



CISV International
Building global friendship

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Our first priority is the welfare and safety of children. If a child is in immediate danger of harm of abuse you must act immediately to protect them from danger.

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Introduction

The highest priority for CISV is the welfare and safety of children. We recognise that children have unique needs that are influenced by their different backgrounds, abilities and identities, however all children share a common need to be safe. CISV believes that every child who participates in CISV activities has the right to enjoy a safe environment and be protected from harm. In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that all children have a right to protection, CISV believes that it has a duty of care and obligation to protect those children for whom we are given responsibility.

As part of that obligation, CISV believes that we must all be aware of and actively address child protection. The CISV Child Protection Policy and

Procedures is a comprehensive document that outlines our rules and expectations to help ensure that child safety and protection comes first in everything we do. It is vital for the protection of everyone involved in CISV that we have a clear policy and procedures for the protection of children.

Child Protection is not just about reading and signing a piece of paper; this document sets out guidelines and standards that must be put into practice. This includes involving children actively as the best way to protect children is to empower them to protect themselves. Children will only benefit from this policy if we make them aware of their rights and give them the proper environment in which to exercise them.

Purpose

CISV promotes good child protection practice by developing, communicating, and implementing policies and procedures to ensure the safety and the wellbeing of the children for whom we are given responsibility. At all times, the implementation of this policy and procedures should be based on a spirit of positive commitment to the best interests of the child.

We must each do this through making sure that we focus on:

- Protecting children
- Preventing abuse
- Promoting behaviour that demonstrates respect for the dignity, diversity, and rights of all individuals

Definitions

- **Child:** anyone under the age of 18 (in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).
- **Adult:** anyone aged 18+.
- **Participant:** every person who participates in a local, national, or international CISV activity or programme, who is not a 'person in a position of trust and responsibility'. In some CISV programmes, participants are adults. Though they are not children, they have the same right to expect a safe environment and appropriate behaviour from other participants and persons in positions of trust and responsibility. Please refer to the CISV Behaviour Policy (Infofile R-07) for situations where the participant is an adult.
- **Person in a position of trust and responsibility:** Any individual (staff, leader, Junior Counsellor, host family, local event coordinator or other person) who has responsibility for any aspect of delivering a CISV programme or activity. Note that in some cases, such persons may be 'children' (for example, Junior Counsellors aged 16/17), who are, therefore, both responsible for and covered by this Child Protection Policy.
- **Person in charge:** This refers to the person on site with lead responsibility for Child Protection for the event or programme. This could be the Camp Director, a staff member, the Chapter President, the Local Interchange Coordinator, a relevant board member, or another official of CISV who would have direct lead responsibility for Child Protection during the event or programme in question.
- **Child Protection:** A broad term to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines, and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In this policy and for CISV, it applies particularly to the duty of the organization - and individuals associated with our organization - towards children in our care. This policy is about organizational Child Protection – in other words, building a 'child-safe organization.'
- **Child abuse:** According to the World Health Organization, "child abuse" or "maltreatment" constitutes "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 responsibility, trust or power." Abuse can happen to a child regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.
- **There are four main types of child abuse:** physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional/psychological abuse and neglect¹. Children can suffer from one or a combination of these forms of abuse.
- **Emotional/psychological:** the emotional or psychological mistreatment of a child involves both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment. This may include:

¹ These definitions have been developed based on definitions used in the UK and by the World Health Organization.

- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views
 - Deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
 - Telling a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only to meet the needs of another person
 - Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
 - Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person
 - Serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- **Physical:** causing any type of bodily or physical harm to a child e.g. hitting, poisoning, burning, giving children alcohol or drugs.
- **Sexual:** Sexual abuse is defined as the involvement of a child in a sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are – by virtue of their age or stage of development – in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim. These activities may involve:
- Physical or sexual contact, including kissing, rubbing, massaging, touching or allowing physical contact that could reasonably be perceived as sexual or inappropriately intimate. Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or befriending a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
 - Child sexual exploitation occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
- **Neglect:** when the child's basic needs are not met to an extent that is likely to result in serious impact on the child's health or development. Neglect may involve failing to:
- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter
 - Protect a child from physical harm or danger
 - Ensure adequate supervision
 - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
 - Neglect can also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- **Safeguarding:** Safeguarding is a term used in the United Kingdom and Ireland to describe measures to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, which allow all people – especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults – to live free from abuse, harm and neglect. Child Protection is part of Safeguarding.

Scope of the Child Protection policy

This policy and procedures apply to all parts of CISV – local, national and international – and to all activities and programmes run by CISV.

The CISV Child Protection Policy and Procedures provide a framework for individual and organizational practice as we seek to:

We must each do this through making sure that we focus on:

- Protecting children
- Preventing abuse
- Promoting behaviour that demonstrates respect for the dignity, diversity, and rights of all individuals

The focus of this policy is on the relationship between **adults** who act in any capacity with CISV and the **children** who participate in CISV. It includes all interactions that adults and children have, both in person and online.

