

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

July 2026

Trigger warning: This policy describes examples of child sexual abuse and exploitation and may be distressing to read.

CONTENTS

Purpose of the policy	1
Scope	2
Policy principles	2
Risk-based approach	3
Opportunity-Funded Partners	4
Sub-Contractors	4
Contact with Children	4
Working with Children	4
Child Protection Laws	5
Employee recruitment.....	5
Child Protection Training.....	5
Child exploitation and abuse reporting processes	5
Use of children's images	6
Visiting programs overseas	6
Appropriate use of communication systems	7
Safeguarding Code of Conduct.....	7
Individual contractors	7
Reviewing the Child Protection Policy	7
Appendix 1 - Child protection standards	9
Appendix 2 - Child protection reporting and investigation process for Opportunity's internal and domestic operations.....	11
Appendix 3 - Child protection reporting process for Opportunity-funded implementing partners.....	13
Appendix 4 – Child friendly reporting process	14
Appendix 5 - Definitions and Terms.....	15

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

Opportunity International Australia (Opportunity) believes in the fundamental right of all people to be free from exploitation and abuse. Opportunity is committed to ensuring child safeguarding mechanisms are in place for all aspects of its operations.

This Policy provides guidance on how Opportunity will protect children from exploitation and abuse across Opportunity's operations, ensuring all Opportunity staff and partners proactively prevent, mitigate and respond to child exploitation, abuse and harm. It outlines measures that safeguard and reduce the risk of children being harmed during visits to programs overseas and promotes a culture of child protection within the organisation. This Policy also provides direction on how to report and respond to concerns and allegations of child abuse in connection with Opportunity's business.

This Policy is to be read alongside Opportunity's Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy and Safeguarding Code of Conduct. Where persons under 18 are impacted, this Child Protection Policy and relevant legal frameworks apply.

SCOPE

Protecting children from harm is the responsibility of all those who engage in the work of Opportunity. This Policy applies to all Opportunity business, including:

- Opportunity's Board of Directors
- Opportunity's staff, including employees and independent contractors
- Opportunity's volunteers, including interns and ambassadors
- Visitors to programs overseas
- Opportunity-funded organisations and contractors engaged in Opportunity's business that involves contact with children, including consultants, researchers and photographers.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

1. Zero tolerance of child exploitation and abuse

Opportunity has zero-tolerance for child exploitation, abuse and harm in all aspects of its work. This means zero tolerance for any acts of child abuse, exploitation and harm and zero tolerance for inaction to prevent, report or respond to child exploitation, abuse and harm. Child exploitation and abuse will attract criminal, civil and disciplinary sanctions.

2. Prioritise the best interests of the child

Opportunity and its partners must ensure that all actions and decisions prioritise children's rights, safety and wellbeing and are underpinned by a 'do no harm' approach. Responses to incidents must be trauma-informed, child-centred and enable access to support services.

3. Inclusion and equity and diversity

Opportunity safeguard and is inclusive of all children regardless of their circumstances, abilities, sex, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, displacement, socio-economic and cultural background.

4. Managing child protection risk and prioritising prevention

While it is not possible to eliminate all risks of child exploitation and abuse, Opportunity and its partners must be proactive in promoting safety of children and must identify, mitigate, manage or reduce the risks to children associated with Opportunity's business. Actions to protect children must be embedded in policies, programs, recruitment, staff training and daily operations to minimise risks and protect children, both in physical and online spaces.

5. Empowering and participatory approach

To effectively manage risks to children, Opportunity requires the commitment, support and cooperation of every person who shares in the business of Opportunity—including staff, volunteers, partners and supporters—to take every precaution to protect children within the context of that work. Opportunity will ensure that all staff and relevant stakeholders are made aware of their responsibilities outlined in the Child Protection Policy. Adherence to the Child Protection Policy is mandatory for all staff, volunteers, and contractors engaged by Opportunity. Opportunity and its partners must empower children to understand their rights, express concerns, and participate in decisions affecting them in ways that are age-appropriate, voluntary and safe. Families and communities must be engaged as partners in promoting child safety and wellbeing, fostering trust and enhancing collaboration.

