

THF Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

One of the fundamental pillars of THF work is to ensure that all children served in its projects, programs and actions are safe and protected. The organization is committed to the fulfilment of children's rights and seeks to ensure that their right to protection in accordance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is fully respected.

Through this Safeguarding Policy, which is to be followed by all staff, employees and volunteers of the organization, and by all those involved in any activity of the organization, including board members, trainees, researchers, suppliers and visitors, we take seriously our responsibility to promote practices that are safe for children and to protect them from any kind of harm, abuse, abandonment and exploitation. In addition, we are committed to taking strict measures to punish employees, associates, visitors or others related to THF who adopt a stance contrary to those established by this policy.

2. THF Safeguarding Policy Objectives

Promote the welfare of the children served by the organization and ensure that the actions of any adult in the context of the work conducted by THF are transparent and safe.

2.1. Policy Principles

- 2.1.1. The well-being of a child will always come first.
- 2.1.2. The rights, wishes and feelings of children and their families will be respected and heard.
- 2.1.3. Employees in positions of responsibility will work in the best interests of the children, sign and follow the THF Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct, in accordance with local and international child protection laws. In some countries, however, legislation does not reflect the internationally recognized, basic ethical standards. If there is a conflict between national legislation and international standards, it is strongly recommended to prioritize the international standard.
- 2.1.4. Employees and board members in positions of responsibility will ensure that the same opportunities are offered to all, and that diversity is respected.
- 2.1.5. Two National Safeguarding Officers will be designated onsite and at least one of them should be from an external organization or agency to ensure transparency and trustworthiness as well as expertise. There will be two designated National Safeguarding Officers for each THF project, in every country.

The National Safeguarding Officers report directly to THF Safeguarding Officer, who is based in THF headquarter, in Lausanne, Switzerland.

- 2.1.6. Provide clear processes involving the organization's management and external partners in the field of child protection to address and deal with issues of abuse and violation of this policy and recommendations for action to be taken against any person in violation, regardless of the relationship with that organization.
- 2.1.7. For the purposes of this policy and in accordance with the CRC and SDG, a child is defined as any person below the age of 18 (CRC Article 1).
- 2.1.8. Every child shall be entitled to protection during any program or activity that the organization carries out, whether on the organization's premises or in outdoor settings where the organization carries out activities. This includes protection against: exploitation, inhumane treatment, neglect, gender discrimination, religious discrimination, racial discrimination, social class discrimination, sexual orientation discrimination, physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, corporal punishment.

2.2. Definitions of Abuse

- 2.2.1. Sexual abuse is characterized by sexual violence committed against children and adolescents, based on sexual act or play, whose aggressor's intention is to sexually stimulate the victim or use it to obtain sexual satisfaction. These practices are imposed by physical violence, threats or inducements of his/her will. The child is forced to participate in a sexual act without yet having sufficient emotional capacity and knowledge to consent, deny or evaluate what is happening. Sexual abuse includes, among other crimes, rape, rape of the vulnerable, corruption of minors and sexual exploitation.
- 2.2.2. Emotional abuse is understood as the persistent emotional harm to a child. It includes conveying to a child the idea that he or she is inadequate, unworthy, incapable, stupid or unwanted. It can also take the form of harmful and inappropriate expectations imposed on a child. It is also characterised by the use of authority and fear to emotionally control a child, humiliate it and force it into embarrassing situations in front of its peers. Provocation due to a child's gender expression is also harmful and considered abuse.
- 2.2.3. Physical abuse is characterized by any conduct that offends the physical integrity or bodily health of the child. For example: punches, slaps, pinches, kicks, hair pulling, ear pulling, arm squeezing, shaking, beating with the hand or with objects, attempts at strangulation, among others, may lead to murder.
- 2.2.4. Discrimination is defined as any exclusion, distinction or restriction based on race, gender, national or ethnic origin, social class, color, descent, sexual orientation, politics, religion or that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise on an equal footing of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, sporting, cultural and or any other field of public life.