NOTE: CISV policies on general behaviour rules and expectations among children and among adults are covered in our Behaviour Policy (Info File R-07).

The Child Protection Policy and Procedures is part of a broader approach to being a child-safe organization, which includes other policies and procedures of CISV:

- **Our Behaviour Policy (Info File R-07)** – this outlines rules and expectations regarding the general behaviour of everyone in CISV. It also includes our anti-bullying policy.
- Our Programme Basic Rules (Info File C-03) and Programmes Guides – these address, among other things, how we provide a safe physical environment for children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures.
- Our Policy and Procedure for Enforcement of Rules (Info File R-11) – this outlines our complaints and whistleblowing measures and how we enforce our rules.
- Our Guidelines on Discrimination, Selection and Behaviour (Info File R-05) – this outlines our policy on non-discrimination in selecting people for participation in our programmes.

As an international organization, CISV exists in over 60 countries. However, CISV International is registered as a charitable organization in England and Wales and must observe the relevant laws there. National Associations (NAs) and Chapters must also observe the laws of their own country/province/state/city. It is essential that NAs and Chapters find out about the relevant laws that govern how they can operate and deliver CISV programmes and develop procedures, guidance, and training in line with both local law and this Policy.

At the same time, CISV International has rules and standards that seek to create a consistent organizational approach and which, in some cases, may be stricter than national or local laws. This means that the CISV Child Protection Policy must be followed **in addition to** the relevant national and local laws on Child Protection.

Policy

CISV must take all reasonable steps to:

- Create an environment that is safe, open, and respectful;
- Respect the children we work with;
- Value, listen to, and respect the voices of children
- Help children to feel safe to make disclosures and to respond appropriately to disclosures;
- Take the interests and wellbeing of children into account in all our planning;
- Recruit CISV volunteers and staff to work with children who are suitable for that responsibility and provide them with the necessary training;
- Ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear and that procedures for follow up, documentation, and enquiries are followed;
- Ensure that adults understand they have a duty to report any concerns they have regarding adult behaviour or the welfare of a child to a person in charge;
- Respond to all suspicions and allegations of abuse transparently, consistently, and fairly, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality;
- Share information about concerns with relevant authorities who need to know, and involve parents and children appropriately.

Monitoring Methods

CISV has a global network of Risk Managers and an internal certification system to ensure that they have the training and skills required for the role. Each NA and Chapter must have a certified Risk Manager in place. This network of Risk Managers works to support the child protection efforts of the organization and document all concerns in regard to child protection.

CISV International keeps a record of all incidents reported, inquiries made, and actions taken. We also summarise incidents anonymously and keep them in a database of issues. We send annual reports, based on the database, to NAs for their review and further action as needed.

All reported issues for the organization are analysed annually by the Committees of the Board and the Regional Coordinators and their teams to identify learning, development potentials, and actions to be taken to improve CISV.

This policy and procedures will be reviewed at least every three years by the Training and Quality Assurance Committee of CISV International.

Procedures

Guide to icons

We all have a responsibility to read, understand and follow the Child Protection Policy and these procedures. Some of us have specific responsibilities. The icons below will help you to see easily where you have specific responsibilities.



Any adult in CISV



Chapter Risk Manager



National Risk Manager



Regional Risk Manager



International Risk Manager /
Safeguarding Lead



Trustees of CISV
International



Person In Charge



Procedure 1: Selection Of Persons With Responsibility For Children

Responsibilities of anyone who recruits and selects people to take on a position of trust and responsibility with children.

1.A Basic Requirements for all persons in positions of trust and responsibility in CISV

i. Membership

Every person in a position of trust and responsibility at any CISV programme or event must be a member of CISV. They must also be committed to CISV's values, rules, and Child Protection Policy and undergo appropriate training on child protection (see Procedure 2B: Training of People in a Position of Trust and Responsibility).

ii. Criminal Reference checks

You must check everyone who will be in a position of trust and responsibility for children at any CISV programme or event through the police in your country. You must do this before they take on a role of trust and responsibility for children. For applicants that are new to your country, you must also get a check in the country they resided in before – you can work with the CISV NA in that country where possible. Although procedures may vary and it may not be possible to obtain the same information in all countries, we have to work with the best information we can get in accord with National laws and procedures. You must investigate and discover whatever information you can get in your country. It is essential under all circumstances that you find out

whether an applicant has a criminal record of convictions or arrests, which would make them unsuitable to take on a role of trust and responsibility for children in a CISV programme or event. The following persons are considered unacceptable for a position of trust and responsibility in CISV and you must not choose:

- Persons who are listed on a National Child Protection Register
- Persons who have been charged with or convicted of serious criminal activity. Serious criminal activity includes, but is not limited to: murder; a serious sex offence; an offence committed by an adult involving intentionally wounding or causing grievous bodily harm; indecency offences; kidnapping; offences connected with child prostitution or child pornography; human trafficking.