6. Mandatory and expedient reporting

Reporting child safeguarding concerns related to Opportunity business is mandatory and immediate (within 24 hours). Mandatory reporting includes any suspected, alleged or known incidents of child exploitation, abuse and harm related to Opportunity business. Reporting pathways and response mechanisms must be clear, accessible, child-friendly, confidential and safe, and protect from retaliation those who raise concerns. Reporting mechanisms must ensure that concerns are addressed effectively and in a timely and appropriate manner.

7. Safeguarding embedded in organisational culture and leadership

Executive leadership, managers and the Board must embed child safeguarding into governance, institutional culture and systems. A strong safeguarding culture requires clear accountability, leadership commitment, adequate resourcing, regular review and improvement of policies and practices.

8. Procedural Fairness

Opportunity will apply procedural fairness when making decisions that affect a person's rights or interests. Opportunity will adhere to this principle when responding to concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse.

9. Confidentiality

Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis to protect privacy and safety, consistent with law and to fulfil reporting obligations.

RISK-BASED APPROACH

Opportunity takes a risk-based approach to child protection in its business activities, ensuring that Child Protection Standards are proportionate to risk and expected level of contact with children. This approach categorises three levels of contact with children, each with corresponding Child Protection Standards as outlined in Appendix 1.

Level of contact	Definition	Child Protection Standards Required
No contact with children	Activities with no anticipated interaction with children	None
Incidental or minimal contact with children	Activities where interaction with children is limited, indirect or incidental	Essential Standards
Direct, sustained or significant contact with children	Activities involving regular or ongoing interaction with children	Comprehensive Standards

Opportunity staff and partners must assess programs or activities to identify the level of contact with children and the associated child protection risks. Relevant risk and decision-making processes and activity design documents must reflect this assessment. This does not need to be a stand-alone process and can be incorporated into existing activity planning and risk management processes, such as project risk assessments and project appraisal processes and project design documents. Opportunity staff and partners must monitor for any change in the risk setting and report on the effectiveness of the management of child protection risk.

OPPORTUNITY-FUNDED PARTNERS

All Opportunity-funded organisations are required to act in accordance with the policy principles outlined in this Policy, including mandatory reporting requirement. Non-compliance with the minimum child protection standards where required may lead to suspension or termination of funding arrangements, and non-renewal of Relationship Agreements. Child protection policies and processes are mandatory for the establishment of new partnerships that will involve contact with children.

Opportunity-funded organisations must meet the essential or comprehensive standards, depending on their level of contact with children. Requirements cascade proportionately using a risk-based approach. Controls must be put in place to manage and monitor the risk of child harm and ensure adherence to processes.

Where small/locally based partners need time to achieve Comprehensive standards, Opportunity will require immediate implementation of Essential standards and a time-bound, risk-sensitive action plan to reach Comprehensive standards. Opportunity will monitor progress and provide technical assistance and capacity-building support where needed.

SUB-CONTRACTORS

The requirement to develop and implement a child-safe approach also applies to all downstream personnel, partners and subcontractors who are engaged by an Opportunity-funded organisations to perform any part of an Opportunity-funded activity where contact with children is involved. The Opportunity-funded partner must ensure the downstream organisation or individual contractor complies with the relevant child protection standards.

CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

Contact with children means working on an activity or in a position that involves, or may involve, contact with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment. Opportunity's services and activities do not generally involve contact with children.

If the program or activity is determined to involve '**contact with children**', then the Essential Standards in Appendix 1 should be applied, including undertaking a child protection risk assessment, ensure personnel receive appropriate child protection awareness training, and maintain a clear internal process for reporting child protection concerns. The level of safeguarding measures implemented should be proportionate to the risks identified.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Working with children means being engaged in an activity with a child where contact with children would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the activity and is not merely incidental. This includes paid employment, volunteering and other unpaid work.

Opportunity's activities do not generally involve working with children. However, where any program, activity or role is assessed as involving working with children, the organisation must implement the applicable child protection standards set out in Appendix 1 of this policy including maintaining appropriate child safeguarding policies and reporting procedures, undertaking risk assessments, providing training, implementing

robust recruitment and screening processes, maintaining a Code of Conduct, ensuring appropriate employment provisions are in place, and regularly reviewing child protection arrangements.

