

## **Orphan Voice Child Protection Policy**

### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

1. ORPHAN VOICE is committed to the welfare of children and youth in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. ORPHAN VOICE opposes all forms of child exploitation and child abuse, including child sexual abuse.
2. ORPHAN VOICE believes that all children are made in the image of God, who created them with infinite worth and value.
3. ORPHAN VOICE believes that all children have a right to be protected from abuse.
4. ORPHAN VOICE believes that keeping silent about child abuse is wrong, if such is known to have occurred beyond a reasonable doubt.
5. ORPHAN VOICE believes that preventative measures should be taken to protect children from potential abuse by volunteers, staff, donors and visitors but also to protect ORPHAN VOICE staff from false charges.

### FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE:

1. Physical Abuse: actual injury to a child.
2. Mental/Emotional Abuse: when children experience emotional trauma caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection.
3. Sexual Abuse: exploitation of a child or adolescent. The involvement of dependent, developmentally, immature children and adolescents in sexual activities to which they are unable to give informed consent.

### BEHAVIORAL PROTOCOLS:

1. ORPHAN VOICE expects all its staff, short-term volunteers, consultants, visitors and donors to give respect and dignity to all children associated with the work of ORPHAN VOICE.
2. ORPHAN VOICE staff, short-term volunteers, consultants, and donors who visit program sites must sign the Orphan Voice Child Protection Policy.

3. Local children will not stay overnight with an ORPHAN VOICE staff, short-term volunteers, donors, or visitors unless accompanied by a parent or family member.
4. ORPHAN VOICE staff, short-term volunteers, visitors and donors will not touch a child in an inappropriate manner.
5. ORPHAN VOICE short-term volunteers, visitors and donors will not discipline a child.
6. ORPHAN VOICE drivers will not take a beneficiary child home without at least one other person being present in the vehicle, unless the child is a family member.
7. ORPHAN VOICE staff, short-term volunteers, visitors, consultants and donors will not visit a beneficiary child alone at his/her own home, while the child is home alone.
8. Adults will always be responsible for their behavior and cannot blame the child, even if the child 'provokes' or acts in a 'seductive' way.
9. If protocols are broken, the person involved will be disciplined and may lose his/her job and may be subject to criminal proceedings.

#### RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

1. ORPHAN VOICE staff agree to inform the ORPHAN VOICE Director if information arises that casts doubt on the team members' trustworthiness with children.
2. ORPHAN VOICE team members and staff will be carefully and properly screened during their recruitment period.
3. The Orphan Voice Child Protection Policy will be reviewed and signed before acceptance of employment.
4. ORPHAN VOICE projects will not employ or accept as volunteers any children under 12 unless accompanied by his/her parent or guardian.

#### RESPONSES TO ALLEGATIONS:

1. ORPHAN VOICE prohibits any retaliation against an employee who, in good faith, has registered a complaint under this procedure.
2. ORPHAN VOICE staff, short-term volunteers, visitors and donors are required to report suspected abuse to the Director, program manager or head teacher, in the case of New Beginnings School for the Deaf. All reports of alleged abuse will be investigated. The

investigation process will be documented and a written report of findings will be completed within 30 days of the allegation.

#### COMMUNICATION:

1. ORPHAN VOICE's communication about children will reflect images that preserve their dignity and are decent and respectful, not seeking to exploit their circumstances.
2. ORPHAN VOICE will only post or use children's first names (or use fictitious names) and will not disclose children's last names or addresses.
3. Disclosure of information about past or present child abuse should be limited to only those who need to know.

#### DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

I declare that:

1. I have read and understand the Orphan Voice Child Projection Policy.
2. I will comply with the procedures laid out in the Orphan Voice Child Protection Policy.
3. I have not been convicted of any offense involving physical or sexual abuse of children or young people.

Signature:

Date: