

# Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy



# **Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**



## Policy Endorsement & Approval

This Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy has been formally reviewed and approved by the Executive Director and the Board of Directors of Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF). It reflects our legal and moral commitment to protecting children from all forms of abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

We commit to ensuring this policy is fully implemented, regularly reviewed, and supported with adequate resources, staff training, and accountability systems.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
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## Document Control & Versioning Table

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Changes Made</b>	<b>Approved By</b>
1.0	April 2025	COO	Initial full policy draft	Board of Directors

## Table of Contents

Policy Overview & Statement of Commitment .....	7
Definitions & Terminology .....	8
Purpose & Scope .....	11
Purpose .....	11
Scope .....	11
Guiding Principles .....	13
4.1 Best Interests of the Child .....	13
4.2 Do No Harm.....	13
4.3 Zero Tolerance for Abuse.....	14
4.4 Survivor-Centered Approach.....	14
4.5 Accountability & Transparency .....	15
4.6 Non-Discrimination & Inclusion .....	15
4.7 Child Participation & Voice.....	15
Code of Conduct for Staff, Volunteers & Partners .....	17
5.1 Core Expectations.....	17
5.2 Prohibited Conduct (Tier 1 & Tier 2 Violations) .....	17
Tier 1 Violations – Gross Misconduct .....	17
Tier 2 Violations – Boundary & Professional Misconduct.....	18
5.3 Physical Contact Guidelines .....	19
5.4 Online & Digital Conduct .....	19
5.5 Personal Relationships & Conflicts of Interest .....	19
5.6 Reporting Responsibilities .....	20
5.7 Affirmation of Compliance .....	20
Core Safeguarding Commitments in Recruitment.....	21
6.2 Role-Based Risk Classification.....	21
6.3 Screening & Vetting Process.....	22
6.4 Red Flags & Disqualification Criteria .....	22
6.5 Safeguarding Declarations & Contracts .....	23
6.6 Probation & Monitoring .....	23
Mandatory Reporting Mechanism.....	24

7.1 Who Must Report?.....	24
7.2 What Must Be Reported? .....	24
7.3 How and When to Report .....	25
7.4 What Happens After a Report Is Made? .....	25
7.5 Legal Compliance & Referral Obligations .....	26
7.6 Protection for Reporters (Whistleblower Safety) .....	26
7.7 Staff Training & Awareness .....	27
Response & Case Management Protocol .....	28
8.1 Principles Guiding Our Response .....	28
8.2 Intake & Initial Risk Assessment .....	28
8.3 Survivor Safety Planning .....	29
8.4 Legal, Medical & Psychosocial Referrals .....	29
8.5 Internal Actions: Managing the Alleged Perpetrator .....	30
8.6 Case Documentation & Record Keeping.....	30
8.7 Case Review, Monitoring & Closure .....	30
8.8 Survivor Feedback & Ongoing Support .....	31
Confidentiality & Information Handling .....	32
9.1 Guiding Principles on Confidentiality .....	32
9.2 Types of Sensitive Information.....	32
9.3 Information Access & Storage Protocol .....	33
9.4 Information Sharing Protocols .....	33
9.5 Survivor Anonymity in Reports & Communications .....	34
9.6 Breach of Confidentiality .....	34
Safe Spaces & Physical Environment Safety .....	36
10.1 Safe Space Principles .....	36
10.2 BSF's Current Safe Space Approach .....	36
10.3 Minimum Physical Safety Standards for Program Spaces .....	37
10.4 Staff Conduct Within Physical Spaces .....	37
10.5 Transportation & Off-Site Safety Protocol .....	38
10.6 Monitoring of Partner Spaces .....	38
Training & Capacity Building.....	39

11.1 Training Objectives .....	39
11.2 Who Must Be Trained .....	39
11.3 Mandatory Training Modules .....	40
11.4 Training Delivery Format.....	40
11.5 Training Records & Compliance Tracking.....	41
11.6 Non-Compliance Consequences .....	41
Roles, Responsibilities & Governance .....	42
12.1 Organization-Wide Responsibilities .....	42
12.2 Executive Director (ED) .....	42
12.3 Chief Operating Officer (COO).....	43
12.4 Safeguarding Officer .....	43
12.5 Department Heads & Project Leads .....	44
12.6 Human Resources (HR) Lead .....	44
12.7 Communications Lead / Media Spokespersons .....	44
12.8 Board of Directors .....	45
12.9 Partner Organizations & Contractors.....	45
Disciplinary Measures & Enforcement .....	46
13.1 Scope of Disciplinary Action .....	46
13.2 Types of Violations & Sanctions .....	46
Tier 1 Violations (Gross Misconduct).....	47
Tier 2 Violations (Boundary or Professional Misconduct) .....	47
13.3 Investigation & Disciplinary Process .....	48
13.4 Referrals to Law Enforcement or Authorities.....	49
13.5 Right to Appeal.....	49
13.6 Protection for Survivors, Witnesses & Reporters .....	50
APPENDICES .....	51
Appendix 1: Code of Conduct Declaration Form .....	51
Appendix 2: Child Protection Declaration Form.....	53
Appendix 3: Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form .....	55
Appendix 4: Safeguarding Risk Assessment Checklist .....	57
Appendix 5: Child-Friendly Reporting Poster (Text Description Template) .....	59

Appendix 6: Safeguarding Training Log Template ..... 60

Appendix 7: Partner Safeguarding Compliance Statement (Template for MOU or  
Contract Attachment) ..... 61

Appendix 8: Child Participation & Informed Consent Template ..... 63

Appendix 9: Case Closure Checklist ..... 65

Appendix 10: List of Pre-Vetted Referral Partners..... 66

## Acronyms & Abbreviations

Acronym	Meaning
BSF	Bringing Smiles Foundation
DCS	Department of Children Services (Kenya)
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

## Policy Overview & Statement of Commitment

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) is fully committed to upholding the rights, dignity, and safety of every child we come into contact with—directly or indirectly—through our programs, services, communications, or partnerships. We recognize that child sexual abuse is a grave violation of a child’s rights and a widespread issue in the communities we work in, particularly within informal settlements like Mathare.

This Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy outlines BSF’s formal commitment to preventing, detecting, and responding to all forms of abuse, exploitation, neglect, and violence against children. It applies to all BSF personnel, volunteers, consultants, board members, implementing partners, and contractors, regardless of location or role. It is a legally binding and operationally enforceable policy that reflects both our moral duty and legal obligations.

BSF adopts a **zero-tolerance approach** to child abuse of any kind. We will not tolerate, ignore, or conceal acts of abuse, exploitation, or policy violation under any circumstances. Every allegation will be taken seriously and handled swiftly, fairly, and confidentially, with the **best interests of the child as the paramount concern**.

This policy is grounded in and guided by the following legal and ethical frameworks:

- The **Kenya Children Act (2022)**
- The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**
- The **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child**
- The **Keeping Children Safe Coalition Child Safeguarding Standards**

We are aware that organizations working to protect children must also be vigilant not to cause harm. For this reason, BSF is committed to the **“Do No Harm” principle** and ensures that all child protection measures are survivor-centered, trauma-informed, community-sensitive, and evidence-based.

This policy is not a formality or a symbolic gesture—it is a binding framework that all individuals associated with BSF are required to understand, sign, and follow without exception. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal, legal prosecution, or termination of contracts or partnerships.

The policy is owned by the **Executive Director**, implemented under the authority of the **Chief Operating Officer (COO)**, and reviewed every **two years**, or immediately following any serious safeguarding incident or legal change.

## Definitions & Terminology

The following definitions apply throughout this Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and are based on the **Kenya Children Act (2022)**, the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, and international safeguarding standards. Where discrepancies arise between global and national definitions, BSF applies the interpretation most protective of the child.