If a person has a criminal record this in itself does not mean that you cannot allow them to take on a position of trust and responsibility. It depends on the contents of the record and whether it relates to 'serious criminal activity' or other behaviours or attitudes that would make the person unsuitable for a position of trust and responsibility for children. If in doubt, you should talk with your Chapter and/or National Risk Manager.

iii. Suitability for the role

- a. There are also some conditions or tendencies, which could make someone unsuitable for a position of trust and responsibility. We consider that persons with a history of conviction or treatment for the following behaviours, except in cases of unusual circumstances, are inappropriate for a position of programme responsibility in CISV. You must not select persons with a history of:
 - Alcohol/ drug abuse;
 - Dishonesty;
 - Prejudice or intolerance;
 - Violence or lack of self-control;
- b. CISV International maintains a List of Excluded Individuals of people who have shown themselves to be unsuitable for positions of trust and responsibility in CISV. You must check this list and must not select anyone on that list. The list is available to National Risk Managers.

iv. Selection processes

When you select persons for positions of trust and responsibility for children you must base your selection on the role profiles and follow the relevant rules for selection (as set forth in these procedures and in the Programme Guides).

1.B Application and Interview process for persons in a position of trust and responsibility who have international programme responsibility (for example, leaders or staff - see the Programme Guides for further definition)

- i. If you are responsible for the selection and recruitment of people with international programme responsibility, you must make sure that:
- ii. Advertisements for the available positions include expectations for the role and a clear statement about CISV's commitment to child protection and our values.

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- iii. Applicants complete a standardised application form (for example the Staff-Leader Application Form).
- iv. Applicants sign a personal declaration that they do not have a history of any behaviours that would affect their ability to meet CISV's duty of care to participants (for example: criminal activity, child abuse, violence, drug/alcohol abuse).
- v. You ask applicants if they have any developmental conditions, physical, or mental health conditions that may affect their ability to meet the requirements of the role and programme/event.
- vi. Applicants provide two references (these must not be from close family; they must be from people who have known the applicant for more than 2 years), which you must check.
- vii. You require applicants to attend an interview with CISV representatives. At least one of the CISV representatives must have training in the Child Protection Policy.
- viii. You must select applicants based on their ability to deliver on the relevant role profile description.

Note: The selection process is set out in detail in the CISV Programme Guides.

1.C Recruitment at short notice

You **must** have a plan for how to replace (often at short notice) leaders or staff who are not able to fulfil their role either just prior to, or during, an international programme. The replacements must be qualified, selected in line with the processes outlined in this document and the Programme Guides, and trained.



Procedure 2: Education And Training

2.A Creating a safe and supportive environment



Responsibilities of the person in charge at a programme or event

- i. You must make it clear to everyone attending the programme or event that you are the 'person in charge' and what that means.



Responsibilities of the Chapter/National Risk Manager

- ii. All active Chapter/NA members must be aware that the Chapter/National Risk Manager is the person with lead responsibility for the Child Protection Policy within that organization.
- iii. Before your Chapter/NA sends children to participate in any CISV programme or event, you must make sure that they are familiar with the Child Protection Policy and the Adult Code of Conduct, as well as how they can share their concerns.
- iv. When your Chapter/NA hosts a programme, you must make sure that all participants, leaders, and host families receive training on the Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Adult Code of Conduct, and CISV Behaviour Policy at the beginning of the programme.
- v. You must encourage and help persons in positions of trust and responsibility to reflect on and understand intercultural differences to reduce misunderstandings.
- vi. You must ensure that programme leaders, staff, and host families are trained to recognise situations where abuse of children may occur to enable them to react appropriately if they have concerns.



Responsibilities of the International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead

- i. You must make sure all staff at the International Office and members of the Governing Board receive training in the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and the Adult Code of Conduct.
- ii. You must make sure that Chapter/NA Risk Managers have the training and access to the support to enable them to be effective in their roles.

2.B Training Of People In Positions Of Trust And Responsibility.



Responsibilities of the Chapter/National/International Risk Manager

You must make sure that:

- i. All persons in positions of trust and responsibility are trained on the following points:
 - The specific responsibilities of their role;

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- The CISV Behaviour Policy (Info File R-07);
- The CISV Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Adult Code of Conduct
- How to assess their own practices against what is considered good practice;
- How to recognize signs of possible abuse or reasons for concern ([see Procedure 5A: Becoming Aware](#));
- How to respond to concerns expressed by a child;
- How to work safely and effectively with children; and
- Intercultural competence and sensitivity relevant to their role.

- ii. You are responsible for making sure that person receives training after they are selected. Ideally, this should be before they start their role, or as soon as possible. If training is not possible before they start their role, then they should **at a minimum** have confirmed that they have read, understood, and will follow our Behaviour Policy, Adult Code of Behaviour, Social Media Guidelines, and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.