3. Code of Conduct

Everyone who works with and/or engages with THF or our actions has a responsibility to ensure that children are protected, signed and acted upon in accordance with the Code of Conduct below:

- 3.1. Never assault and/or harass a child physically, verbally or psychologically.
- 3.2. Not to get involved in love or sexually with a child, or to touch a child in a sexual way. This includes any inappropriate touching or innuendo of a loving or sexual nature.
- 3.3. Not to abuse and/or exploit a child or behave in any way that puts the child at risk of moral, psychological, physical and/or material harm.
- 3.4. Not discriminate against any child because of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, ethnicity, weight, height, social class, physical ability, or any other condition.
- 3.5. Not punish a child by provocation, embarrassment or any other attitude that puts him/her on display.
- 3.6. Not to use threats or rewards (such as uniforms, equipment, snacks, etc.) to manipulate a child.
- 3.7. Report any case or suspicion of mistreatment and abuse to the proper authorities.
- 3.8. Cooperate fully and confidentially with any investigation into suspected or accused child maltreatment or abuse.
- 3.9. Ensure that the physical environment in which children develop activities is as safe and appropriate as possible, free from harmful objects and other obstacles that could represent physical danger.
- 3.10. Not to remain alone in a closed room with a child. When a child asks to speak to you in private, stay away from other people, but stay within the field of vision of another adult.
- 3.11. Do not take pictures of children without their consent or their guardian. Avoid taking pictures with a child alone, hugging, holding or with him/her on your lap.
- 3.12. Do not offer rides to a child in his/her personal vehicle. In case of rides and/or events, transportation must be done with the signature of the person in charge. It is important to ensure the safety and well-being of children if trips or overnight stays are necessary. This will mean carrying out a risk assessment in advance, including for transport and accommodation.
- 3.13. Never solicit or accept the personal contact (this includes e-mail, telephone number and social network contacts) of any child, nor share your personal contacts with them. In cases where it is strictly necessary within the objectives of the program, it must be authorized by those responsible and communicated to his/her superior in the organization.

- 3.14. Do not maintain direct virtual communication (e-mail, text message, Whatsapp, etc.) with a child. Avoid interactions via social networks (Facebook, Instagram, etc.). When this type of contact is necessary, it should be done through the organization's social networks or institutional phone numbers and communicated to your superior in the organization.

4. Code of Conduct Outside of Work

Although THF cannot impose its principles and standards of conduct on its employees, associates, visitors and suppliers in their personal lives, it is a requirement that they keep in mind the principles of this Safeguarding Policy and are aware of how their conduct is perceived both at work and outside it. Thus, if the attitudes or conduct they perform outside the work environment are contradictory to this policy, they will be considered a violation of it.

5. What to do in case of suspected abuse

If a child reports an abuse situation to you:

