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# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>1 KidsRights Mission, Vision</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2 Core Child Protection principles and values</b> .....	<b>4</b>
2.1 UN convention on the Rights of the Child .....	4
2.2 Child participation.....	5
2.3 Our approach to child protection/safeguarding .....	5
<b>3 Definitions</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>4 Child Protection Policy</b> .....	<b>8</b>
4.1 Protection of children .....	8
4.2 Protection of KidsRights Employees and Representatives.....	8
4.3 KidsRights and its reputation are protected .....	8
4.4 The scope of the policy .....	8
4.5 Awareness.....	9
4.6 Risk assessment and ensuring safeguarding during programmes .....	9
<b>5 Staff</b> .....	<b>9</b>
5.1 Recruitment and Onboarding .....	9
5.2 Training on Child Protection and Safeguarding .....	10
5.3 Procedures .....	10
5.4 Adult-child relationships.....	11
5.5 Reporting procedures .....	11
5.5.1 Guiding principles .....	11
5.5.2 Internal concern.....	11
5.5.3 External concern .....	12
5.5.4 Integrity policy .....	13
5.5.5 Reporting process .....	14
5.5.6 Follow-up.....	15
<b>6 Communications and media</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>6.1 Principles</b> .....	<b>15</b>
6.1.1 Dignity.....	15
6.1.2 Accuracy.....	16
6.1.3 Privacy.....	16
<b>6.2 Informed Consent</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>6.3 Interviewing children</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>6.4 Visits by media (photographers, film crews, journalists etc.)</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>6.5 Social Media</b> .....	<b>18</b>
6.5.1 Purpose and Scope .....	18

6.5.2	Key Definitions .....	18
6.5.3	Duties of KidsRights Staff .....	18
6.5.4	Duties of Children on KidsRights' platforms .....	19
6.5.5	Monitoring, Review, and Implementation.....	20
<b>6.6</b>	<b>Complaints procedure .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>7</b>	<b><i>Digital Safety</i> .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Data Protection Policy .....</b>	<b>21</b>
7.1.1	GDPR.....	21
7.1.2	Cookies and statistics.....	21
7.1.3	Storing of Information.....	21
7.1.4	Processing of Information .....	21
7.1.5	Sharing of Information with third parties.....	21
<b>7.2</b>	<b>Protection against harm online (bullying, abuse) .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>7.3</b>	<b>Informed Consent (online procedure) .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>8</b>	<b><i>Monitoring and evaluation of CPP</i>.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>8.1</b>	<b>Procedures .....</b>	<b>22</b>
8.1.1	Under normal circumstances .....	22
8.1.2	After a breach or allegation.....	23
<b>8.2</b>	<b>Risk Assessments .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>9</b>	<b><i>Appendixes</i> .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>9.1</b>	<b>Appendix I - Risk Assessment Form.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>9.2</b>	<b>Appendix II - New Employee Criminal Convictions Declaration Form .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>9.3</b>	<b>Appendix III - Character References Form for Employees.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>9.4</b>	<b>Appendix IV - Child Protection Reporting Form .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>9.5</b>	<b>Appendix V – Consent Form for State of Youth .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>9.6</b>	<b>Code of Conduct.....</b>	<b>32</b>

## 1 KidsRights Mission, Vision

Children are *changemakers*. KidsRights **envisions** a world in which their rights are guaranteed and works with children to enable them to realize their great potential. KidsRights is convinced that realizing children's rights **cannot be done without** the perspective, experience and authority of children themselves.

Our **mission** is to ensure that children are heard. Together with children, we ask global attention for their power as *changemakers* and children's rights issues. We also empower children as positive and resilient *changemakers*. We act with children, amplifying and accelerating their actions in their communities and beyond. Lastly, we make sure everyone is informed about children's rights. Through our research we provide insight into the status of children's rights worldwide.

## 2 Core Child Protection principles and values

The core child protection principles and values underpin all the work that KidsRights does in the Netherlands and globally, and these are informed by the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, our commitment to child participation, and our values when working within an international environment. KidsRights has the obligation to promote the protection of children and youth, especially those with whom we work are in contact. The goal of this policy is:

1. **Prevention** of harm to the children that KidsRights are in contact with, directly or indirectly.
2. **Protection** against harm for all children directly or indirectly in contact with KidsRights.
3. **Promotion** of the safeguarding of children and ensuring the wellbeing of children directly or indirectly in contact with KidsRights.

The Child Protection Policy serves as a framework for achieving these aims.

### 2.1 [UN convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the seminal international treaty outlining the rights of children and the responsibilities of governments, organisations and individuals in ensuring the realisation of these rights. The CRC's rights directly inform and influence KidsRights' Child Protection efforts. The principles outlined in the CRC serve as a framework for child protection efforts within KidsRights, informing best practice within the organisation and emphasizing the responsibility placed on KidsRights for ensuring protection and promotion of rights, welfare and wellbeing of all children directly and indirectly in contact with KidsRights and their representatives.

## 2.2 [Child participation](#)

KidsRights advocates for child participation. Child Protection efforts are considered through this lens, and children should have the opportunity to express their views and be involved in decisions affecting their lives as much as possible. Their opinions should be considered and respected, according to their age and maturity.

KidsRights aims to implement the nine basic requirements for meaningful and ethical children's participation. <sup>(OBJ)</sup> Child Participation must be transparent and informative; supported by training; safe and sensitive to risk; and accountable.