CHILD PROTECTION LAWS

Opportunity's staff, volunteers, supporters and Opportunity-funded organisations are obliged to adhere to local and international child protection criminal laws, which prohibit the abuse and exploitation of children. These include Australian laws¹ and local legislation in the countries where Opportunity works in relation to all forms of child abuse and child exploitation, including child sex tourism, child sex trafficking, child labour and child pornography.

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

Opportunity will not knowingly engage – directly or indirectly – anyone who poses an unacceptable risk to children.

During the recruitment process, all potential employees must be asked to declare any charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence relating to child exploitation and abuse.

All employees must sign an employment contract which contains provisions for dismissal, suspension or transfer to other duties for any employee who breaches Opportunity's Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

All personnel shall be screened through the following procedures:

- Criminal record checks before engagement
- Verbal referee checks.

Personnel recruited for positions that involve direct, sustained or significant contact with children shall be screened using additional measures including behavioural-based interview questions that probe the applicant's past behaviour in specific situations relevant to the position to give interviewers additional information about the applicant's suitability to work with children.

CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING

Opportunity provides personnel with training on child protection including outlining their responsibilities to protect children under this Policy, including mandatory reporting of concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse. Training is delivered at induction and annual refresher training is provided.

CHILD EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE REPORTING PROCESSES

Reports must be made of any suspected, alleged or known incidents of child exploitation, abuse and harm related to Opportunity business. Opportunity has internal procedures or handling reports related to child exploitation and abuse as well as non-compliance with its Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Code of Conduct and notifies relevant law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

¹ Including the *Criminal Code Act 1995* and the *Crimes Act 1914* and various state and territory legislation.

These procedures outline obligations and responsibilities of employees, interns, volunteers, Directors, contractors, suppliers, partners and supporters for reporting on and managing concerns about malpractice, illegal acts or failures to comply with recognised standards of work, including concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing or unacceptable behaviour by personnel.

Opportunity is committed to ensuring victims/survivors of child safeguarding incidents are treated with dignity and respect. The needs and interests of the child are the primary priority for all cases.

When responding to allegations, Opportunity and its partners have a responsibility to ensure their staff are treated fairly, and that the rights of individuals are respected during an investigation and any applicable disciplinary process. Individuals who report concerns in good faith are protected from retaliation, victimisation or adverse consequences.

All allegations or incidents reported will be investigated in line with company procedures. Following investigations, possible outcomes for Opportunity staff may include dismissal, suspension or transfer to other duties for any employee who breaches this Policy or Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

- Refer to [Appendix 2](#) for Opportunity's Child Protection reporting and investigation procedures for Opportunity's Australian internal and domestic operations
- Refer to [Appendix 3](#) for Opportunity's Child Protection reporting process for Opportunity-funded implementing partners and programs
- Refer to [Appendix 4](#) for Opportunity's child-friendly reporting mechanism

USE OF CHILDREN'S IMAGES

Opportunity will portray children in a respectful, appropriate and consensual way, as set out in Opportunity's Photography Guidelines² and Opportunity's Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

VISITING PROGRAMS OVERSEAS

Opportunity conducts visits to its programs overseas, for example, monitoring and evaluation visits or Insight Trips for raising awareness about development issues. To ensure all reasonable precautions are taken to protect children from people who may wish to exploit or abuse them during those visits, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- All visits to programs overseas, without exception, will be arranged through Opportunity. Unauthorised visits are when a person visits a community directly or arrives at the overseas office of an organisation funded by Opportunity, requesting access to clients without the required approvals obtained from Opportunity. In this event, the Opportunity-funded organisation can elect to decline the visit or to manage the person according to the guidelines outlined in this Child Protection Policy and Opportunity's Safeguarding Code of Conduct.
- In preparation for a visit, all visitors must:
 - Complete a Criminal Record check before visiting program countries

² See Opportunity's Photography Guidelines <https://app.box.com/s/meipo8sku38qhdpegcozy9x57nql0oyc>

- Receive and read Opportunity's Child Protection Policy and Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy and agree to comply
- Be provided with information concerning appropriate behaviour during visits to programs overseas
- Read, sign and return Opportunity's Safeguarding Code of Conduct before the visit.
- While visiting Opportunity's programs overseas, visitors must be always accompanied by an Opportunity and/or Opportunity-funded organisation's staff member (or authorised volunteer). During the visit, a visitor should never spend unsupervised time with a child.
- Any gifts for, or correspondence to, community members and/or their children from Opportunity staff and visitors will be facilitated through and screened by the Opportunity-funded organisation.