Procedure 3: Responsibilities And Behaviour Protocols



Trustees of CISV International will:

- Ensure this Child Protection Policy is in place, is monitored, and reviewed
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and the procedures by working with the International Risk Manager and Safeguarding Lead
- Nominate a Safeguarding trustee who has responsibility for supporting the Senior Management Team by acting as a champion for Safeguarding and Child Protection and who takes responsibility for keeping up to date with the Charity Commission requirements for Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- Ensure that serious incidents are reported to the Charity Commission



The Safeguarding Lead and International Risk Manager will:

- Provide support to Chapter and National Risk Managers
- Alert the relevant members of the Senior Management Team and the Trustees about Child Protection issues that need to be addressed at the international organizational level
- Ensure these policy and procedures are reviewed and updated
- Ensure these policy and procedures are posted on the website in an easily accessible place
- Ensure that induction and training for International Office staff is delivered
- Work with the Chapter/National Risk Managers to ensure the policy is communicated and implemented
- Make decisions about the response to child protection concerns and liaise with other agencies to report child protection concerns
- Ensure accurate records of child protection concerns are kept securely
- Act as a source of advice and support to staff regarding Child Protection concerns
- Monitor compliance with the policy



Chapter/National Risk Managers will:

- Encourage an environment within the organization where information about the child protection policy is easily accessible, and open discussion about child protection prevention and child protection concerns can take place
- Ensure that proper procedure is followed for selection, training, and programme planning (for instance, the use of Risk Management Checklist Report)
- Identify a person responsible for the Child Protection Policy for each CISV programme or event
- Work with national or local training coordinators to ensure that child protection training is delivered to staff, leaders, host families and other relevant people.
- Support the Person in Charge or other persons who have concerns about a child
- Pass on concerns to the International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead via the Incident Report Form within 48 hours

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Person in Charge (on site) for the Child Protection Policy will:

- Ensure that all leaders and participants have received relevant child protection training
- Encourage an environment where open discussion about child protection concerns can take place
- Support anyone at the programme who has concerns about a child
- Liaise with the Local/National Risk Manager about child protection concerns or disclosures
- Document concerns and pass them on to the Local/National Risk Manager



All Persons in Positions of Trust and Responsibility will:

- Always follow the rules set out in our Behaviour Policy, the Adult Code of Behaviour as well as the rules regarding Adult Supervision set out in the relevant CISV International Programme Guide.
- Attend CISV Child Protection training
- Apply the CISV Adult Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy in a spirit of respect, sensitivity, and common sense, where the best interest of the child is always your primary consideration.
- Make sure that the CISV Adult Code of Conduct is displayed clearly during any CISV programme or activity
- Be familiar with the CISV Child Protection policy and procedures
- Follow the procedures for responding to and reporting child protection concerns as laid out in the CISV Child Protection policy document.



Procedure 4: Communicating with and about Children

4A. Adult Communication with and about Children

You must:

- i. Never engage in any private, one-on-one contact or communication with children
- ii. Only contact children about things that are relevant to your CISV role
- iii. Ensure that personal conferences or meetings you have with a child are conducted with the knowledge and in view of other adults and/or children
- iv. Include other adults and/or children in online communications with children (texting, phone calls, chat, instant messaging, etc.)
- v. Include other adults and/or children in any communication via social media with children (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- vi. Recognise that you are a role model and conduct yourself appropriately.
- vii. Reflect the same values and behaviours in any contact with children outside of a CISV programme or outside of CISV, as you would within a programme or CISV.
- viii. Never provide personal details about children on your personal social media accounts (for example, through tagging, sharing full names, birthdays)
- ix. Never include personal or physical information that identifies the location of a child on a website or in communications (for example, openly posting the address of a camp before or during the programme).
- x. Never share personal information about a child with anyone who does not need to know
- xi. Ensure that communication about children is respectful and is restricted to what is necessary to provide a safe environment and good educational experiences

We strongly recommend that:

- i. You have at least two adults in all online communications and communications via social media with children.
- ii. You do not use personal social media accounts to communicate with children.

4B. Permission to Use of Images/video and Art or Written Work

- i. You must **never** share a photograph or video footage of a child or children on your personal social media account or accounts unless you have specific permission from their parents.