Annex 1 includes the Code of Conduct, which sets out the do's and don't's when working with children. This must be signed by the KidsRights Staff, the Board and the (sub)contractors hired by KidsRights who might be in direct contact with children. The signed Code of Conduct, together with the VOG, will be saved in the KidsRights staff files.

## 2.3 [Our approach to child protection/safeguarding](#)

KidsRights foundation is committed to safeguarding all children, irrespective of ability, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality and culture. We recognise that types of risk may vary according to the child and that therefore the means of addressing risks may also vary.

Child protection efforts within KidsRights must be **culturally sensitive**, respecting the diversity of children's backgrounds and traditions, and understanding these to adapt our approach to ensure that all children's wellbeing is protected no matter which background they are from. Child protection systems and procedures within KidsRights aim to be **child-sensitive**, by ensuring that initiating a procedure or reporting a suspected violation does not cause further harm to any child involved. This policy aims to ensure that all adults directly or indirectly in contact with children at KidsRights are **accountable** for their actions and decisions related to children's well-being.

## 3 Definitions

KidsRights uses the following definitions in relation to child protection:

**Abuse:** refers to the mistreatment or harmful behaviour directed toward another person, often with the intention of causing physical, emotional, psychological, or social harm.

- a) **Physical abuse:** involves the intentional use of force to cause bodily harm or injury to another person. This can include hitting, punching, kicking, slapping, burning, shaking, pinching, poisoning, suffocating, or any other form of intentional action causing physical harm to a child.
- b) **Emotional abuse:** is characterised by behaviours that cause harm to a child's emotional, intellectual, mental, or psychological development. This may occur as an isolated event or on a recurrent basis. Behaviours intended to manipulate, control, degrade, or undermine a person's self-esteem and mental well-being

are also considered emotional abuse. Some examples include any humiliating or degrading treatment (e.g., bad name calling, threats, yelling/screaming/cursing, teasing, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming etc.); failure to meet a child's emotional needs; rejecting, ignoring, terrorizing, isolating, or confining a child; and attacking or minimizing a child's cultural identity.

- c) **Child sexual abuse:** The involvement of a child in any sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening. A child cannot consent to sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- d) **Financial Abuse:** The exploitation of another person's financial resources or assets without their consent. This can include theft, fraud, or coercive control over a person's finances.

**Child/ young adults:** A child is defined as anyone under 18 years of age according to the UNCRC. Nonetheless the protection offered under this policy covers children as well as young adults up to 24 years of age if they are directly or indirectly under the care of KidsRights, by being a participant in a KidsRights programme.

**Child protection:** An umbrella term for the policies, procedures and practices designed to make KidsRights safe for children. It is fundamental to ensuring adequate measures to prevent and respond to harm towards children. It is also necessary to ensuring that best practices are in place for the safety, wellbeing, and promotion of the rights of the children within KidsRights' orbit.

**Exploitation:** The actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential, or trust for the benefit of the individual leveraging their position, power, privilege, or wealth (through enticement, manipulation, coercion, or trickery) to engage a child in labour, domestic servitude, forced criminality, soldiering or organ harvesting, or in activity in which a child's dignity is compromised in order for an organization to gain financially or in reputation. Typically, the person(s) exploiting a child does so to profit monetarily, socially, or politically. It can happen to one or a group of a children, in the community of origin, outside of the community, or internationally.

- a) **Sexual exploitation:** refers to the sexual abuse, victimization, or commercialization of minors for sexual purposes. It involves the sexual use, manipulation, and harm of children, and it is a severe violation of their rights and well-being. Sexual exploitation of children can take various forms, including:
- Child pornography>> (online) video or photographic material of sexual abuse of children.
  - Child sex trafficking >> child trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation
  - Child prostitution >> exploitation of children in prostitution
  - Online grooming

- Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)
  - Child marriage
- b) **Commercial exploitation:** These principles derive from the Children's Rights and Business Principles<sup>1</sup> of children refers to the illegal or unethical use of children for financial gain. This is a violation of their rights as it subjects them to often harmful or coercive activities for the profit or pleasure of others. Commercial exploitation of a child may include, but is not limited to:
- Taking photos of children in distress or extreme states of malnourishment to gain donations.
  - Unethical use of children and their activities for the purpose of achieving a profit or a gain.
  - Forced labour.
  - Using children to benefit fraud.

**Informed Consent:** The decision, taken freely after being duly informed of the nature, significance, implications, and risks of an intervention (including all medical acts, in particular interventions performed for the purpose of preventive care, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, or research) by any person capable of giving consent or, where the person is not capable of giving consent (minors), by his or her legal representative. The three central elements necessary for informed consent are the information, the decision-making capacity (DMC) and the voluntariness. The voluntariness represents the absence of undue influence on the decision-making process including fear, pain, false beliefs, or incorrect information.

**Neglect:** Includes, but is not limited to, failing to provide adequate food, shelter, or sufficient clothing. Neglect is also failing to prevent harm; failing to ensure adequate supervision; failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment or providing inappropriate medical treatment (e.g. administering medication when not authorized); or failing to provide a safe physical environment (e.g. exposure to violence, unsafe programming location, unsafe sleeping practices, releasing a child to an unauthorized adult, access to weapons or harmful objects, failing to child-proof a space that children will occupy etc.). It can also be KidsRights staff, partners, contractors, suppliers, and sub-grantees failing to apply minimum requirements as set out in mandatory procedures (e.g., failing to protect a child's personal data).