Inappropriate behaviour on the part of the visitor toward any child must be addressed and reported immediately. The Opportunity or Opportunity-funded organisation's staff member accompanying the visitor will seek the assistance of their supervisor and follow the guidelines established by the Opportunity Child Protection Policy.

APPROPRIATE USE OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Using Opportunity systems to access child exploitation material or to engage in online grooming is prohibited and will be dealt with promptly, including reporting of the incident to relevant law enforcement agencies, as appropriate. Opportunity personnel who are aware of child exploitation material on a work computer or other piece of technology can report this to the Australian Federal Police Child Protection Operations Team (CPO). Any inappropriate material should not be discussed, forwarded or deleted without the express agreement of CPO.

SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

All Opportunity personnel, visitors to Opportunity's programs overseas, Directors and volunteers must sign and comply with Opportunity's Safeguarding Code of Conduct which sets stringent standards for behaviour in relation to children. Opportunity expects staff, visitors, contractors, and volunteers to avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse during their engagement with Opportunity.

INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTORS

An individual contractor is not required to have a child protection policy. However, individuals contracted for engagements that involve working with children or contact with children are required to sign Opportunity's Safeguarding Code of Conduct and provide evidence of their commitment to child protection, for example, sign a contract that includes clauses that state their commitment to child protection.

REVIEWING THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Opportunity's Child Protection Policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if required. This policy is next due to be reviewed in 2029.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Child protection standards

- Appendix 2 - Child protection reporting and investigation process for Opportunity's internal and domestic operations
- Appendix 3 – Child protection reporting process for Opportunity-funded implementing partners
- Appendix 4 – Child friendly reporting processes
- Appendix 5 – Definitions and terms

APPENDIX 1 - CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS

Standard 1. Child protection policy and procedures, including a code of conduct	
Essential	Comprehensive
The organisation has a child protection policy/statement or other documented policies and procedures The organisation has a Code of Conduct. All personnel are required to acknowledge they have read and agreed to the organisation's Code of Conduct.	The organisation has a detailed child protection policy and procedures in place and are subject to regular review. The policy should demonstrate the organisation's commitment to zero tolerance for child exploitation, abuse and harm and establish procedures in line with these standards. The organisation has its own Code of Conduct. All personnel are required to acknowledge they have read and agreed to the organisation's Code of Conduct.
Standard 2: Reporting mechanism and investigation procedures	
The organisation can receive and manage incident reports safely and confidentially in accordance with Australian and/or local law. Reporting mechanisms are accessible to all stakeholders including children. The organisation must report incidents and investigation outcomes to DFAT.	The organisation has a well-publicised, accessible (including to children), confidential and safe mechanism for reporting child protection concerns or incidents which includes protections from retaliation. The organisation has documented procedures for managing child protection incidents that include trauma-informed responses, procedural fairness, transparent and timely investigation processes, privacy protections and support for child victim-survivors, and appropriate disciplinary actions if the incident involves their personnel. The organisation ensures children, families and communities are informed about expected behaviours, reporting mechanisms and investigation processes in accessible and culturally appropriate ways. The organisation must report incidents and investigation outcomes to DFAT.
Standard 3: Risk management processes	
The organisation undertakes a child protection risk assessment, including mitigation actions tailored to the activities and the context, that is reviewed at least annually and revised as needed.	The organisation undertakes a child protection risk assessment, including mitigation actions tailored to the activities and the context, that is reviewed at least annually and revised as needed. The organisation must provide documented evidence that senior management and executive boards have visibility of child protection risk management. The organisation has documented evidence of its expectations for downstream partners and how those partners will manage child protection risk.