- ii. All participants (including leaders and staff) in CISV international programmes must have a correct and signed legal form to participate.
- iii. The CISV legal forms give you consent to use and publish photographs, artwork, and written work as well as video and audiotape created as part of participation in CISV international programmes. You can **only** use these items in the production of CISV educational or promotional materials, including web pages or on official CISV social media accounts. You may use these items and publish them with a child's age and nationality. Unless you obtain specific parental consent, you must not identify a child by name.
- iv. Outside of CISV international programmes, you must ensure you have parental permission to use images, photographs, videos, art, or written work of or produced by children in a CISV activity, event, gathering, or meeting.
- v. Unless you have specific written parental consent, you must not identify a child by name in any social media captions. You must not 'tag' a photograph of a child.
- vi. When you take or use a photograph, you must ensure that children are appropriately clothed and are not in sexually provocative poses.
- vii. When you photograph children, you must focus on the overall activity or group as opposed to close ups or individual children, unless you have the specific written parental consent.
- viii. You must respect the wishes and feelings of the children before you take photographs and before you post them online (if a child feels uncomfortable being photographed or having their photograph shared, you should not take or share their photograph).
- ix. When you work with other organizations you must ensure that you gain proper permission to use any photographs, videos etc. that include children from the other organization.
- x. You must make sure that photographs, videos, etc. give an accurate and balanced portrayal of the children engaged in CISV activities in a safe environment that reflects the values of CISV. This is especially important when you work with partners that work with children with disabilities, marginalized groups, or in situations that might promote or spread stereotypes.



Procedure 5: Recognising, Reporting, and Documenting Concerns



Responsibilities of any adult in CISV

Your primary concern must always be the best interest of the child. Every situation is different and it is important that you involve your Risk Manager and/or person(s) in charge as early as possible to determine how to follow this procedure. **If a child is at risk of immediate harm or danger, your first action must be to make sure they are protected from that harm or danger.**

5A. Becoming aware

- i. There are many ways you can become aware of child protection concerns:
 - You observe something that feels wrong or you know is wrong
 - You are told something by a child that feels wrong or you know is wrong
 - Someone else tells you that they have either heard or seen something that they feel is wrong or they know is wrong

You should not automatically assume that abuse is occurring. It is important, however, not to dismiss fears, worries, physical indicators, or significant changes in behaviour. Some possible signs of abuse are:

- Physical Abuse – frequent or unexplained injuries
- Psychological/Emotional Abuse – withdrawn behaviour, fear or anxiety
- Sexual Abuse – sexual knowledge or interest inappropriate to their age, inappropriate sexual behaviour, sexual health concerns
- Neglect – hungry, dirty, lack of adequate clothing

Do not ignore these signs, but remember it is not your role to become an investigator.

Note: The concern you hear could be about something happening at a CISV programme or activity, or in the child's home or community. It might also be something that happened to the child in the past or to an adult in the past when they were a child.

5A. Acting on a suspicion



Responsibilities of any adult who suspects that a child is being, or has been, abused

- i. You must immediately report any reasonable suspicion, whether based on your own observations or someone else's, to the person in charge or your Risk Manager. Ignoring your suspicion or concern is not an option. (See [Procedure 5D: Reporting a concern](#) and [Procedure 5E: Documenting a concern](#)) If you are in doubt, contact the person in charge or your Risk Manager to discuss the concern.

- ii. It is contrary to the values of CISV for anyone to seek revenge upon any person who in good faith reports a concern.



Responsibilities of the person in charge

If someone reports a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing to you, there are a number of steps you must take:

- i. Talk to the child – follow the guidance in this document.
- ii. A diary is a good way to keep a note of your concerns and the way the child is behaving. It can also help you to spot patterns of behaviour. You must note your concerns factually and without judgement or evaluation. You must keep the information confidential and store it in a secure way. If the concern is one that you must report, you must submit this 'diary' with the Incident Report Form. If you find that you no longer have concerns, you must destroy the 'diary'. If you are in doubt, ask your Risk Manager for advice.
- iii. Other people who come into contact with the child may also have noticed them acting unusually. Ask them if they have noticed that the child is acting in an unusual way or has unusual or unexplained injuries. Take care to present it calmly for consideration. Do not present your concerns as a conclusion that abuse is happening or present them with more certainty than is reasonable.
- iv. **Bring it up with your Risk Manager.** The Risk Manager can offer you support, advice, and an outside perspective. If you are in doubt, always consult your Risk Manager.

5B. Hearing a disclosure



Responsibilities of any adult

- i. You should follow the advice below when you hear a disclosure.

General points:

- Accept what the child says
- Listen carefully
- Keep calm
- Don't panic
- Don't seek help while the child is talking to you
- Be honest
- Look at the child directly
- Do not appear shocked
- Assure them that they are not to blame for the abuse
- Never ask leading questions
- Try not to repeat the same questions to the child
- Never push for more information than the child has given you, even if you think they have not told you everything
- Do not fill in words, finish their sentences, or make assumptions
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or may be frightened about what will happen next

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- Make certain you distinguish between what the child has actually said and the inferences you may have made. Accuracy is paramount in this stage of the procedure
- Do not permit personal doubt to prevent you from reporting the allegation to the person in charge or your Risk Manager
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- Tell the child that this information must be shared and cannot be kept 'secret' or confidential. The child should also be told that the information will only be shared with those who need to know to help.