**Representatives:** Includes anyone acting on behalf of KidsRights, or who could be perceived as acting with, on behalf of, or under the direction of KidsRights. This includes, but is not limited to, employees, volunteers, interns, consultants, Board members, partners, service providers, donors and others who work with children on KidsRights' behalf, visit KidsRights' programmes, or who have access to sensitive information about children within KidsRights' programmes. This is interpreted widely to protect the children who we encounter across various contexts, directly or indirectly.

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, Children's Rights and Business Principles, 2012. (Accessible online at [www.unicef.org/media/96136/file/Childrens-Rights-Business-Principles-2012.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/96136/file/Childrens-Rights-Business-Principles-2012.pdf))

## 4 Child Protection Policy

As an international children's rights organisation promoting the empowerment of children and young people, KidsRights works with children around the world to deliver its programmes, including vulnerable children or children in situations where they may be vulnerable. A culture of child protection and accountability is vital for KidsRights to achieve its mission.

### 4.1 Protection of children

The inherent power dynamic between children and charitable organisations supporting them increases the risk of abuse and exploitation. KidsRights is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability regarding its Child Protection policies and procedures. Clear policies and procedures, available to the children themselves in a format that is easily accessible to them increases awareness of what the policies are and how to submit complaints. This is also a part of our strategy in preventing harm and protecting children.

### 4.2 Protection of KidsRights Employees and Representatives

This policy protects staff members working professionally with children, mitigating the risk of false allegations towards staff members or representatives of KidsRights. Clear procedures of redressal mechanisms also ensure that complaints are handled transparently and are investigated effectively.

### 4.3 KidsRights and its reputation are protected

This policy recognises the risk inherent to KidsRights of being infiltrated or targeted by people wishing to do harm to children. KidsRights is committed to protecting the rights of children, additionally has a reputational risk for being associated with such persons or behaviour. To avoid this, the policy includes ongoing monitoring procedures for identifying and mitigating child protection risks and reserves the right to terminate any agreement with any staff, representatives, partners, or other persons associated with KidsRights deemed to have violated this policy.

### 4.4 The scope of the policy

The KidsRights Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct applies to all staff or representatives of KidsRights, as well as any persons acting on behalf of KidsRights in any capacity, including any person who could be perceived to be acting on behalf of KidsRights, and employees at all levels, such as Board members, volunteers, consultants, interns, contractors, business partners, NGO partners, youth representatives and service providers traveling to locations where KidsRights projects exist, as well as KidsRights representatives accompanying children to external events. Partner organisations must develop minimum child safeguarding measures appropriate for their organisation.

This policy also applies to adults participating in KidsRights events and activities where children are present, including, but not limited to, journalists, sponsors, donors,

business partners, policy makers and educators. All representatives and those mentioned in the above paragraph will be expected to be aware of the Child Protection Policy and if appropriate, sign a declaration attesting to their understanding of it and their commitment to adhering to the principles and policies contained within. KidsRights representatives must always demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour and conduct towards children, both in their private and professional lives.

Any violations of this policy will be treated as a serious infraction and will be treated accordingly, resulting in disciplinary action if appropriate, up to and including termination, and any other available legal remedy. No employee will face punishment for submitting a complaint for investigation according to the Child Protection Procedures outlined.

#### 4.5 Awareness

To ensure that the policy is effective in achieving its aims, it is vital that all staff members of KidsRights, all KidsRights representatives and partners working directly with children involved in KidsRights programmes and, when possible, all KidsRights representatives working indirectly with children are made aware of the Child Protection Policy.

By signing the Child Protection Code of Conduct, all employees of KidsRights adhere to the Child Protection Policy. Representatives, partners, or other persons working directly with children within KidsRights programmes must sign the Code of Conduct to adhere to the Child Protection Policy. Representatives or partners working for other organisations may be asked to provide evidence of their internal child protection policies in lieu of, or in addition to, signing an undertaking to adhere to KidsRights' Child Protection Policy.

#### 4.6 Risk assessment and ensuring safeguarding during programmes

To ensure the safety and protection of children in all the programmes across KidsRights, KidsRights endeavours to:

1. Conduct comprehensive risk assessments when designing projects and activities where children are present, or directly or indirectly affected.
2. Include within the programme design strategies to ensure the safety of the children involved.
3. Design strategies for mitigating manageable risks to children, when identified, and incorporate these into the design, delivery and evaluation of the projects or activities.

## 5 Staff

As described under clause 4.4, all staff working for KidsRights must adhere to the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct. All staff are expected to maintain the highest possible standards regarding their conduct with children in their private and professional lives.

### 5.1 Recruitment and Onboarding

To ensure staff members are suitable to work with children, several recruitment

procedures must be followed. On offer of a position, and prior to beginning a role at KidsRights, all employees must have completed the following:

1. Police background check with the relevant authority where they currently live, or where they have previously lived ('Verklaring omtrent Gedrag).
2. Submitted the Character References form with two contacts whom KidsRights may contact to attest their suitability to working with children.

All new employees will be provided training on the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and how this applies to their work during their onboarding and will be introduced to the Child Protection Officer.

## 5.2 Training on Child Protection and Safeguarding

KidsRights takes Child Protection within its organisation seriously and endeavours to provide training for all its staff on Child Protection yearly, or more frequently should the need arise. This could include:

1. Training on understanding the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and how this applies to the different roles and types of activities carried out at KidsRights.
2. Training on developments within Child Protection rules and regulations, that are internationally applicable and that are applicable within the Netherlands, the EU and, if necessary, the countries and regions which KidsRights operates in.
3. Training on understanding safeguarding of children and signs of abuse or other harm.