TERM	DEFINITION
1. <b>Child</b>	Any person below the age of <b>18 years</b> , in accordance with Kenyan law and international conventions.
2. <b>Child Protection</b>	All measures and structures designed to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence against children.
3. <b>Safeguarding</b>	The broader concept of protecting children from all forms of harm—whether deliberate or unintentional—including ensuring their physical, emotional, psychological, and social well-being. At BSF, safeguarding includes proactive risk prevention across programs, personnel, and partners.
4. <b>Abuse</b>	<p>Any form of <b>physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological mistreatment</b> or neglect that results in actual or potential harm to the health, development, dignity, or survival of the child.</p> <p><b>Types of Abuse include (but are not limited to):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Physical Abuse:</b> Intentional use of force causing injury or suffering (e.g., hitting, shaking, burning).</li> <li>• <b>Sexual Abuse:</b> Engaging a child in sexual activity—including touching, rape, grooming, or exposure to sexual content or</li> </ul>

	<p>exploitation (e.g., child pornography, sex trafficking).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Emotional/Psychological Abuse:</b> Behaviors that harm a child’s self-worth or emotional well-being (e.g., threats, humiliation, rejection).</li> <li>• <b>Neglect:</b> Persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical, emotional, educational, or medical needs.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Exploitation</b>	The use of a child for someone else’s advantage—financial, sexual, labor, or otherwise—often resulting in harm to the child. Includes <b>child trafficking, child labor, sexual exploitation, and online exploitation.</b>
<b>6. Survivor</b>	A child who has experienced abuse, exploitation, or harm. BSF uses this term in preference to “victim” to reflect resilience and agency, while recognizing that legal documents may still use the term “victim.”
<b>7. Perpetrator</b>	Any person (adult or child) who is alleged or proven to have committed an act of abuse, exploitation, or harm against a child.
<b>8. Mandated Reporter</b>	Any person legally or organizationally required to report known or suspected child abuse. <b>All BSF staff, volunteers, and partners are mandated reporters</b> under this policy.
<b>9. Disclosure</b>	When a child shares information—directly or indirectly—that they have been abused or harmed. Disclosures must

	always be taken seriously and responded to using BSF’s response protocol.
<b>10. Grooming</b>	A process where a perpetrator builds trust with a child (and sometimes their family or community) in order to <b>exploit or abuse the child at a later stage.</b>
<b>11. Safeguarding Concern</b>	Any behavior, information, incident, or environment that raises <b>a reasonable suspicion</b> that a child may be at risk of harm or abuse, whether currently or in the past.
<b>12. Case Management</b>	The structured process of assessing, planning, referring, coordinating, and monitoring services for a child who has experienced—or is at risk of—abuse or exploitation.
<b>13. Best Interests of the Child</b>	A guiding legal and ethical principle which mandates that all decisions and actions affecting children must prioritize their <b>health, safety, dignity, and overall well-being.</b>

# Purpose & Scope

## Purpose

The purpose of this Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy is to establish a clear, binding framework that guides how Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) prevents, identifies, responds to, and takes action against all forms of abuse, exploitation, neglect, and violence toward children.

This policy serves to:

- **Prevent harm** to children in all BSF activities, whether direct or indirect.
- **Ensure swift, survivor-centered, and legally compliant responses** when abuse or exploitation is suspected or confirmed.
- **Clarify the roles and responsibilities** of all BSF personnel, volunteers, board members, consultants, and partners in upholding the safety and dignity of every child.
- **Embed safeguarding into the operational fabric** of the organization—from recruitment and programming to partnerships, communications, and advocacy.
- **Demonstrate BSF’s legal and ethical accountability** to the children and communities it serves, in accordance with the Kenya Children Act (2022), the UNCRC, and other applicable laws and standards.
- **Support long-term change** by modeling and promoting child-safe practices in all our interventions, beginning with the pilot in Mathare and scaling nationally.

This policy is **not optional, advisory, or aspirational**—it is an enforceable standard that underpins BSF’s legitimacy, credibility, and effectiveness.

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## Scope

This policy applies to **all individuals and entities** engaged with BSF, including but not limited to:

### Internal Personnel

- Full-time and part-time BSF employees
- Board members and executive leadership
- Interns, fellows, and national service staff
- Volunteers, including short-term and community-based volunteers

## External Actors

- Contractors, vendors, and service providers engaged by BSF
- Implementing partners, grantees, or local organizations receiving BSF support
- Consultants, advisors, and technical service providers
- Media and communications professionals working with or representing BSF

## Programmatic and Physical Environments

This policy is binding in **all physical, digital, and programmatic contexts**, including but not limited to:

- Field operations, including awareness campaigns, school programs, research activities, and survivor support work in Mathare and other communities
- Office premises and BSF-hosted events or spaces
- Partner institutions and referral facilities where BSF beneficiaries are present
- Online platforms, including websites, social media, digital campaigns, and messaging apps used for program delivery or communications

## Children Covered by This Policy

This policy applies to **all children** who:

- Participate in BSF programs or activities (directly or indirectly)
- Are referred to BSF for support or services (e.g., survivors of sexual violence)
- Are in communities targeted by BSF interventions
- Are exposed to BSF's public communications, content, or representatives

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All persons covered under this scope are expected to:

- Read and understand the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Sign a formal declaration of compliance (staff, volunteers, and partners)
- Adhere strictly to the Code of Conduct and reporting obligations
- Take proactive responsibility for maintaining a child-safe environment at all times

## Guiding Principles

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) grounds its child protection and safeguarding work in a set of legally and ethically binding principles that reflect international standards, Kenyan law, and the realities of the communities we serve.

These principles are not philosophical ideals—they are **practical commitments** that underpin all aspects of our work, from direct service delivery and community engagement to staffing, partnerships, advocacy, and decision-making. They form the **ethical spine** of this policy and are **non-negotiable**.

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### 4.1 Best Interests of the Child

All decisions and actions taken by BSF—whether immediate or long-term—must prioritize the best interests of the child, as required by **Article 53(2) of the Constitution of Kenya**, the **Children Act (2022)**, and **Article 3 of the UNCRC**.

This means:

- Ensuring every response, referral, or service offered promotes the **safety, health, education, emotional development, and dignity** of the child.
- Balancing **immediate safety needs** (e.g., removing a child from danger) with **longer-term outcomes** (e.g., reintegration, healing, justice).
- Consulting, where possible, with the child and/or trusted guardians in age-appropriate ways before making decisions that affect them.

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### 4.2 Do No Harm

BSF adopts the internationally recognized “Do No Harm” principle, which requires that all safeguarding interventions—no matter how well-intended—must avoid creating additional risks, distress, or long-term negative consequences for the child or community.

This means:

- Never exposing children to **further trauma, stigma, or retaliation** during investigations, referrals, or media coverage.
- Carefully evaluating the **unintended effects** of BSF’s programs, policies, or advocacy campaigns (e.g., backlash from perpetrators, family rejection, media leaks).

- Ensuring community engagement strategies are **sensitive to culture, gender, power dynamics, and survivor safety.**
- 

### 4.3 Zero Tolerance for Abuse

BSF maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** for all forms of child abuse, exploitation, and neglect—whether physical, sexual, emotional, or institutional. This principle applies to all BSF personnel, volunteers, partners, and associates, without exception.

Zero tolerance means:

- All allegations are **taken seriously and acted upon immediately**—regardless of the rank, role, or status of the alleged perpetrator.
  - **No protective relationships, reputational concerns, or organizational loyalty** will override the duty to report or respond.
  - Individuals found to have committed or concealed abuse will face **disciplinary action, dismissal, and referral to authorities.**
- 

### 4.4 Survivor-Centered Approach

BSF places survivors at the heart of all responses to abuse. Our interventions aim not only to protect survivors from harm, but also to promote their **dignity, voice, healing, and empowerment.**

This means:

- Listening to survivors and, where possible, **involving them in decisions** about their care, referrals, and support.
  - Avoiding coercion, re-traumatization, or forcing survivors into legal or public disclosure processes.
  - Offering **trauma-informed care**, including psychosocial support, legal assistance, and appropriate referrals for long-term recovery.
  - Respecting a child’s evolving capacity to understand, express preferences, and participate in matters affecting them.
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## 4.5 Accountability & Transparency

BSF holds all individuals and partners accountable for upholding child protection standards. Transparency in safeguarding practices is essential to building trust with survivors, families, communities, and donors.

This means:

- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for child protection at every level of the organization.
  - Regular training, supervision, and monitoring of staff and volunteers.
  - **Accessible reporting channels** and confidential case management processes.
  - Open communication about BSF’s safeguarding commitments with the public and stakeholders—without compromising survivor safety or legal processes.
- 

## 4.6 Non-Discrimination & Inclusion

BSF is committed to protecting **all children equally**, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, nationality, language, socioeconomic background, refugee/displacement status, HIV status, or sexual orientation.

This means:

- Recognizing that certain children (e.g., girls, children with disabilities, LGBTQ+ youth, or street-involved children) may face **heightened risk** of abuse or exclusion.
  - Designing programs and protection mechanisms that are **inclusive, accessible, and responsive to diverse needs**.
  - Ensuring that no child is denied support or protection based on identity, perceived “deservingness,” or societal bias.
- 

## 4.7 Child Participation & Voice

BSF believes that children are not just passive recipients of protection—they are **rights-holders with agency** who have the right to express their views in all matters affecting them.

