



## **Youth for Exchange and Understanding Cyprus (YEU Cyprus)- Child Protection Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

YEU Cyprus is a non-profit, independent youth NGO based in Nicosia, that works closely with young people aiming to empower them in realizing the societies they want to be living in. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children and young people involved in our projects and activities, are safe from abuse and harm (intentional and unintentional) of different types (sexual, physical, emotional, neglect) and misconducts (like sexual harassment, bullying). For this purpose, YEU Cyprus adopts the present policy that should be read in conjunction with the relevant local and European regulations.

This policy applies to all persons working with and for YEU Cyprus, including staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers regardless of the type or duration of involvement. This document outlines the commitment of YEU Cyprus, measures, rules, roles and responsibilities, and reporting mechanisms adopted for the protection of children and young people.

### **2. Definitions**

“Child safeguarding is the responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children’s safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities” (Keeping Children Safe, 2014).

### **3. Our Commitment**

This policy reaffirms and strengthens our commitment as an organisation towards keeping children safe and protecting them from all forms of harm or abuse, as well as promoting their wellbeing and creating an environment where they can thrive.

### **4. Guiding principles**

This policy is based on the following guiding principles:

i) Equal Rights and Wellbeing: All children possess equal rights to protection, and it is our duty to ensure and promote their wellbeing and active participation.

- ii) Best Interest of Children: Every action related to child safeguarding must prioritize the best interests of children. This necessitates respecting their rights and preventing harm across all our projects and activities.
- iii) Collective Responsibility: Safeguarding is the responsibility of every individual associated with YEU Cyprus, including staff, volunteers, and partners. While training, advice, and support will be offered, active participation is expected to fulfill one's duties in safeguarding children and young people.
- iv) Transparency and Priority: We foster a transparent and open environment where child safeguarding takes precedence. We recognize that situations of abuse and harm thrive when concerns from staff, volunteers, partners, children, families, and community members are not addressed.
- v) Serious Response to Concerns: All reported concerns regarding a child's safety and protection will be treated seriously. When required, necessary actions will be taken to shield the child and initiate proceedings against the alleged wrongdoer. This might involve referrals to law enforcement and child protection agencies. Concerning allegations involving staff, volunteers, and partners, actions may encompass suspension or termination of engagement.
- vi) Collaborative Approach: Recognizing that no single entity can ensure child safeguarding in isolation, we collaborate with other organizations, agencies, and groups as needed and appropriate, including state departments and ministries tasked with child protection.
- vii) Confidentiality: Confidentiality is maintained, and personal details of individuals linked to child protection concerns, including those raising concerns, are not disclosed. Exceptions may arise when information sharing is crucial for a child's protection or when a potential criminal offense is involved.
- viii) Raising Awareness: We raise awareness and promote the significance of safeguarding children, while highlighting our commitment and values. Our policy and procedures are publically available, and we welcome feedback on their implementation and relevance.
- ix) Compliance with Laws and Policies: Our policy aligns with international and national laws and policies pertaining to child safeguarding.
- x) Cultural Context and Adaptation: In safeguarding children and promoting their rights need the cultural and operational context needs to be considered, as well as the nature of activities. However, lowering standards of safeguarding is unacceptable.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

Specifying the roles and responsibilities is important to ensure that the guiding principles are upheld and the policy is respected;

i) all persons working with and for YEU Cyprus, including staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers regardless of the type or duration of involvement, as appropriate, are responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that safeguards children's and young people's rights, ensuring the code of conduct is followed, the guiding principles are upheld and, taking appropriate measures for this purpose.

ii) all persons working with and for YEU Cyprus, including staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers regardless of the type or duration of involvement, are responsible to report any misconduct of anyone associated with the organisation or that involves the organisation, following the reporting mechanisms.

iii) The Board of Directors and management are responsible to inform all personnel of the contents of the present policy and ascertain that each personnel member receives a copy thereof.

iv) The Board of Directors and management are responsible to take appropriate action in case that there is a reason to believe that any of the code of conduct is violated.

v) The Board of Directors and management are responsible during recruitment and selection of personnel, to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to detect anyone unsuitable. During this process, references (non-relatives) are checked to verify their experience, knowledge and suitability for their role. New hires may be requested to present a Clear Criminal Record Certificate and a Prevention and Combating of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography Law Certificate.

vi) The policy should be made available publicly, and ensure that any person associated with the organisation, to the extent possible, is aware of the policy and its contents.

vii) This policy should be part of any Safeguarding Policies Training organised for personnel.

## 6. Reviewing this Policy

Regular reviews of this policy shall be done to ensure it remains current and relevant with the global standards and EU and local legislation as well as training shall be conducted for all personnel.

Last Review was August 2023.