The Child Protection Officer at KidsRights is responsible for organising the training, though it may be delivered by an appropriate person internally, or by an external provider.

## 5.3 Procedures

KidsRights appoints a staffmember as Child Protection point of contact (CP PoC) to ensure that the Child Protection Policy is effective in achieving its aims, that Child Protection remains at the forefront of KidsRights' work, and that any complaints can be addressed promptly and effectively. The CP PoC assumes this role in addition and independently from their role at KidsRights, and other KidsRights' representatives must not interfere with their work. The CP PoC term is unlimited and dependent on their willingness and the needs of the organisation.

The CP PoC must be capable of doing this role independently and should be someone with significant experience or knowledge of working with children. They should have a professional qualification which sets ethical behaviour standards (such as lawyer, accountant, doctor, or teacher) and/or have reputable character referees attesting to their suitability for this role. The CP PoC must undergo Child Protection training prior to taking on this role.

The CP PoC role includes:

1. Ensuring that the Child Protection Policy is up to date and takes the lead in establishing best practice.
2. Ensuring that all staff members of KidsRights are knowledgeable on how to apply the Child Protection Policy in their work by providing opportunities for training.
3. Being available to receive complaints and investigate them in a fair and

transparent manner, ensuring that no further harm is caused to children and that recommending the best course of action.

4. Overseeing documentation relating to child protection at KidsRights.

The CP PoC undertakes the responsibility to keep the policies and documents up to date on relevant regulations. All KidsRights employees have a collective responsibility to ensure that the Child Protection Policy is applied in practice.

Ultimate responsibility for child safeguarding remains with senior executives and managers.

#### 5.4 Adult-child relationships

KidsRights firmly protects the rights of children to special protection by adults, this means in practice that:

- Adults are **always responsible** for their behaviour with a child, no matter how the child behaves.
- Adults should take measures and care to avoid being in a compromising situation, such as ensuring that they are never alone with a child, or that their actions or words cannot be mistaken or construed in a way that could put them in a compromising position.
- Adults must take care to ensure that they communicate with children in an appropriate, professional, and child-friendly manner, being sensitive to the age, gender, cultural background, and other factors.
- Adults must recognise the trust placed in adults by children, and the position of power they may hold or be seen to hold with children. Adults must take this great responsibility seriously and ensure that risk of abuse arising from this are mitigated.
- Adults must ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed.

#### 5.5 Reporting procedures

##### 5.5.1 Guiding principles

Child Protection reporting procedures must be transparent and carried out with due diligence. All representatives of KidsRights have a responsibility to uphold the rights of children, prevent all kinds of abuse, and ensure that any person(s) violating these are held accountable. To this end, no representative should face any adverse consequences for utilising these procedures and reporting their concerns.

All reports should be kept confidential as far as possible, protecting the names and identities of affected persons if necessary.

##### 5.5.2 Internal concern

If a representative of KidsRights, or an outside party, has a child protection concern relating to the conduct of a fellow representative, whether it be an employee of KidsRights or other representative, they have a duty to report it. If a third party raises concerns with a representative of KidsRights, they also have a duty to report it.

The reporting procedure for a representative of KidsRights is as follows:

1. Contact is made to the CP PoC at KidsRights as soon as possible, who then provides a framework for submitting a report, including the details in writing of the concern and alleged violation of the Policy.
2. The CP PoC assesses the information they are given, deciding on the appropriate next step. This could involve investigating the representative and gathering more information to make a fair judgement of the situation. While this takes place, the representative may be temporarily suspended or barred from contact with children, depending on the severity of the allegation.
3. The Child Protection Officer may decide to consult superiors within KidsRights, or may refer the matter to external services, such as the police or a child protection expert to assist with decision making on the validity of the allegation and the consequences faced.
4. The Child Protection officer will suggest consequences faced by the representative if they have been found to violate the Child Protection Policy. For smaller infractions, this could include warnings or disciplinary procedures and conditions. For serious violation or in cases of recidivism, this could include termination of employment with KidsRights or termination of a contractual agreement, if necessary. The CPO will communicate the decision made within 4 weeks of receiving the complaint.
5. All the parties involved in the case that arises shall be given an equal and fair opportunity of being heard and to defend themselves.
6. For investigation and decision-making, the CP PoC may set up a committee, in consultation with the concerned higher authority, comprising of members that may or may not be a part of KidsRights employee staff as the situation may require.
7. In case the allegations are brought against the CP PoC, the CPO shall immediately consider themselves temporarily suspended from the post of CPO. It remains up to the discretion of the concerned higher authority to appoint a CPO (in-charge) for the trial period and/or compose a disciplinary committee to take further actions.

To ensure the protection of children while an investigation is ongoing, representatives who are currently being investigated must not have any contact at all with the child in question. In case of a serious allegation, a staff member may be suspended pending further investigation. The CP PoC has ultimate responsibility for coordinating the gathering of facts, the judgement of whether the breach constitutes a minor or serious breach of policy, the consequences for this breach and the forwarding to law enforcement authorities, if appropriate. The CP PoC will also ensure transparent communication with the children's parents or guardians and take into consideration their views and provide support to them if needed.

#### 5.5.3 External concern

As an organisation campaigning for children's rights, KidsRights views itself as responsible in ensuring that children everywhere are protected from harm. In this vein, KidsRights places a responsibility on representatives to report child protection concerns and potential abuse and violations of rights to the appropriate people as they encounter them in the normal work.