This means:

- Creating safe, age-appropriate spaces where children can **speak up, ask questions, and participate in shaping responses.**
- Using accessible, child-friendly language and tools to ensure understanding.
- Ensuring that children's voices are **taken seriously** and integrated into BSF's programming, policy reviews, and monitoring processes.

# Code of Conduct for Staff, Volunteers & Partners

All individuals working with or representing Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)—including staff, volunteers, consultants, interns, board members, and partner personnel—are **required to comply** with the following Code of Conduct.

This Code defines the **minimum standards of behavior** when interacting with children, both in person and digitally. Any breach will result in **disciplinary or legal action**, depending on the severity of the violation.

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## 5.1 Core Expectations

All BSF personnel and associates must:

- Treat every child with **respect, dignity, and compassion** at all times
  - Maintain **professional boundaries** in all interactions with children
  - Act in ways that uphold the **best interests and safety** of every child
  - Take immediate action to **report any suspicion or allegation** of abuse
  - Create and maintain environments where children feel **safe, heard, and empowered**
  - Comply with all legal and organizational child protection requirements
- 

## 5.2 Prohibited Conduct (Tier 1 & Tier 2 Violations)

Violations of this Code are categorized into two tiers based on severity and intent.

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### Tier 1 Violations – Gross Misconduct

These acts are considered abuse or criminal in nature. They will result in **immediate termination**, and where applicable, **reporting to law enforcement or child protection authorities**.

You must **never**:

- Engage in **any form of sexual activity** with a child, including inappropriate touching, grooming, or suggestive behavior.
- Hit, beat, slap, shake, or physically harm a child in any way.
- Use sexually explicit, degrading, or violent language with or around children.

- Share or display **pornographic or sexually explicit content** to a child.
- Use a child for labor, errands, or services not related to their care.
- Photograph, film, or share images of children **without explicit written consent** from BSF and the child's guardian.
- Take children into **your own home, accommodation, or private space**.
- Be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while engaging with children.
- Retaliate against, intimidate, or attempt to silence a child or staff member who reports abuse.
- **Fail to report** known or suspected child abuse within 24 hours.

**Sanction:** Immediate dismissal, internal investigation, permanent blacklisting, and referral to police.

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## Tier 2 Violations – Boundary & Professional Misconduct

These are violations of professional ethics that may not constitute abuse but create unsafe environments or blurred boundaries. If unaddressed, they may escalate to serious harm.

You must **not**:

- Be alone with a child in a **private or unsupervised setting**, including vehicles, closed rooms, or isolated areas.
- Initiate **physical contact** (e.g., hugging, lap-sitting, tickling) unless necessary for safety or consented medical care.
- Share **personal contact information** (e.g., phone number, social media) with children.
- Communicate with children via **private messaging apps or social media** outside approved BSF platforms.
- Give **gifts, money, or special privileges** to specific children.
- Show favoritism or exclusion among children in BSF programs.
- Use language that is **demeaning, shaming, or discriminatory**.
- Engage children in **religious or political discussions** unless part of an approved educational activity.

**Sanction:** Verbal or written warning, mandatory retraining, supervision plan, or contract termination depending on frequency and severity.

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### 5.3 Physical Contact Guidelines

BSF recognizes that physical contact can be part of a caring relationship but also carries risk. To ensure safety:

Allowed only when:

- Necessary for medical or safety purposes
- In the presence of another adult or in public view
- Consented to by the child and appropriate to their age and culture

Never:

- Touch a child in a sexual, intimate, or intrusive way
  - Initiate hugs, lap-sitting, or prolonged touching
  - Force physical contact (e.g., pulling, grabbing, restraining) unless necessary to prevent immediate harm
- 

### 5.4 Online & Digital Conduct

When using digital platforms for BSF work involving children:

- Only use **BSF-approved devices, accounts, and communication tools**
  - Never share or forward **personal stories or images of survivors** outside formal channels
  - Do not add children to personal **social media accounts or private chats**
  - Digital contact should be **transparent, professional, and documented**
- 

### 5.5 Personal Relationships & Conflicts of Interest

BSF personnel must:

- Disclose any **personal relationships** with beneficiaries, partners, or local authorities that may affect impartiality.

- Avoid any romantic or sexual relationship with a child’s caregiver, if such a relationship compromises a child’s access to services or creates a power imbalance.
  - Step back from decision-making roles in any case where personal bias could affect objectivity.
- 

## 5.6 Reporting Responsibilities

All BSF personnel must:

- Report any **suspected or known safeguarding concern** to the Safeguarding Officer or designated alternative within **24 hours**.
  - Cooperate fully with internal investigations.
  - Maintain confidentiality and **not discuss safeguarding cases casually** or with unauthorized persons.
  - Understand that **failure to report** is itself a violation of this policy.
- 

## 5.7 Affirmation of Compliance

All BSF staff, volunteers, board members, and partners must:

- Sign a **Child Protection Declaration** confirming they understand and will follow this Code of Conduct.
- Undergo orientation and refresher training on expected conduct.
- Acknowledge that **ignorance is not a defense** for policy violations.

## Core Safeguarding Commitments in Recruitment

BSF will:

- Prioritize child safety and survivor protection in all hiring decisions.
- Prevent individuals with a known history of abuse, boundary violations, or safeguarding misconduct from entering the organization.
- Conduct risk-based screening **based on the level of access each role has to children.**
- Make **compliance with safeguarding screening and declarations a mandatory condition of employment or engagement.**
- Immediately terminate or reject candidates found to pose a safeguarding risk—**regardless of skill, seniority, or reputation.**

### 6.2 Role-Based Risk Classification

Each role at BSF is assessed and classified according to the potential risk it poses to children:

Risk Level	Description	Examples of Roles	Required Screening
<b>Low Risk</b>	No contact with children or survivors, no access to personal data	Finance officer, logistics assistant	Basic background check, 1 reference, safeguarding declaration
<b>Medium Risk</b>	Indirect exposure to children or survivor data, or limited community engagement	Data analyst, program officer, driver	Police clearance, 2 references, safeguarding training, declaration
<b>High Risk</b>	Direct contact with children or survivors in any capacity	Social workers, field volunteers, counselors	Enhanced screening, psych assessment, 3 references, police clearance

Roles are reclassified as needed based on changes in job description or exposure.

## 6.3 Screening & Vetting Process

BSF's vetting process is conducted in **four mandatory stages**, adjusted by risk level:

### 1. Application Review

- Specific safeguarding clauses included in job descriptions and adverts.
- Candidates required to disclose **any past criminal or disciplinary record** involving children.

### 2. Reference Checks

- At least **two verbal references** for medium-risk roles; **three** for high-risk roles.
- One reference must be a **direct former supervisor**.
- Referees asked explicitly about the candidate's behavior with children, handling of conflict, and any history of misconduct.

### 3. Police Clearance (Certificate of Good Conduct)

- Required for **all personnel** regardless of role.
- Must be issued within the **past 12 months** and renewed every **3 years**.

### 4. Enhanced Checks for High-Risk Roles

- **Psychosocial screening or interview** conducted by trained staff or external partner.
- In-person scenario-based child protection interview to assess boundary understanding.
- Written agreement to abide by BSF's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.

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## 6.4 Red Flags & Disqualification Criteria

Candidates will be **disqualified or terminated** if they:

- Have a **history of child abuse or safeguarding violations**, regardless of legal conviction.
- Fail to disclose disciplinary actions or criminal charges related to children.
- Provide **false, unverifiable, or suspicious references**.
- Show **poor understanding of safeguarding boundaries** during screening.

- Refuse to sign the **BSF Child Protection Declaration**.

BSF reserves the right to terminate employment or contracts **at any time** if a new safeguarding risk is identified.

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## 6.5 Safeguarding Declarations & Contracts

- All successful candidates must **sign a Safeguarding Declaration** before assuming any duties.
  - Safeguarding clauses are included in **employment contracts, volunteer agreements, and partnership MOUs**.
  - Contracts may be terminated **immediately** if any safeguarding policy is breached or found to have been misrepresented at entry.
- 

## 6.6 Probation & Monitoring

- All new hires undergo a **minimum 3-month probation period**, during which safeguarding performance is closely monitored.
- Supervisors conduct a **safeguarding behavior review** at the end of probation.
- Extension or confirmation of contracts depends on full compliance with BSF's child protection standards.

## Mandatory Reporting Mechanism

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) enforces a strict **mandatory reporting policy** for all personnel, volunteers, partners, and affiliates. Anyone associated with BSF who witnesses, suspects, or receives a disclosure of child abuse, exploitation, neglect, or safeguarding violation is **legally and organizationally obligated** to report it within **24 hours**—without exception.