Standard 4: Child protection training	
The organisation provides basic child protection training to all relevant personnel. Personnel are required to complete the training annually.	The organisation provides comprehensive child protection training – regularly reviewed for all personnel. Personnel are required to complete the training annually.
Standard 5: Child safe recruitment and screening processes	
The organisation conducts child safe recruitment and integrity screening for all personnel. Screening should include reference checks, recent police checks, working with children or vulnerable people checks, or locally appropriate alternatives, or where these are not feasible, a self-declaration.	The organisation conducts child safe recruitment and integrity screening for all personnel. Screening should include reference checks, recent police checks, working with children or working with vulnerable people checks, or locally appropriate alternatives. Additional integrity measures required include targeted messaging and questioning about child safeguarding at all stages of recruitment and onboarding, and ongoing monitoring of staff behaviour and adherence to child protection policies and processes.

APPENDIX 2 - CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION PROCESS FOR OPPORTUNITY'S INTERNAL AND DOMESTIC OPERATIONS

1. Making a report

Child protection concerns or incidents relating to Opportunity's internal operations in Australia may involve organisations we work with, employees, interns, volunteers, contractors or sub-contractors, donors, or members of the public, occurring at any location where work is being conducted, including on-site at Opportunity's offices, off-site or after hours, at work-related activities including conferences, training sessions, insight trips and social functions. (Opportunity maintains a separate reporting process for implementing partners, a person to whom Opportunity or Opportunity's partners deliver services or who is affected by Opportunity's services.)

The People and Culture Team (hereinafter referred to as 'Safeguarding Officer') are responsible for with concerns raised under Opportunity's Child Protection Policy and Prevention of Sexual, Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy and ensuring that an investigation is conducted.

Concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse, and policy non-compliance relating to Opportunity's operations in Australia should be raised **immediately** (within 24 hours) with Opportunity's Safeguarding Officer.

The Safeguarding Officer can be contacted on 02 9270 3300 or at Safeguarding@opportunity.org.au.

Alternatively, if a disclosure is about a Director or the Safeguarding Officer, concerns can be reported directly to the Chair of Opportunity's Audit and Risk Committee, contactable at auditriskchair@opportunity.org.au.

Reports may be made anonymously. Anonymous reports will be treated seriously and investigated as far as possible.

2. Escalating the report

The Safeguarding Officer will record all reported incidents in Opportunity's internal Safeguarding Misconduct Register using de-identified information

The Safeguarding will notify the CEO and Company Secretary immediately that a report has been received. The CEO will notify the Chair of Opportunity's Board that an allegation has been received and the Board must be informed at the earliest appropriate opportunity with details of the complaint and the proposed response.

The Safeguarding Officer will report to DFAT within 24 hours of any suspected or alleged child protection incidents, using DFAT's Incident Form and email to childprotection@dfat.gov.au. Where there are fears for the safety of a victim-survivor, the Safeguarding Officer will contact childprotection@dfat.gov.au for advice.

Reporting to DFAT is mandatory for any suspected or alleged cases of child exploitation, abuse or harm perpetrated by anyone within scope of the DFAT Child Protection Policy in connection with official duties or business. Reports of abuse or exploitation of individuals

above the age of 18 years will be handled as set out in Opportunity's Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy.

If an incident is suspected of being a criminal offense, it will be reported to the local enforcement authorities. Where local mandatory reporting laws apply, Opportunity and its partners will comply with these in addition to DFAT's reporting requirements.

3. Investigation process

The Safeguarding Officer will investigate, ensuring procedural fairness and impartiality. If they decide it is not possible to resolve the complaint internally, they may refer it to external processes such as a complaint handling body.

In both cases, the complainant or victim-survivor will be advised in writing of the process for investigating the complaint and the expected timeframe for resolution. Throughout the investigation, the complainant or victim-survivor, or individual to whom a complaint has been made, may have a support person present at meetings.

The Safeguarding Officer is to document the progress and result of the investigation in the Internal Safeguarding Misconduct Register using de-identified information and provide the CEO with regular updates.