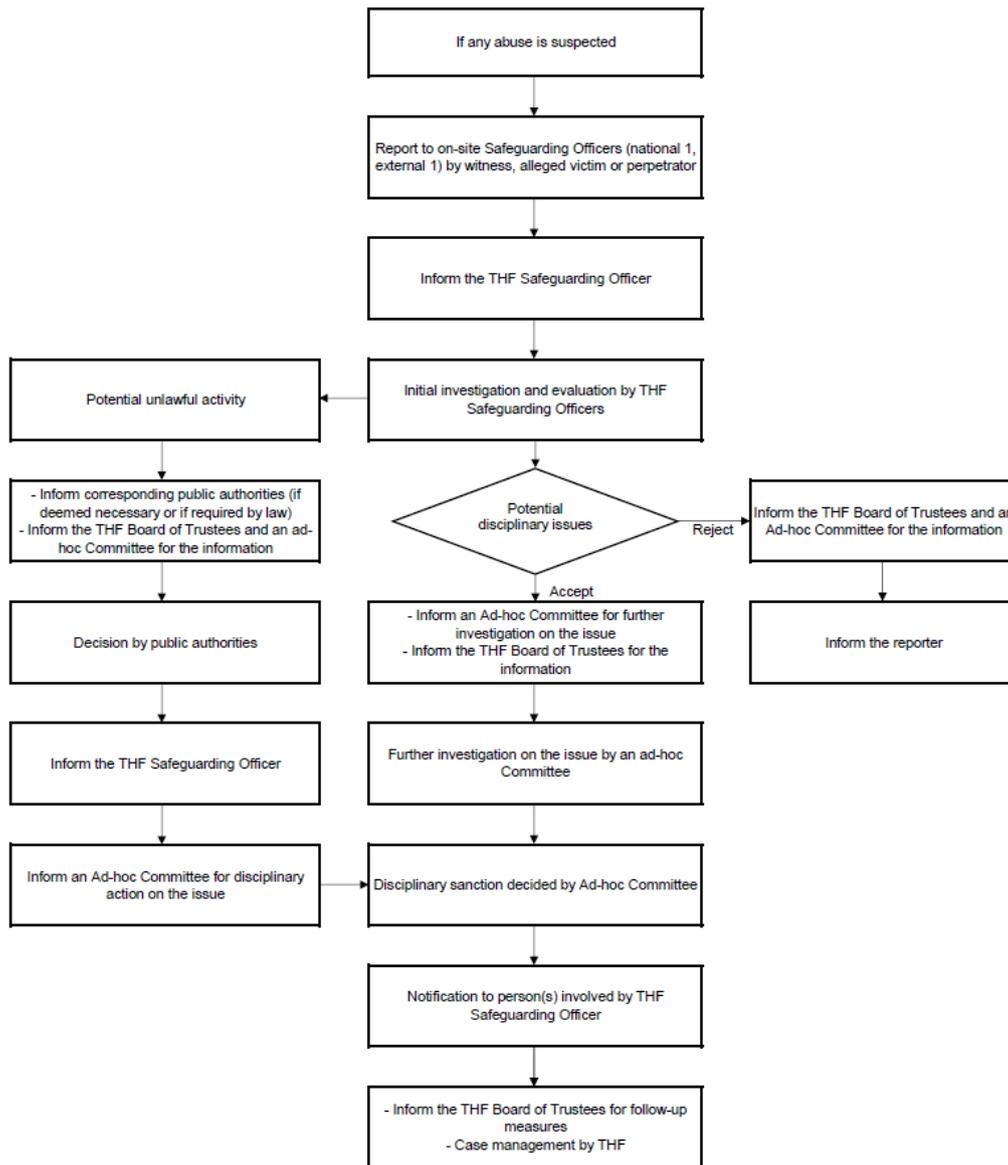
- 5.1. Believe him/her. It is unusual for a child to make up stories of abuse. The trusting relationship in the group has allowed this child to reveal this information to you. Listen openly and calmly, don't judge or show any opinions or emotions that are not trustworthy and supportive.
- 5.2. Reassure the child, but don't promise that you will keep your secret. Assure him/her that you will try to get him/her the help he/she needs. Explain that you should share this information with someone to get help.
- 5.3. As soon as possible, write the report down using the child's own words. Do not ask the child questions or try to clarify details.
- 5.4. Report immediately to the appropriate agencies. In general, reports should be made to THF, NF's and local authorities.
- 5.5. Confidentiality is essential. Do not discuss the situation with anyone else. Only share with the competent professionals of the organization the information they need to understand the situation, support the child and make the necessary referrals.
- 5.6. THF believes the power and importance of speaking up for anyone who has concerns. The 'whistle blowers' should be able to speak up in the confidence that wherever possible the organization will provide anonymity. THF supports 'whistle blowers' and encourages anyone to speak up when they have concerns to prevent any damage to children or participants.