This procedure is as follows:

- (1) Identifying reasonable grounds for concern. The representative should establish clearly what the grounds for concern are. This could include, but not limited to:
  - (a) Evidence of misconduct by an adult towards a child;
  - (b) Signs of physical, mental, emotional and sexual abuse;
  - (c) Signs of sexual, labour or commercial exploitation;
  - (d) Signs of neglect;
  - (e) Other signs that may point to a child's safety, welfare or other rights being harmed, or that raises in them suspicions or concerns;
  - (f) Disclosure by a child. All representatives must make sure that the child is aware that you cannot, as a responsible adult, keep their disclosure confidential. Representatives can tell the child that they must report their concerns, but that they will do so in a way that is respectful of their wishes and does not cause them further harm.
  
- (2) Identifying appropriate reporting procedures. The representative should identify the most appropriate reporting procedure, depending on the situation they find themselves in. They may like to seek advice from the CP PoC, or from another member of staff at KidsRights who may be able to help them decide what the most appropriate action may be in this context. Reporting procedures include:
  - (a) Bringing a concern to the designated CP PoC as soon as possible, preferably within the same day;
  - (b) Bringing a concern to the relevant Programme Manager or other staff member working alongside the representative at that time, as soon as possible, unless this is the person whom the complaint concerns;
  - (c) Involving external partners, institutions, or agencies. This may be the best course of action, for example, when working with a partner organisation outside of the Netherlands, or in the case of a very serious violation warranting police intervention.

Representatives must take care to ensure that the best interests of the child are always considered and must avoid causing further harm to the child through the procedures. This may include, where appropriate, protecting the identity and anonymity of the child.

#### 5.5.4 Integrity policy

KidsRights has an integrity policy, which is in line with the Child Protection Policy.

The integrity policy describes the reporting process. There are several ways to report (suspected) wrongdoing or violations:

##### I. Member of the management team

It concerns an anonymous report (who it concerns), the reporter is not anonymous (the person making the report). The manager must also always pass the report on to the integrity officer.

##### II. Integrity Officer

KidsRights Foundation sees the integrity officer as part of the HR duties. Therefore, the operations manager also has the role of integrity officer, with the secretary of the board

acting as back-up, unless the board decides otherwise. Ways of reporting to the integrity officer are through [integriteit@kidsrights.org](mailto:integriteit@kidsrights.org) and through an interview.

### III. Confidential Advisor

The role of the confidential advisor is to be a discussion partner for the person thinking about reporting. The confidant can thus provide access to the reporting process. The confidant, in consultation with the integrity officer, decides whether or not a report will be made. KidsRights has outsourced the role of confidentiality officer to Gimd. A report can be made to [meldpuntgoededoelen@gimd.nl](mailto:meldpuntgoededoelen@gimd.nl)

### V. Chairman of the Board

A report can be made to the chairman of the board; only if the report concerns the operational director of KidsRights Foundation. A report can be made to [bestuur@kidsrights.org](mailto:bestuur@kidsrights.org)

#### 5.5.5 Reporting process

The following explains how an employee can report a (suspected) abuse or violation within KidsRights Foundation and the subsequent process.

##### I. Reporting to one of the four hotlines.

II. The reporting centre consults with the employee on whether a report should actually be made, advises the employee on this and discusses possible consequences.

III. Filing a report or reporting an (alleged) violation can, in addition to a written submission, also take place verbally in the first instance. However, the submission of an official report is always ultimately made in writing to the operational director/integrity officer.

IV. A written report shall be signed by the reporter and shall contain at least:

a. the name and position of the reporter;

b. the date of the report;

c. a description of the (alleged) violation, stating where and when the incident took place or a description of the (alleged) violation and the possible perpetrators.

V. The reporting centre records the report, where desired with the assistance of the integrity officer, with the date it was received, in writing and has the reporter sign the record for approval, receiving a copy thereof. The reporting centre also ensures that the operational director is informed without delay of a reported suspicion of a violation and of the date on which the report was received, and that the operational director receives a copy of the record.

VI. If the Operational Director is himself the subject of a suspicion of wrongdoing, the report may be addressed directly to the Chairman of the Board of KidsRights Foundation (via [bestuur@kidsrights.org](mailto:bestuur@kidsrights.org)). The operations director is then informed of the report by the chairman of the board as far as the complaint and the interest of the reporter allow.

VII. In the case of an official written report, the operations director (or chairman of the board) shall initiate an investigation. The Integrity Officer or the Chairperson of the Board may decide to engage an external investigator if:

a. considers that within KidsRights Foundation the knowledge and experience regarding conducting such an investigation is insufficient, or

b. the objectivity of conducting the investigation would benefit from this.

VIII. The reporter will receive, during the investigation, general information about the progress of the investigation (and the outcome) unless the reporter does not appreciate this or this is detrimental to the reporter or the investigation, or unless there are other valid reasons not to inform the reporter. If there are other grounds for not informing the reporter, the reporter will be informed in writing.

IX. The operational director and integrity officer discuss the results of the investigation and, if necessary, inform the chairman of the board about the next steps. If the report is made to the chairman of the board, the results of the investigation are discussed within the board. The chairman of the board informs the operational about the outcomes and follow-up steps.

X. The person reporting the suspicion of a violation and the person(s) to whom the suspicion of a violation has been reported always treat the report confidentially.

If there is a complaint from a staff member, volunteer or other concerned party about how the report of a (suspected) violation is handled, he/she will contact one of the other hotlines.