Failure to report is itself a **Tier 1 policy violation** and may lead to dismissal, blacklisting, and legal consequences.

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### 7.1 Who Must Report?

Mandatory reporting applies to:

- All BSF staff (full-time, part-time, contractual)
- Volunteers and interns
- Board members
- Consultants and service providers
- Partner organization staff
- Any individual working on behalf of, funded by, or representing BSF

**There are no exemptions. No role, status, or personal relationship overrides the duty to report.**

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### 7.2 What Must Be Reported?

The following must be reported to BSF's Safeguarding Officer:

- **Direct abuse** of a child (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, exploitation)
- **Suspected abuse** based on observation, behavior, or information received
- **Disclosures** made by a child or third party (including community members)
- **Inappropriate conduct** by staff, volunteers, or partners (e.g., boundary violations)
- **Unsafe environments or program practices** that could expose children to harm
- **Any retaliation or intimidation** against a child or reporter of abuse

**Note:** Proof is **not required** — reporting is based on **reasonable suspicion or concern**.

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## 7.3 How and When to Report

Reports must be made **within 24 hours** of becoming aware of the concern, using one of the following channels:

### Primary Reporting Channel:

- **BSF Safeguarding Officer** (designated staff member trained in handling child protection cases)
- Contact by direct communication (in person), email, or phone

### Secondary Channel (if Safeguarding Officer is unavailable or compromised):

- **Department Head or Supervisor**
- They must immediately escalate to the Safeguarding Officer

### Anonymous Reporting Channel:

- Confidential form available via BSF's internal system or physical drop box (location: [insert location])
- Reviewed daily by the Safeguarding Officer

### Emergency Situations (Immediate Danger):

- Contact **local police, child protection officers, or emergency services** directly
  - Inform the Safeguarding Officer **as soon as it is safe to do so**
- 

## 7.4 What Happens After a Report Is Made?

### 1. Receipt & Acknowledgment:

- The Safeguarding Officer logs the report and acknowledges receipt (within 24 hours).

### 2. Initial Assessment:

- Determine if the child is in **immediate danger**. If so, protective action is initiated immediately.

### 3. Internal Notification:

- COO and Executive Director are notified **only on a need-to-know basis** to avoid interference and protect confidentiality.

#### 4. Referral (if needed):

- The case may be referred to legal, medical, psychosocial, or law enforcement services based on severity and survivor needs.

#### 5. Case Management & Documentation:

- A confidential case file is opened, and all actions are logged and monitored.

#### 6. Feedback to Reporter (if appropriate):

- BSF will update the reporter on whether action was taken (without breaching confidentiality).

---

## 7.5 Legal Compliance & Referral Obligations

BSF complies with **Kenyan legal requirements** to report suspected child abuse, including:

- **Section 22–23 of the Children Act (2022)**: Mandates professionals and any person to report actual or potential abuse.
- Where required, BSF will make **formal reports to**:
  - The **Department of Children Services (DCS)**
  - The **National Police Service**
  - Any other relevant statutory body

**Survivor consent will be sought where possible**, but legal obligations may override consent if the child is in serious danger.

---

## 7.6 Protection for Reporters (Whistleblower Safety)

BSF enforces a **strict anti-retaliation policy**. Anyone who reports a concern in good faith—whether anonymously or openly—will be:

- Protected from disciplinary action or termination
- Provided emotional support if needed
- Given confidentiality to the fullest extent possible

**False or malicious reporting**, however, is a **Tier 2 violation** and may lead to sanctions.

---

## 7.7 Staff Training & Awareness

- All BSF staff and volunteers must undergo **mandatory reporting training** during induction.
- Training includes:
  - What to report
  - How to recognize signs of abuse
  - How to respond sensitively to disclosures
  - Reporting steps and timelines
- Refresher training required **annually** for all staff, and **every 6 months** for high-risk roles

## Response & Case Management Protocol

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) is committed to responding to all child protection concerns swiftly, ethically, legally, and in a way that **respects the safety, dignity, and agency of the survivor**. Every report of abuse or suspected abuse—whether physical, sexual, emotional, or neglect—triggers a **structured, time-bound response process** led by trained personnel.

This section defines how BSF handles reported cases through **triage, safety planning, referrals, documentation, and follow-up**.

---

### 8.1 Principles Guiding Our Response

BSF's response to child protection cases is anchored in the following principles:

- **Best Interests of the Child:** Every action is taken with the child's safety, development, and well-being as the top priority.
  - **Survivor-Centered Approach:** Respecting the survivor's voice, agency, trauma, and consent throughout the process.
  - **Timeliness:** Every hour counts. Delays increase risk and reduce accountability.
  - **Confidentiality:** Only those who need to know will be informed—no gossip, leaks, or breaches.
  - **Non-Retaliation:** Survivors, whistleblowers, and reporters will be protected at every stage.
- 

### 8.2 Intake & Initial Risk Assessment

Once a report is received:

1. **Safeguarding Officer logs the report** into the secure case register (digital or physical).
2. An **initial risk assessment** is conducted within **24 hours**, categorizing the case as:
  - **High-risk/urgent** (e.g., child in immediate danger)
  - **Moderate-risk** (e.g., historical abuse, no current threat)
  - **Low-risk** (e.g., minor boundary violation, not criminal but concerning)

- 
3. If there is **immediate danger**, BSF prioritizes **child safety over all other procedures**, including:
- Removal of the alleged perpetrator from the child’s environment
  - Emergency referral to law enforcement, shelter, or medical services
  - Coordinating with the **Department of Children Services (DCS)** where necessary
- 

### 8.3 Survivor Safety Planning

Every survivor is entitled to a **personalized safety plan**, which may include:

- Emergency relocation or shelter placement (via BSF partners)
  - Escort to hospital or clinic for medical care and forensic examination
  - Psychosocial support or trauma counseling
  - Protection from contact with the alleged abuser (suspension, relocation, safety escort)
  - Informing and involving **parents/guardians**, unless doing so would expose the child to further harm
- 

### 8.4 Legal, Medical & Psychosocial Referrals

BSF does **not handle investigations or prosecutions** directly but ensures survivors are referred to:

- **Local police or Child Protection Units** (for criminal investigation)
- **Health facilities** (for medical treatment and forensic exams)
- **Legal aid organizations** (for representation in court)
- **Mental health professionals or counselors** (for trauma recovery)
- **Safe shelter providers**, vetted and mapped in advance

Where possible, BSF obtains **consent from the survivor or guardian** before making referrals—but may proceed without consent **if the child is at risk of further harm**.

---

## 8.5 Internal Actions: Managing the Alleged Perpetrator

- If the accused is a BSF staff member, volunteer, or partner, they will be:
  - **Immediately suspended** from all duties
  - **Informed of the allegation** without revealing survivor identity
  - Barred from contact with any BSF beneficiaries or sensitive data during investigation
- Breach of suspension terms results in **summary dismissal and external reporting**.

---

## 8.6 Case Documentation & Record Keeping

BSF maintains a **secure, centralized case management system**, which includes:

- Case intake forms and referral logs
- Risk assessment tools
- Survivor safety plans and consent forms
- Incident investigation notes (if conducted)
- Follow-up actions and closure checklist

**All files are confidential**, stored with access limited to the Safeguarding Officer and COO. Physical records are kept in **locked cabinets**, and digital records are **password-protected and encrypted**.

---

## 8.7 Case Review, Monitoring & Closure

Cases remain open until:

- All critical referrals have been completed
- Survivor is no longer in immediate risk
- Follow-up with child or caregiver has been done (minimum 30 days post-report)
- Internal actions are complete (e.g., disciplinary hearing, external referral)

Cases are reviewed monthly by the **Safeguarding Officer** and quarterly by the **COO**. A closure form is signed, and a summary (with anonymized data) may be used for learning or donor reporting.

## 8.8 Survivor Feedback & Ongoing Support

BSF ensures survivors are:

- Informed about decisions made on their case (in a child-friendly way)
- Offered continued support and check-ins after case closure
- Given the opportunity to **submit feedback or complaints** through safe, confidential channels
- Never blamed, shamed, or disbelieved

Where appropriate, BSF supports **family reintegration** or **community reintegration** plans through partner CBOs and local leaders, always guided by the child's best interests.

## Confidentiality & Information Handling

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) upholds the highest standards of confidentiality in all matters related to child protection. Survivors of abuse have the right to privacy, dignity, and protection from further harm. Mishandling sensitive information can expose children to **stigma, retaliation, and secondary trauma**—and can compromise investigations, prosecutions, and healing.