Things to say:

- Repeat the child's last few words in a questioning manner
- 'I believe you'
- 'I am going to try to help you'
- 'I will help you'
- 'I am glad that you told me'
- 'You are not to blame'
- 'It is not your fault'

Things not to say:

- 'You should have told someone before'
- 'I can't believe it! I'm shocked!'
- 'Oh that explains a lot'
- 'No not...he's a friend of mine'
- 'I won't tell anyone else'
- "Why? How?"

At the end of the disclosure:

- Reassure the child that it was right to tell you
- Let them know what you are going to do next
- Immediately seek help, in the first place from the person in charge or your Risk Manager
- Document the disclosure that you heard. [See Procedure 5E: Documenting a suspicion or concern.](#)
- Seek help for yourself if you feel you need support – your local/national or regional risk manager will be able to provide you with support.

- ii. If it is about abuse that happened in the past, the disclosure might come from an adult. You should follow the same rules as listed above for hearing a disclosure from a child.

5B. Reporting



Responsibilities of any adult in CISV

- i. If you hear a disclosure or have a reasonable suspicion of child abuse, you must immediately report it to a person in charge or your Risk Manager. If you are at a CISV programme or event, and the concern is about the person in charge, then you must contact your Risk Manager directly.

- ii. The person in charge or Risk Manager is responsible for letting you know how the concern will be dealt with.



Responsibilities of the person in charge

- i. You must make sure that you document the concern or disclosure. If someone tells you they have heard a disclosure from a child, you must make sure that they document what they heard.
- ii. You must contact your Risk Manager immediately, or as soon as possible that day.
- iii. With the Risk Manager, you may agree that the person who heard the disclosure from the child should continue to talk to the child, following the guidance on hearing a disclosure.
- iv. You should agree with your Risk Manager on the proper steps you should take to ensure the physical safety and psychological well-being of the child. This may include referring them for medical treatment or to a psychologist.



Chapter/National Risk Managers

- i. As a Chapter Risk Manager, you must consult directly with your National Risk Manager with regard to any serious incident. Together, you must also keep your Chapter and National Boards advised of any incidents, which relate to your NA. If in doubt, they should start by treating it as a serious incident.
- ii. In the event of a serious incident, you must inform CISV International **within 12 hours**. You should follow the guidance in the CISV Crisis Communications Guide.
- iii. You must submit all disclosures and reasonable suspicions through an Incident Report Form to CISV International and the National Risk Manager of the hosting country **within 48 hours**.

5C. Documenting a disclosure or reasonable suspicion



Responsibilities of any adult hearing a disclosure from a child

- i. You must document any concern that a child discloses to you. Write down accurately what the child has told you. Sign and date your notes and send them using an Incident Report Form to CISV International. CISV International will keep the notes and reports you make in a secure place for an indefinite period; they are essential to help us, and the relevant authorities, decide what is best for the child, and for evidence if necessary.
- ii. When you document a concern, you must take care to make clear what is your personal opinion and what is fact.
- iii. The Incident Report Form and body chart (to indicate any injury you observe) can be found on the Resources section of www.cisv.org.

The information you give about suspected abuse must be accurate and you should make a detailed record at the time of the disclosure or when the concern arises. The information you give must include the following to the best of your ability:

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- The child's name, age, and date of birth;
- The child's home contact details;
- Whether or not you are expressing your own concerns or those of someone else;
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information;
- State clearly what is fact, opinion, or rumour;
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries using the body chart form to indicate the location of such bruises or injury.
- Details of any indirect signs of possible abuse, ;
- Details of witnesses to any incident/s;
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred;
- How the child presented – for instance, were they upset, angry, or scared.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Details of the alleged abuser, if known.

You must submit all relevant evidence with the form. For example, this could be photographs, letters, drawings, or screenshots from a social media account.

CISV International keeps a record of all incidents reported, inquiries made, and actions taken. All incidents are also summarised anonymously and kept in a database of issues, from which annual reports are sent to National Associations for review and further action as needed.

5C. Confidentiality



Responsibilities of any adult in CISV

If you have a reasonable concern for the safety of a child, that concern overrides data protection concerns – in other words, you must share it. However, you must still make every effort to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for everyone involved – only share the concern with those who need to know in order to help address it. This usually includes the following people:

- The person making the allegation;
- The person in charge;
- The Risk Manager (Chapter and/or National);
- Parents of the child;
- Social services/ police/doctor;
- CISV International.

You should inform parents of concerns unless there is evidence to suggest that informing them would place the child at risk of harm or further harm. If that is the case, or if the allegation is about the child's parents, you should not share the information with them until you have conferred with the relevant authorities and/or CISV International.

If the allegation is about the Risk Manager or person in charge, you must escalate the matter to the level above them (for example, if it is about the Chapter Risk Manager you should escalate the matter to the National Risk Manager, if it is about the National Risk

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Manager, you should escalate the matter to the National President or the Regional Risk Manager).

Please refer to our [Data Protection Guidelines](#) on our website for more information.