Opportunity will not reveal a complainant or victim-survivor's name or personal details to anyone outside the organisation without the complainant or victim-survivor's permission, unless required by law. Internal confidentiality will also be a priority, to the extent possible, with respect to the details of allegations and the identity of people involved.

4. Support

Responding to the emotional, mental and physical wellbeing needs of the complainant or victim-survivor(s) must be actioned at the same time any reporting or investigation is taking place.

This should include checking-in on what support mechanisms are available to the complainant or victim-survivor, referring the complainant or victim-survivor to Opportunity's Employee Assistance Program, providing links to reputable support organisations, and asking what reasonable accommodations are needed for the complainant-survivor to feel comfortable and safe at work.

If a victim-survivor of child sexual misconduct alleges the perpetrator was an employee or volunteer deployed by Opportunity, or otherwise conducting business for or representing Opportunity, we will consider, on a case-by-case basis, providing appropriate and effective forms of reparation, including but not limited to access to relevant assistance and support services such as medical, legal and psycho-social services.

5. Disciplinary actions

Available sanctions include dismissal, suspension, warning, counsel or transfer to other duties for any employee who breaches Opportunity's Child Protection Policy or Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX 3 - CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING PROCESS FOR OPPORTUNITY-FUNDED IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Partner organisations must report any suspected or alleged child exploitation, abuse or harm incidents, or policy non-compliance, to Opportunity's Program Team Safeguarding focal points within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident.

The Opportunity Programs Safeguarding Officers are responsible for dealing with Partner and Program Child Protection reports, which includes those relating to implementing partners, a person to whom we deliver services or who is affected by Opportunity's services.

The Programs Safeguarding Officers can be contacted at:
programs-safeguarding@opportunity.org.au

Non-DFAT funded partners must also report alleged child protection incidents to Opportunity's Program Safeguarding Officers as outlined above, where Opportunity and the partner organisation will manage the incident directly.

The Programs Safeguarding Officers will:

- Record all reported incidents in the Safeguarding Misconduct Register using de-identified information.
- Inform Opportunity's Company Secretary, and CEO immediately so they can notify the Opportunity Board.
- Report to DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) within 24 hours any suspected or alleged Child Protection incidents involving DFAT funds or that pose a reputational risk to DFAT, using the DFAT Protection Incident Notification Form and emailing childprotection@dfat.gov.au

The Programs Safeguarding Officers will continue to liaise with partner organisations and DFAT until the case is closed.

On an ongoing basis, and following any incident reports, the Programs Safeguarding Officer will work with partners to ensure appropriate and effective child safeguarding mechanisms are in place.

APPENDIX 4 – CHILD FRIENDLY REPORTING PROCESS

1. How children can get help or tell us if something is wrong

We want you to feel safe. If something happens that makes you feel scared, confused, uncomfortable or unsafe, you can tell us. We will listen and help.

You can tell us if:

- Someone hurt you or another child
- Someone made you feel unsafe
- Someone behaved in a way that felt wrong or confusing
- You saw something that worried you
- You are not sure, but something didn't feel right.

There is **no problem too small**. You will not get in trouble for speaking up.

2. Ways you can tell us

You can choose the way that feels best for you.

Tell a trusted adult

This could be:

- a parent or caregiver
- a teacher
- a community leader
- a staff member or volunteer you feel safe with

They can tell us on your behalf.

Tell us directly

You can contact us in these ways:

- **Phone:** 02 9270 3300 (you can ask for the Head of People and Culture).
- **Email:** safeguarding@opportunity.org.au

You can tell us as much or as little as you want. You can tell us your name, or you can stay anonymous.

3. What happens when you tell us

When you tell us something:

- We believe you.
- We take you seriously.
- We will help keep you safe.
- We will only share information with people who need to know to help you.
- You can choose a support person to be with you.
- We will explain what will happen next in words you can understand and will keep you updated.

You never have to repeat your story more times than needed.

4. If you are in danger right now

If you are scared or in danger, please tell a trusted adult immediately or call emergency services in your country. We will follow our child protection procedures to make sure you get the help and support you need.