This section sets out clear rules for how BSF collects, stores, shares, and protects **personal and sensitive information related to child protection concerns, reports, and case management.**

---

### 9.1 Guiding Principles on Confidentiality

BSF handles all child protection information based on the following principles:

- **Do No Harm:** Mishandled information can be as damaging as the original abuse.
  - **Strict Need-to-Know Basis:** Only individuals directly involved in managing or responding to a case are allowed access.
  - **Informed Consent:** Survivor or guardian consent must be sought before sharing identifying information, except where law requires disclosure.
  - **Child-Friendly Practices:** Children must be informed—using age-appropriate language—about how their information will be used.
  - **Secure Systems:** All case files and survivor data are protected through digital and physical security protocols.
- 

### 9.2 Types of Sensitive Information

This policy applies to all information that could identify or harm a child or survivor, including but not limited to:

- Names, addresses, school or location data
- Case reports, interviews, medical or psychological records
- Photos, videos, voice recordings
- Notes from field visits or staff discussions
- Any correspondence about a safeguarding concern

It also applies to **information about alleged perpetrators**, witnesses, or whistleblowers.

### 9.3 Information Access & Storage Protocol

#### Access Control:

- Only the **Safeguarding Officer, COO, and designated caseworkers** may access full case files.
- Department heads may be briefed on general case status **without identifying information**, unless directly involved.
- The Executive Director is informed only when escalation or legal risk requires it.

#### Storage Protocol:

- **Physical Records:** Stored in locked filing cabinets within the Safeguarding Officer’s secure office.
- **Digital Records:** Stored in password-protected folders with restricted access; encryption used for all case files.
- **Backups:** Digital backups are encrypted and stored on secure external drives or cloud services.

Case data is retained for a minimum of **10 years** unless otherwise required by law or donor contract, and then securely destroyed.

### 9.4 Information Sharing Protocols

BSF only shares child protection information under the following conditions:

Recipient	Conditions for Sharing
<b>Law Enforcement or Courts</b>	When required by Kenyan law or court order
<b>Medical &amp; Psychosocial Providers</b>	With verbal or written survivor/guardian consent, unless in emergency
<b>Donors or External Auditors</b>	Only anonymized, aggregated data is shared; no identifiable information permitted

Recipient	Conditions for Sharing
Partner Organizations	Only after signing a data protection agreement + with survivor/guardian consent
Media or Public	Never—BSF does not disclose survivor information to the media under any circumstance

If a survivor’s data must be shared without consent (e.g., mandatory reporting of life-threatening abuse), BSF will:

- Inform the child and/or guardian **as soon as it is safe** to do so
- Limit disclosure strictly to what is legally required
- Document the rationale and authority for disclosure

## 9.5 Survivor Anonymity in Reports & Communications

All public reports, advocacy materials, donor updates, and communications involving survivors must:

- Use **pseudonyms or codes** (e.g., “Child A,” “Survivor X”)
- Alter or omit identifiable details such as location, age, school, or family composition
- Avoid direct quotes unless consent is obtained and context anonymized
- Never include photographs, video, or voice recordings unless:
  - There is **informed, written consent** from the child and guardian
  - The identity is **visually obscured**, and
  - The use is reviewed and approved by the **Safeguarding Officer + Communications Lead**

## 9.6 Breach of Confidentiality

Any unauthorized access, sharing, or misuse of sensitive child protection information constitutes a **Tier 1 policy violation**, and will result in:

- Immediate suspension from duty pending investigation
- Possible termination of employment or contract

- Referral to legal or professional regulatory authorities
- Written documentation in the individual's HR or partnership file

All suspected or actual breaches must be reported immediately to the **Safeguarding Officer** or **COO**.

## Safe Spaces & Physical Environment Safety

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) is committed to ensuring that every physical or programmatic space where children engage with BSF is **safe, respectful, inclusive, and free from abuse, intimidation, or exploitation.**

This applies to:

- BSF-run activities and premises (e.g., office spaces, field events, outreach programs)
- Partner-run environments (e.g., shelters, schools, community spaces)
- All locations where BSF staff or volunteers may interact with children (e.g., homes, clinics, transport vehicles)

---

### 10.1 Safe Space Principles

All BSF activities and physical environments must uphold the following minimum standards:

- **Safety:** Children must be protected from physical hazards, violence, harassment, and unsafe adults
- **Accessibility:** Children with disabilities must be able to safely enter, use, and exit the space
- **Visibility:** Spaces must be organized to **reduce isolation**, enable monitoring, and prevent hidden or unsupervised interactions
- **Boundaries:** Adults and children must maintain **clear physical and emotional boundaries** at all times
- **Dignity:** Spaces must respect children's **privacy, gender, and cultural needs**

---

### 10.2 BSF's Current Safe Space Approach

As of now, BSF **does not operate its own shelters or permanent drop-in centers.** Instead, BSF:

- Conducts its programs in **partner spaces (e.g., schools, CBOs, churches, rented halls)**
- Refers children in need of shelter to **pre-vetted, child-safe partner organizations**

- Maps, assesses, and signs MOUs with all physical spaces used for child-facing work
  - Ensures all partner spaces meet **minimum safety standards** outlined below
- 

### 10.3 Minimum Physical Safety Standards for Program Spaces

Whether permanent or temporary, any location used by BSF for child-facing activities must:

- Have a **secure perimeter** (e.g., fence, wall, or enclosed room)
  - Provide **clean, safe, gender-segregated toilet facilities**
  - Ensure **adequate lighting**, ventilation, and exits
  - Be regularly inspected for **hazards** (e.g., exposed wiring, broken furniture, unsafe play equipment)
  - Allow for **visual supervision** (no adults alone in enclosed rooms with children)
  - Display visible **Child Protection posters or helpline numbers** where children can see them
  - Have a **staff-to-child ratio** appropriate to the activity and age group
  - Ensure that all adults present have undergone **basic safeguarding orientation** if not BSF staff
- 

### 10.4 Staff Conduct Within Physical Spaces

BSF staff and volunteers must:

- Never be alone with a child in a **closed room, vehicle, or isolated location**
- Use **open-door or glass-partitioned rooms** when private conversations are necessary
- Conduct all physical contact (e.g., first aid) **in visible areas and only when necessary**
- Avoid sharing **restrooms or sleeping spaces** with children during overnight events or field travel
- Maintain appropriate dress, language, and tone at all times while around children

## 10.5 Transportation & Off-Site Safety Protocol

When transporting children or conducting off-site BSF activities:

- **At least two adults** must be present when transporting children, preferably of different genders
- **Unrelated children and adults must not sit alone together** during transport
- Drivers must be vetted and instructed in BSF's child protection rules
- Consent must be obtained from guardians for off-site activities, including:
  - Location and duration of event
  - Who will be present
  - Emergency contact protocol

## 10.6 Monitoring of Partner Spaces

BSF only uses partner spaces for child programs if:

- The space has been assessed for safety and documented using BSF's **child-safe venue checklist**
- The partner has signed a written **Safeguarding Compliance Statement**
- The partner agrees to allow **unscheduled spot checks** by BSF
- All partner staff interacting with children have undergone **basic safeguarding orientation**

If a partner facility fails to meet minimum standards or refuses to comply, BSF will **suspend collaboration until the issue is resolved.**

# Training & Capacity Building

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) recognizes that the effectiveness of this Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy depends on the knowledge, attitude, and skills of the people responsible for implementing it. Therefore, BSF is committed to ensuring that all personnel—regardless of role, rank, or contract type—receive **mandatory, ongoing training in child protection, safeguarding, and ethical conduct.**

Training is not optional. Lack of awareness is not a defense for violating this policy.