#### 5.5.6 Follow-up

A report is treated confidentially. It is communicated to colleagues or externally that a report has been made, but the content of the report is not communicated. If the 'victim' of the abuse or cross-border behaviour needs professional help, KidsRights will facilitate this and cover these costs (to a reasonable extent).

## 6 Communications and media

Communications and media relate to the representation of children through images, pictures and video on KidsRights platforms, whether online platforms such as websites, social media platforms, or offline platforms such as posters, newsletters and presentations. It also related to texts, speeches, presentations, or other forms of verbal or written communications about children, whether they are online or offline. With all contact with and communication about children, either in the Netherlands or abroad, representatives must be aware of the following principles and guidelines.

### 6.1 Principles

KidsRights' approaches communications and media holistically to ensure child protection, with its core principles being dignity, accuracy, and privacy.

#### 6.1.1 Dignity

The rights and dignity of the children must always be safeguarded. This means that:

- Communications about children must be decent and respectful;

- Communications must not present children as victims but highlight their strengths;
- Children should be appropriately clothed in ways that promote their dignity, and according to their cultural norms. Adults must ensure that children avoid poses that could be interpreted as inappropriate for children, including sexualised or violent poses;
- Children shall not be asked to do things against their will for photos or videos;
- Pictures or videos should be taken in an environment sensitive to the child and the child's background;
- Language that implies a relationship of power should be avoided;
- Pictures or videos taken of children should never be used for inappropriate ends, including to exploit children commercially.

### 6.1.2 Accuracy

KidsRights has a responsibility to ensure that all communications about children are accurate and depict children and their situations in an accurate manner. KidsRights must also ensure that communications about children are presented in a way that they wish. Wherever possible, KidsRights should share with children the final version of a communications piece before publication, or at least allow them to provide feedback on accuracy and suggestions for changes to improve accuracy before publication.

### 6.1.3 Privacy

KidsRights must make sure that adequate measures are taken to ensure the privacy of the children and their families. When appropriate, KidsRights should withhold certain identifying information, such as last name, address, or town. KidsRights must adhere to all local laws and regulations in the Netherlands and Europe regarding the privacy of children and data privacy. More information can be seen below.

## 6.2 Informed Consent

For all communications and media containing an image, video or interview of a child, written consent must be obtained from the parents or guardians of the child, in addition to the child themselves, in a child-friendly format.

KidsRights must never take photos or videos or conduct an interview of children unsupervised. KidsRights, when taking pictures, shooting videos or conducting interviews must always ensure that informed consent has been obtained. This means that information about the nature of the media and the ways in which they intend to be used must be communicated in a clear manner within the consent form. Information must include:

- The purpose of the campaign;
- Overview of the how KidsRights intends to use the media captured;
- Overview of the proposed media to be captured (text, images etc.);
- The duration and timeframe of this communications campaign;
- The duration of the consent;
- Any other conditions which are important to the child, or their parents must also be included.

### 6.3 Interviewing children

The Child Protection Policy applies also in instances when KidsRights representatives interview children in the course of work on the projects or communications about KidsRights projects.

A few basic guidelines, particular to interviewing children, must be followed:

- Interviewers must be respectful of the age and experience of the children and be clear on the questions and purposes of the interview, as well as how it will be disseminated;
- Interview content must be accessible to the children, and not lead children into inaccurate or misleading statements;
- Interviewers must obtain informed consent from the parents of the child, which details key information clearly, including purpose of the interview, intended use, a time limit;
- Interviewers must share questions with the children beforehand and provide opportunities for feedback from the children to ensure they are comfortable with what is asked of them;
- Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, and if not available, a trusted adult.

Aside from these guidelines, interviewers must follow the Code of Conduct. The Child Protection Policy in its entirety applies to situations where a KidsRights representative interviews a child.

### 6.4 Visits by media (photographers, film crews, journalists etc.)

In the normal course of KidsRights work, there are times when media will visit children. Media include photographers, film crews, journalists, videographers, writers or any other person who records content for the purpose of communicating a message on behalf of KidsRights or in conjunction with a KidsRights' project.

A few basic guidelines, particular to media visits, which must be followed:

- In preparation of the interview or visit, KidsRights sends the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct to the persons who interview/visit the children connected to KidsRights. A signed version of the Code of Conduct is to be received by KidsRights before the visit takes place;
- All media persons that visit a KidsRights programme, ICCP nominate or ICPP winner, must submit a VOG to KidsRights prior to the visit. Without a VOG travel is not permitted. Costs can be reimbursed by KidsRights.
- Media persons must be respectful of the age and experience of the children, and record content that is appropriate, according to their age, cultural background and other factors;
- Media persons must allow children to express what they are comfortable with and what they are not, and respect this;
- Media persons must respect the rights of the child, including their right to education and leisure and must not pressure children to forego their normal daily activities for the purposes of a media visit;
- Media persons must obtain informed consent from the parents or guardians of the child, which details key information clearly, including purpose of the visit, intended use of content, and a time limit;

- Media persons must ensure that children understand fully the content that is being recorded from them, as well as the potential consequences that might arise from this;
- Media persons must ensure that content they record is an accurate depiction of the child and their situation, from their perspective, and must not include any image or statement which could otherwise be misleading;
- Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, and if not available, a trusted adult. The person accompanying the child, in trust, may also be an employee of KidsRights. Media persons must never be alone with a child.

Aside from these guidelines, media persons are also obliged to follow the Code of Conduct. The Child Protection Policy in its entirety applies to situations where media persons visit a child associated with KidsRights, and they will be treated as a representative of KidsRights in such situation.