APPENDIX 5 - DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

1. Child or children

In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 'child' means every human being under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. For the purposes of this policy, Opportunity considers a child to be a person under the age of 18 years.

2. Abuse

Includes:

- **physical abuse**—the use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviour includes shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning
- **neglect**—the failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they can do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and wellbeing
- **emotional abuse**—refers to a parent or caregiver's inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts toward a child or a pattern of failure over time to provide a child with adequate non-physical nurture and emotional availability. Such acts have a high probability of damaging a child's self-esteem or social competence
- **sexual abuse**—the use of a child for sexual gratification by an adult or significantly older child or adolescent. Sexually abusive behaviours can include fondling genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism and exposing the child to, or involving the child in, pornography³.
- **online or digital abuse**—including exposing a child to harmful online content, online exploitation, cyber-enabled abuse, or using digital technologies to harm, coerce or manipulate a child.
- **ill-treatment**—disciplining or correcting a child in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate or improper manner; making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child; hostile use of force towards a child; and/or a pattern of hostile or unreasonable and seriously inappropriate degrading comments or behaviour towards a child

Note: the above includes a child or children being present (hearing or seeing) while a parent or sibling is subjected to any of the above.

3. Child abuse material

Material that depicts (expressly or implicitly) a child under 18 years of age as a victim of torture, cruelty or physical abuse.

4. Child exploitation

One or more of the following:

- committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child
- possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material
- committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming.

³ Fact Sheet No. 12 *What is child abuse and neglect?* National Children's Clearinghouse, Australian Institute of Family Studies.

- using a child for profit, labour, sexual gratification, or some other personal or financial advantage

5. Child exploitation material

Material, irrespective of its form, which is classified as child abuse material or child pornography material.

6. Child labour

In accordance with the International Labour Organisation's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, 'child labour' means 'work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development'. It refers to work that 'is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.'

7. Child pornography

In accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 'child pornography' means 'any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes.' For further information regarding child pornography offences, refer to the Criminal Code Act 1995.

8. Child pornography material

Material that depicts a person, or is a representation of a person, who is, or appears to be, under 18 years of age and is engaged in, or appears to be engaged in, a sexual pose or sexual activity, or is in the presence of a person who is engaged in, or appears to be engaged in, a sexual pose or activity, and does this in a way that a reasonable person would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive⁴.

9. Child protection

An activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly arising from child exploitation and abuse.

10. Child Safeguarding

The broad obligation on staff and partners to ensure that the design and delivery of Opportunity's programs and organisational operations do not expose children to adverse impacts, including the risk of abuse and exploitation, and that any concerns about children's safety within the communities where they work are appropriately reported.

11. Child sex tourism

The commercial sexual exploitation of children by people who travel domestically or internationally, and while there, engage in sexual acts with people under 18 years old.

12. Child sex trafficking

Children who are lured, kidnapped, sold, transported, threatened, drugged, beaten, imprisoned and forced into having sex with persons over 18 years old.

⁴ This definition has been extracted from the *Criminal Code Act 1995*. See Part 10.6 of the criminal code for the full definition.

13. Grooming

Generally, refers to behaviour that makes it easier for an offender to procure a child for sexual activity. For example, an offender might build a relationship of trust with the child and then seek to sexualise that relationship (for example by encouraging romantic feelings or exposing the child to sexual concepts through pornography).

14. Online grooming

The act of sending an electronic message to a child, with the intention of procuring the recipient to engage in or submit to sexual activity with another person, including but not necessarily the sender; or of sending an electronic message with indecent content to a recipient who the sender believes to be a child.

15. Harm

Any detrimental effect on a child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. Harm may be caused by financial, physical or emotional abuse, neglect, and/or sexual abuse or exploitation whether intended or unintended.

16. Informed consent

Ensures the child and the parent or guardian understand the implications, purpose and potential uses of photographs or videos.

17. Victim-survivor

A child who is, or has been, abused, exploited or harmed. The term 'victim-survivor' recognises both the harm experienced (victim) and the child's resilience or agency in coping with the aftermath (survivor). This approach prioritises dignity, rights and wellbeing during reporting and response processes.