## 11.1 Training Objectives

BSF’s training and capacity-building efforts aim to:

- Equip all personnel with the knowledge to **prevent and recognize abuse**
- Ensure individuals understand and fulfill their **mandatory reporting obligations**
- Promote a shared culture of **proactive safeguarding, not reactive compliance**
- Enable survivors, children, and communities to **trust BSF’s interventions**
- Reduce the risk of accidental harm or misconduct through ignorance or poor judgment

## 11.2 Who Must Be Trained

Mandatory safeguarding training is required for the following groups:

Category	Required?	Training Cycle
BSF Staff (all levels)	✓ Yes	Onboarding + Annual refresher
Field-facing staff (e.g., social workers, counselors)	✓ Yes	Onboarding + Every 6 months
Interns & Volunteers	✓ Yes	Before deployment + every 6 months
Board Members	✓ Yes	On appointment + every 2 years

Category	Required?	Training Cycle
Contractors (e.g., drivers, cleaners)	✓ Yes	Short induction + behavior guidelines
Partner Organization Staff	✓ Yes (if engaging with children)	At start of engagement + annually

### 11.3 Mandatory Training Modules

All BSF child protection training must cover at minimum:

1. **Introduction to Child Protection & Safeguarding**
  - Types of abuse, signs, risk factors, and impact
2. **BSF’s Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct**
  - What is expected, what is prohibited, and consequences for violations
3. **Mandatory Reporting Procedures**
  - Who reports, when, how, and to whom
4. **Responding to Disclosures**
  - How to listen to and support a child sensitively without causing harm
5. **Maintaining Professional Boundaries**
  - Do’s and don’ts in the field and online
6. **Confidentiality and Data Protection**
  - What can and cannot be shared, with whom, and how
7. **Community Sensitivity and Survivor-Centered Approaches**
  - Gender, disability, power dynamics, and child participation
8. **Realistic Case Scenarios & Roleplays**
  - Practicing appropriate responses to real-life challenges

### 11.4 Training Delivery Format

Training may be delivered through:

- In-person workshops facilitated by the **Safeguarding Officer** or external expert
- Online modules and quizzes (for remote or flexible staff)
- Practical roleplays and case studies tailored to BSF's context
- Shadowing or mentorship for field staff
- Printed handbooks and visual materials for community-based volunteers

**Training materials must be available in both English and Kiswahili**, and adapted for participants with limited literacy or disabilities where needed.

---

## 11.5 Training Records & Compliance Tracking

- All trained individuals must **sign an attendance and comprehension form**
  - BSF maintains a **central training register** (digital and/or physical) listing:
    - Name, role, date of training, modules completed, trainer name
  - Department heads are responsible for ensuring that **no individual is deployed to the field or allowed access to children without proof of completed training**
  - Contracts, MOUs, and volunteer agreements are only activated **after training is complete**
- 

## 11.6 Non-Compliance Consequences

Any staff member, volunteer, or partner who:

- **Fails to attend mandatory training**
- **Refuses to sign the Code of Conduct**
- **Performs duties involving children without certification**

...will be subject to:

- **Immediate suspension from child-facing duties**
- A written warning or **delay in contract confirmation**
- Possible termination of employment or partnership

## Roles, Responsibilities & Governance

Safeguarding is a **shared responsibility** across the entire Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF). Every person engaged with the organization—regardless of title or seniority—has a **legal and ethical duty** to uphold this Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

However, effective implementation requires **clear lines of authority, accountability, and oversight**. This section outlines the specific safeguarding roles and responsibilities across BSF's leadership, operations, field teams, and external partners.

---

### 12.1 Organization-Wide Responsibilities

All BSF staff, volunteers, interns, and partners must:

- Read and understand BSF's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Sign the Child Protection Declaration and Code of Conduct
- Report any safeguarding concern or violation within **24 hours**
- Create and maintain **safe, inclusive, and respectful environments** for children
- Participate in required training and performance monitoring
- Take proactive responsibility for **child safety**, not wait for incidents to occur

“No one is exempt from these responsibilities—regardless of rank, contract type, or relationship to the child.”

---

### 12.2 Executive Director (ED)

The Executive Director holds **ultimate accountability** for ensuring that BSF is a child-safe organization.

Responsibilities:

- Approves and signs off on this policy and any major updates
- Ensures organizational resources (staff, funds, systems) support safeguarding implementation
- Briefs the board on serious safeguarding risks, violations, or investigations
- Leads the creation of a child-safe culture at the highest level

- Ensures public statements and partnerships align with safeguarding commitments
- 

## 12.3 Chief Operating Officer (COO)

The COO is the **operational lead** for safeguarding implementation across BSF.

Responsibilities:

- Supervises the Safeguarding Officer
  - Ensures safeguarding is integrated into all operational systems (HR, programs, logistics, MEL, etc.)
  - Tracks and ensures compliance with staff training, vetting, and reporting timelines
  - Oversees internal investigations, disciplinary actions, and legal referrals in collaboration with legal counsel
  - Ensures budget allocations for safeguarding needs (training, transport, legal aid, etc.)
  - Coordinates safeguarding risk assessments before launching new programs or partnerships
- 

## 12.4 Safeguarding Officer

The Safeguarding Officer is the **day-to-day focal point** for all child protection concerns and implementation of this policy.

Responsibilities:

- Receives and logs all reports of abuse, exploitation, or violations
- Conducts initial risk assessments within 24 hours of receiving a report
- Leads or coordinates survivor referrals to legal, medical, and psychosocial services
- Trains staff and partners in safeguarding procedures
- Maintains secure records and case files
- Conducts spot checks, field visits, and partner assessments
- Reviews and updates the policy every 2 years (or sooner after incidents)

The Safeguarding Officer must be trained in **trauma-informed care, child protection law, and case management.**

## 12.5 Department Heads & Project Leads

Every department or program team at BSF must have **at least one safeguarding liaison**, responsible for:

- Ensuring all team members have signed the Code of Conduct and received required training
- Serving as an initial contact point for team-level safeguarding concerns
- Supporting the Safeguarding Officer with risk identification and case follow-up
- Ensuring activities, field sites, and staff behavior comply with child safety protocols
- Reporting safeguarding risks to the COO

---

## 12.6 Human Resources (HR) Lead

The HR Lead is responsible for integrating child safeguarding into all **recruitment, performance, and exit processes.**

Responsibilities:

- Ensure safeguarding clauses are included in all job descriptions, contracts, and exit forms
- Enforce background checks and risk-based vetting before hiring or onboarding any staff
- Track training compliance and refresher schedules
- Document any safeguarding-related disciplinary actions in personnel files
- Ensure that safeguarding performance is part of performance evaluations for all staff

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## 12.7 Communications Lead / Media Spokespersons

Any individual who handles public communications, media relations, or visibility for BSF must:

- Ensure **survivor images, stories, and data are anonymized** and used only with informed consent

- Collaborate with the Safeguarding Officer before publishing any sensitive material
  - Avoid any messaging that could unintentionally harm children or survivors
  - Uphold survivor dignity and confidentiality in all public communications
- 

## 12.8 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has a **governance-level responsibility** for ensuring BSF is a child-safe organization.

Responsibilities:

- Approves the Safeguarding Policy and oversees its strategic alignment
  - Monitors compliance and risks through periodic safeguarding reports
  - Holds the Executive Director accountable for policy enforcement
  - Ensures an independent review is conducted after any critical incident
  - Participates in safeguarding training at least once every 2 years
- 

## 12.9 Partner Organizations & Contractors

All BSF partners, contractors, and vendors who interact with children or have access to child-related information must:

- Sign a Safeguarding Compliance Statement and agree to BSF's Code of Conduct
- Participate in a safeguarding induction or orientation
- Report any safeguarding concerns within 24 hours
- Cooperate fully with any investigations or monitoring visits
- Accept suspension or termination of contracts if they breach safeguarding standards

## Disciplinary Measures & Enforcement

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) applies **strict, consistent, and enforceable disciplinary action** for any breach of its Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct, or associated procedures.

BSF does **not tolerate**:

- Abuse or exploitation of any child, in any form
- Failure to report abuse
- Negligence or misconduct that places a child at risk
- Breaches of confidentiality, retaliation, or obstruction of safeguarding processes

This section outlines the consequences for policy violations, how internal investigations are managed, and how enforcement decisions are made.

---

### 13.1 Scope of Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action may apply to:

- BSF staff (permanent, temporary, or probationary)
- Volunteers, interns, or fellows
- Contractors, service providers, and consultants
- Board members
- Partner organizations or their personnel

Disciplinary action applies whether the misconduct occurs:

- In person, during or outside work hours
  - Online or digitally
  - In BSF or partner premises
  - In public or private settings while representing BSF
- 

### 13.2 Types of Violations & Sanctions

BSF uses a **tiered response system** for policy violations:

---

## Tier 1 Violations (Gross Misconduct)

Acts that constitute abuse, exploitation, or serious safeguarding breaches:

### Examples:

- Sexual abuse or exploitation of a child
- Physical violence or cruel treatment
- Possession or sharing of child sexual abuse material
- Failing to report known abuse
- Retaliating against a survivor, witness, or whistleblower
- Serious breach of confidentiality or tampering with a case file
- Obstruction of an internal or external investigation

### Sanctions:

- **Immediate suspension** pending investigation
- **Summary dismissal** if violation is confirmed
- **Permanent blacklisting** from BSF and partner programs
- **Reporting to law enforcement, licensing authorities, or professional bodies**
- Documentation in HR records or partnership termination file

---

## Tier 2 Violations (Boundary or Professional Misconduct)

Acts that do not amount to abuse but violate the Code of Conduct or pose safeguarding risks.

