsored or not.
- 10.4 ZOE will protect the privacy, identity and dignity of children in materials and media listed in Section 10.3 as follows:
- 10.4.1 All photos, videos or images used must conceal the child's identity. This includes the child's face, identifying marks (e.g., distinctive scarring, tattoos, etc.) or revealing geographic cues (e.g., background, environment, signage).
- 10.4.2 Actual names of children and/or specific geographic locations will not be used in any media issued whereby Section 10.4.1 is applicable. Only fictitious names will be used.
- 10.4.3 ZOE requests that the following statement be legible at the beginning of reports, videos, newsletters and presentations:
- ZOE protects the identity and dignity of children and does not show trafficked children.**
- 10.5 No photographs or video footage is permissible on ZOE premises or ZOE-sponsored activities without direct authorization from the ZOE Child Protection Manager.