6. Child Abuse Reporting Principles

- 6.1. Every report of harm must be taken seriously and it is important that any disclosure is dealt with appropriately. All safeguarding reports will receive a response from the Safeguarding Officer.

- 6.2. If the report has evidence of potential child abuse or crime, the THF Safeguarding Officer will refer the matter to the relevant public authorities.
- 6.3. If the facts are unrelated to THF activities, THF Safeguarding Officer will inform the THF Board of Trustees.
- 6.4. If the report form received reveals possible abuse or any harm, the report will be prepared by the Ad-hoc Committee. The case will be given to independent investigators to begin investigation. The investigation may involve direct contact with the alleged victim, witnesses and the alleged perpetrators, examination of documents and reports, and contact with legal agencies or sports bodies.
- 6.5. THF and everyone involved in the disclosure process must keep the incident of harassment and abuse as confidential, and personal information should not be disclosed, except if the concerned person gives his/her prior consent, if disclosure is necessary to protect someone from harm, and if a potential criminal act has been committed.

Flowchart of Abuse Report Response



7. Forming an Ad-hoc Committee

- 7.1. An Ad-hoc Committee is a committee that is formed for a specific task or purpose. In the context of the THF Safeguarding, the Ad-hoc Committee normally serves as an investigative and advisory committee formed to help the board with a particular action (e.g. further investigation or disciplinary action on abuse).
- 7.2. The Committee shall be formed by the THF Board of Trustees. Each member of the committee shall serve for a period of three years, and appointment of all the members of the committee shall be made once in three years.
- 7.3. The Committee shall be formed by three individuals appointed outside from the THF for that particular purpose. This will ensure that independent and autonomous means of communication allowing for the reflection of a result of investigation and disciplinary sanction. In case of specific cases, the Ad-hoc Committee can appoint an external expert for a specific mandate (report about the national law in force for instance)

The chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee chairs the meetings, handles the agenda, and communicate the official decision or recommendation. The chairman can also assign the tasks

to each individual according to their field of expertise. The committee members should understand why the committee was formed and what the chairman's expectations are for the committee.

8. Photography and Filming

THF does not allow photographs or filming of participants without the consent of the organization, the participant and his/her guardians, if they are under 18 years of age. This includes all employees, visitors, volunteers, suppliers and partners. In certain circumstances, people may take pictures of children during the activities and use them inappropriately. As an organization, we are vigilant and work to ensure that this does not happen. Any concerns or inappropriate use of children's photographs or videos should be reported to the organization immediately.

9. Implementation, Monitoring and Sanctions

The members of THF's Board of Trustees are the people directly responsible for implementing this policy. They follow its guidelines and Code of Conduct in strict confidentiality.

In case of noncompliance with this Policy, the following measures may be taken based on the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee:

- Employees: disciplinary actions that may include dismissal
- Associates, visitors, suppliers or partners: sanctions that may lead to the break-up of contractual relations and partnership agreements.
- Other cases: appropriate legal actions.

Concerns or suspicions about the conduct of employees, associates, visitors, partners or suppliers in relation to child protection and/or in case of non-compliance with this Safeguarding Policy, will be investigated by THF and notified to the corresponding authorities for criminal investigation in accordance with local law. Reports of mistreatment or abuse which, after investigation, are considered unfounded, will not be pursued and no action will be taken against the person who reported it.

10. Education and Reference

A number of educational tools related to athlete safeguarding have been developed by the IOC and other organizations. They are free and accessible for all athletes and entourage members. THF strongly encourages all participants and entourage members to work through the following module:

- Athlete Learning Gateway - Safeguarding Athletes from Harassment and Abuse <https://www.olympic.org/athlete365/courses/safeguarding-athletes-from-harassment-and-abuse/>
- Child Protection in Sport Unit: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/>
- Play by the Rule: <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/>
- UEFA Child Safeguarding: <https://www.uefa-safeguarding.eu/>