### Examples:

- Being alone with a child in a private setting
- Using inappropriate or demeaning language around children
- Giving unauthorized gifts or showing favoritism
- Failing to attend required safeguarding training
- Digital communication with children through personal channels
- Delays in reporting concerns without justification

### Sanctions (progressive based on frequency/severity):

- Verbal or written warning
  - Mandatory retraining or professional development plan
  - Removal from child-facing duties
  - Contract suspension or probation
  - Termination if misconduct is repeated or escalates
- 

## 13.3 Investigation & Disciplinary Process

### 1. Initial Report Received

- Handled confidentially by the **Safeguarding Officer**
- Immediate risk to the child is mitigated (e.g., removing the alleged perpetrator from contact)

### 2. Preliminary Review

- Determines whether the report meets the threshold for investigation
- High-risk cases are escalated to the COO and ED immediately

### 3. Internal Investigation Begins

- Conducted by the Safeguarding Officer with support from a 2-person panel
- Survivor safety and trauma-sensitive handling prioritized
- Evidence gathered may include interviews, records, site visits, or digital trace reviews

### 4. Findings & Disciplinary Decision

- Report submitted to the **COO for decision-making**
- For Tier 1 cases, the **Executive Director must approve** dismissal or referral to external authorities
- Written outcome is shared with relevant parties (excluding survivor identity)

### 5. Sanction Enforced

- Individual is informed in writing and in person (where safe)
- Contract is updated, suspended, or terminated
- Appeal process explained (see 13.5 below)

#### 6. Case Closure

- Final report stored securely
- Learning fed into prevention strategies and training updates

---

## 13.4 Referrals to Law Enforcement or Authorities

BSF will refer cases to:

- The **National Police Service**
- The **Department of Children Services (DCS)**
- Relevant **regulatory or licensing bodies** (e.g., Teachers Service Commission, social work councils)

Referrals are **mandatory** in Tier 1 cases involving:

- Sexual abuse
- Physical violence
- Online exploitation
- Severe neglect

---

## 13.5 Right to Appeal

Any individual subject to disciplinary action has the right to:

- Submit a written appeal within **7 working days** of being notified
- Request a review by the **Safeguarding Committee**, chaired by an independent senior manager or external advisor
- Receive a final written outcome within **14 working days** of the appeal being received

Appeals do not override legal reporting requirements.

---

## 13.6 Protection for Survivors, Witnesses & Reporters

- No survivor, witness, or whistleblower may be punished, blamed, or disadvantaged for reporting abuse in good faith.
- Retaliation is considered a **Tier 1 offense**.
- Survivors will be provided with support regardless of whether the case leads to formal sanctions.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Code of Conduct Declaration Form

**Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)  
Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy  
Code of Conduct Declaration**

### SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name	
Job Title / Role	
Department / Project	
Phone Number	
Email Address	
Contract Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Intern <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Partner
Date of Onboarding / Start	

### SECTION B: DECLARATION OF UNDERSTANDING AND COMMITMENT

I hereby declare that:

1. I have received, read, and fully understood the **Bringing Smiles Foundation Code of Conduct** as outlined in the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.
2. I understand that the **Code of Conduct is binding** and applies to my role with BSF in all contexts—field, office, digital, and partner environments.
3. I understand the definitions and consequences of both **Tier 1 (gross misconduct)** and **Tier 2 (boundary/professional misconduct)** violations.
4. I understand that I am expected to:
  - Treat all children with dignity, respect, and care
  - Report any concerns or violations within **24 hours**

- Uphold clear and professional boundaries at all times
- Maintain survivor confidentiality and protect child identities
- Avoid any actions or behavior that could harm or endanger a child

5. I understand that violating the Code of Conduct may result in:

- Immediate disciplinary action, including **suspension or dismissal**
- **Referral to law enforcement** or statutory bodies if criminal conduct is involved
- Blacklisting from future work with BSF or its partners

6. I understand that **ignorance of the policy or code is not a valid excuse** for misconduct.

7. I commit to asking for clarification if I am ever unsure about the policy or appropriate conduct.

**SECTION C: SIGNATURES**

<b>Name of Staff/Volunteer (Print)</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Witnessed By (Supervisor / HR)</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>

**File Copy:** Original to be stored by **HR or Safeguarding Officer** in the staff/volunteer file. A signed copy may be provided to the signee upon request.

## Appendix 2: Child Protection Declaration Form

**Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)**  
**Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**  
**Individual Declaration of Commitment**

---

### SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name	
Job Title / Role	
Department / Project	
Phone Number	
Email Address	
Contract Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Intern <input type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Partner
Date of Onboarding / Start	

---

### SECTION B: DECLARATION

I hereby declare that:

1. I have received, read, and fully understood the **Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**.
2. I understand that this policy exists to **protect children from abuse, exploitation, neglect, and violence**, and that BSF maintains a strict **zero-tolerance approach**.
3. I commit to complying fully with the policy in all situations—during work hours and beyond—when representing BSF.
4. I understand that I am:
  - A **mandated reporter** under BSF policy and Kenyan law
  - Required to report all suspicions, disclosures, or observations of child abuse within **24 hours**

- Subject to disciplinary action for failure to report, including **termination or legal referral**
5. I accept that **breaches of the Child Protection Policy**, including misconduct or negligence, may result in:
- Internal disciplinary procedures
  - Immediate termination of contract or volunteer engagement
  - Notification of regulatory, legal, or statutory authorities
  - Legal prosecution, where applicable
6. I will uphold the **rights, dignity, confidentiality, and safety of all children** I may interact with or serve through BSF.
7. I understand that **this declaration is a condition of my continued engagement** with the organization.

**SECTION C: SIGNATURES**

Name of Declarant (Print)	Signature	Date
Witnessed By (Supervisor / HR)	Signature	Date

**File Copy:** Original to be securely stored by the **Safeguarding Officer or Human Resources**.

## Appendix 3: Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

### Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)

#### Confidential Safeguarding Concern / Incident Report Form

**IMPORTANT:** This form must be completed and submitted to the **Safeguarding Officer** (or designated alternate) **within 24 hours** of any safeguarding concern, disclosure, or incident.

#### SECTION A: REPORTER DETAILS

Name of person reporting the concern	
Role / Position	
Phone Number	
Email Address	
Date of this report	
Did you witness the incident directly?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are you the first person the child told?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Was this reported anonymously to you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

#### SECTION B: CHILD/VICTIM INFORMATION

| Name of Child (use initials if needed) | | | Age (approximate if unknown) | | | Gender |  Male  Female  Other  Unknown | | Location of child (village/estate/school) | | | Relationship to BSF (e.g., program participant, referred survivor, unknown) | | | Any disability or vulnerability factors? | |

#### SECTION C: DETAILS OF THE CONCERN / INCIDENT

| Date of incident (or date discovered) | | | Time of incident (if known) | | | Location of incident | | | Who was involved (include full names if known, or describe)? | | | Description of what happened (be specific, factual, and avoid assumptions): |

||||||| Immediate actions taken (e.g., moved child, contacted authorities, suspended staff): |  
|||

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#### SECTION D: FOLLOW-UP OR REFERRALS MADE (If any)

| Were any external services contacted? |  Yes  No || If yes, specify: |||  Police  Health Facility  Shelter  Legal Aid  DCS/Children Officer || Name of contact person (if known) ||| Time/date of referral |||

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#### SECTION E: CONFIDENTIALITY AND SIGNATURE

- This report is confidential and will be handled in line with BSF's Safeguarding Policy.
- Do not discuss this case with anyone other than the **Safeguarding Officer** or authorized personnel.
- Submitting this report fulfills your mandatory duty to report.

| Signature of person reporting ||| Date |||

| Name of person receiving the report ||| Signature ||| Date received |||

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#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Submit completed form to the **BSF Safeguarding Officer** within 24 hours.
- Retain a digital or physical copy securely if needed.
- In cases of immediate danger, report directly to police or emergency services first, then complete this form.

## Appendix 4: Safeguarding Risk Assessment Checklist

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)

Safeguarding Risk Assessment for Programs, Events, or Partner Activities

This tool is to be used **before launching any new program, event, activity, or partnership** where children will be present or indirectly affected. It helps identify and mitigate potential safeguarding risks in advance.