## 6.5 Social Media

This Child Protection Policy is established to ensure the safety and well-being of children who participate in the State of Youth Action Program. The purpose of the policy is to provide clear guidelines for both staff and children, emphasizing the importance of child protection and privacy.

### 6.5.1 Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to all staff members, volunteers, interns. KidsRights employees have a collective responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy.

### 6.5.2 Key Definitions

**Inappropriate content** includes any images, videos, text or other content posted online which is deemed to be inappropriate for viewing by children. Children may encounter inappropriate content accidentally or deliberately. This includes:

- Content which upsets a child;
- Material that is created for and directed towards adults;
- Inaccurate information;
- Information that may lead or tempt a child into unlawful or dangerous behaviour;
- Pictures of real violence, criminal acts or accidents, whether they are real or recreated in videos, games, movies or images;
- Explicit, sensitive or inappropriate scenes, or any scenes that include images of child abuse;
- Any image, video or text that upsets, disturbs, offends or otherwise harms a child who views it.

### 6.5.3 Duties of KidsRights Staff

KidsRights Staff have the following duties:

#### (1) **Supervision and Guidance:**

- (a) KidsRights are responsible for reviewing content created by young people.

- (b) KidsRights should ensure that the content produced is age-appropriate, respectful and in compliance with our organization's values and guidelines.
- (2) **Informed Consent**
  - (c) KidsRights must obtain informed consent from a parent or legal guardian before any child participates in social media activities.
  - (d) If the child is over 16, KidsRights must obtain consent from the child themselves.
  - (e) Parents or guardians and children must be fully informed about the nature of the content, its intended audience, and the platform on which it will be posted.
- (3) **Monitoring Content:**
  - (f) KidsRights should regularly review the content created by children to ensure it aligns with our organization's policies and values.
  - (g) KidsRights should monitor the comments to ensure they are not of a harmful or hurtful nature. Harmful or hurtful comments will be removed.
  - (h) Inappropriate or harmful content should not be posted, and discussions should be held with children to educate them on responsible online behaviour.
- (4) **Privacy Protection:**
  - (i) KidsRights must take steps to protect the privacy of children and their families when posting content. This includes not sharing personal information, such as home addresses, phone numbers, or school names.
- (5) **Responding to Concerns:**
  - (j) KidsRights should be vigilant for any signs of abuse or harassment online and respond promptly by reporting such incidents to appropriate authorities and parents or guardians. This includes harassment within the comment section of social media.
- (6) **Training:**
  - (k) All staff members should receive training on child protection, online safety, and privacy issues.

#### 6.5.4 Duties of Children on KidsRights' platforms

- (7) **Responsible Content Creation:** Children should create content that is respectful, kind, and appropriate for their age group. They should avoid sharing personal information or the personal information of others.
- (8) **Consent:** Children under 16 must have the consent of a parent or legal guardian before participating in or featuring in social media campaigns organised by KidsRights. If the child is above 15 they need to sign the consent form for communication themselves.
- (9) **Safe Online Behaviour:** Children should be educated on safe online behaviour, including how to recognize and report any inappropriate or harmful content, and how to protect their personal information.
- (10) **Respect for Others:** Children should treat others online with respect and kindness and should avoid engaging in cyberbullying or any form of harassment.

- (11) **Privacy Settings:** Children should be aware of and use appropriate privacy settings on social media platforms to control who can see their content.
- (12) **Reporting and Response:** Any concerns or incidents related to child protection, online safety, or privacy should be promptly reported to the CP PoC within KidsRights. In the case of legal obligations or emergencies, appropriate authorities must be notified.

#### 6.5.5 Monitoring, Review, and Implementation

Social media interactions involving children will be monitored and supervised to ensure compliance with the policy. The policy will be revised when necessary. KidsRights will ensure that there is sufficient training of the appropriate staff members in direct or indirect contact with children via social media to ensure responsible use. Staff members found to be violating the policy will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary measures and procedures as outlined in this document.

Complaints for social media content uploaded by users can be directed towards the KidsRights staffmember responsible for social media. All complaints about the conduct of KidsRights staff, the content uploaded on official KidsRights' social media channels, content uploaded by staff members, or complaints about inadequate supervision or other misconduct by Kidsrights' employees must be addressed to the CP PoC using the complaint form.

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in technology and online safety practices.

#### 6.6 Complaints procedure

Those wishing to submit a complaint about KidsRights' media and communications about children, or the way in which representatives of KidsRights have conducted themselves when obtaining media content of children, may do so by submitting a complaint to the Child Protection Officer. (See above section)

In submitting a complaint, please specify as much identifying information as possible. For example:

- The media in question or the date, time and context of the behaviour;
- The person or organisation against whom the complaint is submitted;
- The reason for the complaint;
- Why this media or conduct violates the child protection policy;
- Specify if they would like to be contacted to provide further information about the event.

The complainant may submit a complaint anonymously if they wish.

## 7 Digital Safety

## 7.1 Data Protection Policy

### 7.1.1 GDPR

Guaranteeing digital privacy is very important to KidsRights. When any person leaves their personal information with KidsRights, this information is therefore carefully processed and treated by KidsRights in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)/ *Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming (AVG)*.

### 7.1.2 Cookies and statistics

KidsRights uses technical and functional cookies and analytical cookies that do not infringe a person's privacy. A cookie is a small text file that is stored on a computer, tablet or smartphone when first visiting a website. The cookies KidsRights use are necessary for the technical operation of the website and ease of use. They ensure that the website works properly and remember, for example, your preferences. KidsRights can also optimize website with this. You can opt out of cookies by setting your internet browser so that it does not store cookies anymore. In addition, you can also delete all information previously saved via the settings of your browser.