All reports sent to CISV International are kept indefinitely. They are kept securely stored in a database with restricted access for people at the International Office and the Regional Risk Managers and International Safeguarding and Risk Management Advisors who need such access



Procedure 6: Acting on Concerns

6A. If your concern is about something happening now



Responsibilities of any adult in CISV

If you have a reasonable suspicion of any form of child abuse that is happening now, you must act immediately to protect the child or children from harm. You must report the matter to the person in charge (or your Chapter/National Risk Manager if the person in charge is the person you suspect is abusing the child).



Responsibilities of the person in charge

- i. You must report the matter immediately to the Chapter or National Risk Manager (following procedure 5)
- ii. You must consider if you need to suspend/remove the suspected abuser pending the result of an enquiry or involvement of relevant authorities. You must do this in collaboration with your Risk Manager. (see section below for more on this)
- iii. You must work with your Risk Manager to provide all relevant support to the children involved and other children and adults in the programme



Responsibilities of Chapter/National Risk Managers

- i. You must ensure that relevant information is communicated to the National Risk Manager(s) of the involved countries.
- ii. You must work with the person in charge to determine if the suspected abuser needs to be suspended. If the suspected abuser was suspended, then you must monitor and enforce the suspension and ensure that an internal enquiry is done and a conclusion reached within a reasonable period of time.
- iii. You must refer the case to the relevant authorities, if appropriate.
- iv. You must follow any local legal requirements to report child abuse concerns to the appropriate authorities.
- v. If you suspect that any form of criminal behaviour is taking place at a programme, you must inform the appropriate local authorities immediately and follow their advice.
- vi. You must contact the Regional/International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead to coordinate any internal enquiry and to prepare for any associated risks (for example, legal claims, media attention).

6B. If you have reasonable suspicion of any form of child abuse in a child's home country/setting



Responsibilities of the person in charge

You must report the concern immediately to your Chapter/National Risk Manager (following Procedure 5)



Responsibilities of Chapter/National Risk Manager

- i. You must ensure that relevant information is communicated to the National Risk Manager of the sending country.
- ii. You must also submit full details of any such concern to the Regional/International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead immediately to prepare for any associated risks (for example - legal claims, media attention)



Responsibilities of Chapter/National Risk Manager of the sending country

You must report the concern and send all available documentation and evidence to the relevant authority and cooperate with that authority to address the concerns.

6C. If you have reasonable suspicion that any form of child abuse happened in a CISV context in the past:



Responsibilities of the person in charge

- i. You must report the concern immediately to your Risk Manager (following Procedure 5) to prevent any further risk of harm to any child or children.
- ii. You must work with your Risk Manager to provide all relevant support to the child or children involved and your staff and leaders.



Responsibilities of Chapter/National Risk Manager

- i. You must work with the person in charge (and Chapter Risk Manager if you are a National Risk Manager) to consider if you need to suspend the suspected abuser if they are still involved in CISV, pending an official investigation and/or internal enquiry.
- ii. You must either refer the case to the relevant authorities for investigation OR refer the case to the individual's National Risk Manager.
- iii. You must ensure that relevant information is communicated to the National Risk Managers of the involved countries.
- iv. You must contact the Regional/International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead to coordinate any internal enquiry and to prepare for any associated risks (e.g. legal claims, media attention).

If the person bringing forward the allegation is an adult who does not wish to report it to the authorities that is their choice. CISV must, however, follow up with an internal inquiry to the extent possible.

6D. Suspension – what it means, when and how to suspend an individual suspected or alleged to have breached this policy and procedures.



Responsibilities of Chapter/National/Regional/International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead

The act of suspension does not indicate a person's guilt. An individual must not be suspended automatically when there has been an allegation or without careful thought.

Suspension should be considered in any case where:

- There is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm
- Or, the allegation warrants investigation by the Police
- Or, is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal
- Or, there are concerns that the person about whom the allegations are made may put pressure on, or interfere with, potential witnesses or otherwise impede the enquiry.

If you decide to suspend someone, you must communicate in writing to the person being suspended with a message that includes the following points:

- The reason/s why they are being suspended (not necessarily including details at this point)
- That suspension does not assume guilt or represent disciplinary action. It is a neutral step.
- That they are not allowed to have contact with members of CISV during the suspension – to the degree that is possible and realistic; for example, if their close family are CISV members, this has to be taken into consideration.
- That the enquiry will be done as fast as possible, and the suspension will be reviewed monthly to avoid it becoming unnecessarily protracted.
- That they are not allowed to represent themselves as a member of CISV during the suspension.
- Who will be the single point of contact during this suspension (usually your Chapter or National Risk Manager).
- If relevant, they must hand in all materials owned by CISV for the duration of the suspension (keys, computer, bank access devices, etc.)
- Who in their NA/Chapter will manage the situation.

You must then make a plan for how to monitor and enforce the suspension, and you will need to remove their access to CISV IT systems.