### SECTION A: BASIC INFORMATION

| Name of Program / Activity | | | Date(s) of Activity | | | Location(s) | | | Lead Staff or Coordinator | | | Partner Involved (if any) | | | Expected number of children involved | | | Child age group(s) | |

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### SECTION B: STAFF & VOLUNTEER SAFETY PREPAREDNESS

Risk Area	Yes	No	Action Required
Have all staff/volunteers signed the Code of Conduct?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have all staff/volunteers been trained in safeguarding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are staff/volunteers aware of mandatory reporting rules?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there a gender balance among adult supervisors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

---

### SECTION C: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT SAFETY

Risk Area	Yes	No	Action Required
Is the venue safe, clean, and enclosed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are toilet facilities available and gender-segregated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there visible emergency exits and lighting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can adults and children be observed at all times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is transport (if any) safe, vetted, and supervised?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

---

**SECTION D: CHILD SAFETY & PARTICIPATION**

Risk Area	Yes	No	Action Required
Will children be informed about their rights and safety?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will child-friendly reporting channels be present?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are any children with disabilities participating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are reasonable accommodations prepared for them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Will the ratio of adults to children ensure supervision?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

---

**SECTION E: RISK RATING & NEXT STEPS**

| Overall Risk Level (after mitigation): |  Low  Medium  High | | Additional Safeguarding Measures Needed: | | | | | Date of final approval: | | | Approved by (Safeguarding Officer): | |

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**Instructions:** This checklist must be completed and signed **before the activity starts**. Keep a copy on file with the program documents and submit to the Safeguarding Officer for review and record.

## Appendix 5: Child-Friendly Reporting Poster (Text Description Template)

This template is designed to be turned into a poster, flyer, or visual card placed in locations where children interact with BSF or partner staff. It should be translated into local languages and simplified further using child-friendly illustrations.

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**TITLE: "You Have the Right to Be Safe!"**

**[Large Icons: A safe adult, a sad face, a phone, a smile]**

**Text (simple and clear):**

- No one is allowed to hurt you.
- If someone touches you in a way that makes you feel bad or scared, tell a safe adult.
- If someone says, "Don't tell anyone," that means you **should tell** someone.
- You can tell:
  - A teacher
  - A BSF staff member
  - A parent or trusted adult
- You can also call this number: **[Insert Child Helpline Number]**

**You will NOT get in trouble for telling the truth.**

**You deserve to be safe, heard, and helped.**

**[Space for drawing or photos of safe adults]**

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**Instructions for Use:**

- Translate into Kiswahili and other local dialects as needed
- Use visual symbols and images for non-literate children
- Place in schools, event venues, clinics, and program sites
- Train staff to explain it to children as part of program orientation

## Appendix 6: Safeguarding Training Log Template

### Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF) Safeguarding Training Compliance Record

This template should be used by the Safeguarding Officer and HR team to track safeguarding training attendance, compliance, and refresher cycles for all staff, volunteers, and partner personnel.

Full Name	Role / Title	Department / Program	Training Type (Induction / Refresher / Partner)	Date of Training	Trainer Name	Next Due Date	Signature

#### Instructions:

- Maintain both **digital and printed versions** of this log
- Update **immediately after each training session**
- Submit **quarterly summaries to the COO**
- Use this log for **internal audits and donor reporting**

## Appendix 7: Partner Safeguarding Compliance Statement (Template for MOU or Contract Attachment)

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)

Safeguarding Compliance Statement for All Child-Engaging Partners

This declaration is to be signed by all partner organizations, service providers, or vendors who may interact directly or indirectly with children during their engagement with BSF. It ensures alignment with BSF's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

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### PARTNER INFORMATION

Name of Organization	
Type of Engagement (e.g., program delivery, logistics, training)	
Name & Title of Authorized Representative	
Contact Phone	
Email Address	

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### DECLARATION & COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT

On behalf of the above-named organization, I hereby confirm the following:

1. We have received and reviewed the **Bringing Smiles Foundation Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy**.
2. We understand and accept our **legal and ethical responsibility** to uphold child protection standards while working with or around children.
3. We confirm that all personnel assigned to BSF-related activities:
  - Have **no known history of child abuse or exploitation**
  - Will be **vettted appropriately** and trained in safeguarding procedures
  - Will comply with BSF's **Code of Conduct and reporting procedures**

4. We agree to report any child protection concern to BSF’s Safeguarding Officer within **24 hours**.
5. We will **cooperate fully** with any safeguarding review, audit, or investigation initiated by BSF.
6. We understand that any breach of this agreement may result in **suspension or termination of the partnership**, and possible referral to authorities.

---

**SIGNATURE**

Name of Authorized Representative (Print)	
Signature	
Date	
Organization Stamp / Seal (if applicable)	

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**Instructions:** Attach a signed copy of this statement to the official **MOU or Contract** with BSF. Retain a digital version in the safeguarding compliance records. Review annually or upon renewal of engagement.

## Appendix 8: Child Participation & Informed Consent Template

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)  
Child Involvement Consent & Assent Form

This form is required before a child participates in any BSF program activity, interview, photograph, video, story publication, or research. It consists of two parts: **Guardian Consent** and **Child Assent**.

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### SECTION A: ACTIVITY DETAILS

| Name of Activity/Event/Project | | | Date(s) of Activity | | | Location | | | Type of Participation | [] Interview [] Photography [] Video [] Program Activity [] Other | | Purpose of Use | | | Responsible BSF Staff | |

---

### SECTION B: GUARDIAN CONSENT (To be completed by Parent/Guardian)

I, the undersigned, hereby give permission for my child named below to participate in the above-stated activity organized by Bringing Smiles Foundation:

| Full Name of Child | | | Age | | | School / Community | |

I understand:

- The purpose of the child's involvement and how information/images may be used
- That participation is **voluntary** and that I or my child can withdraw at any time
- That BSF will **not use names or identifiable details** without explicit permission
- That BSF commits to keeping the child safe, emotionally supported, and respected

| Name of Guardian (Print) | | | Relationship to Child | | | Signature | | | Date | |

---

**SECTION C: CHILD ASSENT (To be completed by the child, with help if needed)**

The staff of BSF has explained to me:

- What the activity is about
- What I will be asked to do
- That I can say **no** if I don't want to join
- That I can ask to stop at any time
- That my photo or story will only be shared in safe ways

I understand and agree to participate.

| Name of Child (Print) | | | Signature (or mark/thumbprint) | | | Date | | | Staff Facilitator  
Name | | | Signature of Facilitator | |

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**Instructions:** Retain a scanned or physical copy of this signed form. Store with program records and safeguard per confidentiality protocols. Translate as needed for non-English-speaking families.

## Appendix 9: Case Closure Checklist

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)  
Safeguarding Case Closure Verification Form

This form must be completed by the Safeguarding Officer at the end of every child protection case to ensure that no case is closed prematurely or without proper resolution.

### SECTION A: CASE INFORMATION

| Case Reference Number || | Name/Initials of Child || | Date Case Opened || |  
Safeguarding Officer Handling the Case ||

### SECTION B: CLOSURE VERIFICATION CHECKLIST

Criteria	Yes	No	Comments
Immediate risk to the child has been removed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
All necessary referrals have been made (medical, legal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Survivor/caregiver informed of actions taken	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Follow-up support (e.g., psychosocial) has been offered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Alleged perpetrator actions completed (suspension/report)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Confidential records have been fully documented	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Survivor feedback collected (if safe/appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Lessons learned documented for prevention/training use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### SECTION C: FINAL CONFIRMATION

| Safeguarding Officer Signature || | Date of Closure || | Reviewed and Approved by (COO or Delegate) || | Signature || | Date ||

**Instructions:** Completed form should be filed with the corresponding case file and retained securely. All decisions and actions must comply with BSF’s Child Protection Policy.

## Appendix 10: List of Pre-Vetted Referral Partners

Bringing Smiles Foundation (BSF)  
 Directory of Child Protection Referral Organizations

This appendix contains a list of trusted, pre-vetted service providers that BSF may refer survivors to for medical, legal, psychosocial, or shelter support. This list must be updated **at least every 6 months** by the Safeguarding Officer.

Organization Name	Type of Service	Location	Contact Person	Phone	Email	Notes on Specialization (e.g., gender-based violence, legal aid, trauma counseling)

**Instructions:**

- Only include organizations that have been vetted for child safety standards and survivor-sensitive approaches
- Confirm that the organization has trained staff, safe facilities, and clear intake procedures
- Ensure MOUs or informal agreements are maintained where possible
- Include this list in all Safeguarding Induction Packs for field staff
- Provide survivors and caregivers with contact details only when it is safe and appropriate to do so



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