6E. How to conduct an enquiry into a child protection concern or allegation



Responsibilities of Chapter/National/Regional/International Risk Managers and Safeguarding Lead

Any internal child protection enquiry will be based on the following principles:

- i. We always defer to official/formal investigations by relevant authorities, if such investigations are undertaken. For example, if the police are investigating, we ask them to let you know when or whether we can make enquiries.
- ii. Any decision we make considers the best interest of the child (ren) and is in accordance with laws and best practices relevant to the particular countries involved.
- iii. We ensure that we get and consider all relevant perspectives.
- iv. We always consider cultural differences and alternative explanations, where relevant, but we will not tolerate breaches of this policy and these procedures or of the Adult Code of Behaviour.
- v. We always allow the accused person to respond to the concerns.
- vi. We follow relevant laws and best practices in regards to data protection and confidentiality
- vii. All internal enquiries **must** be fully disclosed to the International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead or Regional Risk Managers of CISV International.
- viii. In case of serious issues, internal enquiries will be coordinated by the relevant Regional Risk Managers.

CISV International will review all Incident Reports received and will determine whether any further action is required. The International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead and Regional Risk Managers will take the lead on any inquiry into child protections concerns or allegations conducted by CISV International. They may request that a programme committee, National Association, or other party make inquiries and report back on the results. The International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead and Regional Risk Managers may then advise on specific actions. In serious cases, the International Safeguarding Lead will consult with the Secretary General to determine the best course of action and they will notify the International Board.

6E. Framework for who makes decisions and how on the suspension/removal or permanent exclusion of a (suspected) abuser



Responsibilities of Chapter/National Risk Manager

- i. You make the initial decisions in cases where someone must be immediately removed, reported, or suspended to avoid further risk of harm to children.
- ii. With your Chapter/NA Board, you must determine, according to your legal structure, who can make the decision to impose sanctions (suspension, exclusion, etc.) on individuals in your Chapter/NA and how such a decision must be reached to meet National and local laws. (Chapter Risk Managers must inform their National Risk Manager of any consideration or decision to suspend or remove an individual.)

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- iii. Final decisions on sanctions (for example, if a person is banned or suspended from CISV) are taken either following the advice of the involved authorities or on the conclusion of an internal enquiry, or both.
- iv. If you determine that the behaviour of an individual has been judged based on cultural misunderstandings or similar, then you should make sure that the consequence reflects an educational approach. You should aim to repair any damage done and enable successful mediation and better understanding and respect for cultural differences in the future.

6F. List of Excluded Individuals

- i. CISV International has a List of Excluded Individuals, which is available for National Risk Managers. This list contains the names of people CISV has banned or suspended from any involvement or affiliation with CISV.
- ii. NAs must provide names of individuals they have banned or suspended from the NA or any of their Chapters to the International Risk Manager / Safeguarding Lead with a report of what happened and how the conclusion was reached.

Appendix 1 Adult Code of Behaviour

This Code of Behaviour applies to all adults in CISV as well as to Children in roles of trust and responsibility, e.g. Junior Counselors and people in Junior Branch Leadership Positions.

This Code helps CISV to provide a positive, inclusive and welcoming environment that reflects our values and where everyone feels safe, supported and respected.

I WILL ALWAYS:

1. Put the safety and welfare of the children in CISV as my first priority.
2. Help create a culture where children feel safe
3. Encourage children to speak out and bring up any concerns they have.
4. Listen to the voices of children
5. Treat everyone with courtesy, dignity and respect.
6. Recognize that as adults we are role models at all times and we set the tone for what is acceptable
7. Model positive behaviours that reflect the values of CISV: Friendship, Inclusiveness, Enthusiasm, Engagement and Cooperation.
8. Follow CISV rules, especially the Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection Policy (see especially Procedure 4: Communicating with and about Children).
9. Recognize that my behavior, both in person and online, affects the reputation of CISV
10. Use appropriate language and behaviour in all forms of communication.
11. Report all concerns about inappropriate or forbidden behaviours immediately to the Person in Charge.
12. Avoid physical contact or displays of intimacy that could reasonably be perceived as inappropriate or an abuse of power or trust.
13. Challenge others on behaviour that I feel is against our Code of Behaviour and be open to be challenged by others on my behaviour.

I understand and agree to follow this Code of Behaviour at all times. I understand that violating this Code may result in serious consequences including temporary or permanent removal from an activity or a programme, and/or suspension or termination of my CISV membership.

Signature/Date: _____

Appendix 2 Definition of Bullying

In addition, bullying is a form of child abuse although often, but not always, the person who is the bully is also a child.

Bullying is repeated behaviour that is intended or likely to cause a person to feel excluded, afraid or upset. Be aware that pranks can easily go too far and become bullying.

There are four types of bullying:

- Physical - using your body or objects to hurt someone
- Verbal - using words to hurt someone
- Social (relational) – using friends or relationships to hurt someone (e.g. by excluding them)
- Cyber - using communication technologies e.g. social networks, text or instant messaging, email, websites etc. to hurt someone