### 7.1.3 Storing of Information

The profile of a changemaker signed up on our website will be automatically expire after 5 years if there is no activity recorded. The information will thus not be stored for longer than 5 years after inactivity.

For youth that supports KidsRights, now or in the past, information will be stored to provide updates about our work, to ask for support and/or to thank for a donation. They can notify KidsRights, in writing, when they would like their personal information to be removed from our records.

### 7.1.4 Processing of Information

Personal information will only be collected and processed to provide the information or service they request. The processing and use of personal data are limited to the purpose for which they have provided them and within the implementation of the objectives of KidsRights.

### 7.1.5 Sharing of Information with third parties

Personal information will not be made available or sold to third parties by KidsRights, unless we are legally obliged to do so.

## 7.2 Protection against harm online (bullying, abuse)

KidsRights takes responsibility for ensuring that measures are taken to protect children from harm online. We do this by monitoring our social media pages daily, and removing harmful comments that contain explicit material, bullying, hate speech, violations of privacy or promotion of unsafe behaviour, as well as blocking accounts that abuse children online or persistently post offensive comments. When necessary, KidsRights

will take additional special measures to protect children from harm online, such as disabling comments or refraining from posting about certain topics. KidsRights is responsible for taking steps, in accordance with the GDPR, to prevent harm to children engaging with our social media. Therefore, KidsRights aims to protect children from online abuse and bullying to the fullest extent possible. We do this by monitoring online activity, including comments, and taking measures such as deleting comments and blocking persons posting harmful content, messages or comments. Moreover, we provide children with the opportunity to have their images removed upon request at any future time. KidsRights takes all steps necessary and required in accordance with GDPR guidelines to maintain the standards of online protection.

### 7.3 [Informed Consent \(online procedure\)](#)

KidsRights is committed to protecting the privacy of its online users. For online platforms (such as State of Youth), KidsRights ensures that informed consent is obtained from all young people before any videos or images are shared online.

Images or videos may be used to show impact and positive change brought about by a young person's work in their community, or to show to the general public or other stakeholders of KidsRights the work done by young changemakers within State of Youth. KidsRights will only use images or videos after the informed consent of the person whose likeness is being represented. KidsRights will act with care when using images and videos online, to reduce the risk of harm. Some actions include:

- o KidsRights will never use images and/or videos in ways that could harm you.
- o KidsRights will not edit or change your images and/or videos.
- o If KidsRights uses, after your consent, an image and/or video of your activity on KidsRights social media platforms, it will make sure that it will refer to you as the person having taken the image and/or video.
- o If you do not want KidsRights to refer to your name, KidsRights will not do so.
- o You can always withdraw your consent in case you do not want to have your image and/or video posted on KidsRights social media platforms anymore.

## 8 Monitoring and evaluation of CPP

To ensure that the Child Protection Policy is effective, KidsRights continually monitors and evaluates the policies, codes, standards and procedures within the Policy. The Policy is revised **at least once every two years**, ideally every year, and the CP PoC holds responsibility for ensuring that the Policy is up to date on developments in best practice and regulations concerning Child Protection.

### 8.1 [Procedures](#)

#### 8.1.1 [Under normal circumstances:](#)

- The Child Protection Policy is revised at least once every two years.
- The CP PoC receives comprehensive training for their role once a year and provides periodical training to other KidsRights employees.
- The CP PoC Officer provides training and materials on child protection to newly onboarded employees, as well as training or materials to representatives of KidsRights prior to being allowed to work with children.

- All employees are made aware of the CP PoC, and all representatives in contact with children sign a declaration of their commitment to adhere to it.

#### 8.1.2 After a breach or allegation:

- The CP PoC, in conjunction with KidsRights senior management, will review the Policy, and suggest any changes to be made if necessary, to prevent or minimise the risk of a repeated violation.
- The CP PoC may seek expert advice from external sources to improve the Policy and Procedures.

### 8.2 Risk Assessments

In order to assess risks which are incurred under the normal working context of KidsRights' operations, KidsRights employees conduct risk assessments to assess risk, evaluate potential harm, and find ways to prevent, minimise and mitigate risks as much as possible.

Prior to any activity or event organised by KidsRights, whether in the Netherlands or outside the Netherlands, offline or online, or at any event or activity sponsored, supervised or otherwise attended by KidsRights, and there is potential for harm to come to children, a Risk Assessment Form should be filled out. This risk assessment should be conducted by the Program Manager or the appropriate person overseeing the design and planning of the event. This Form provides guidance for assessing risks and encourages Program Managers and other employees to consider actions and measures needed to reduce risk to children as much as possible.

The Form will be signed off by the appropriate supervisor to the employee and will be kept on file as a record of risk assessment procedures for a period of two years.

These risk assessments will when relevant be accompanied by a local mapping exercise analysing the legal, social welfare and child protection arrangements in the context of the specific KidsRights activities.

## 9 Appendixes

### 9.1 Appendix I- Risk Assessment Form

#### **Procedure:**

1. Assess the risks (concerning child protection) that are present
2. Evaluate these risks using the risk matrix, considering likelihood and potential consequences.
3. Calculate the risk score for each risk.
4. Write in the suggested action to prevent, minimise or mitigate risk.
5. Submit risk assessment for approval to appropriate supervisor.

Forms are kept on file by the Child Protection Officer for a period of 2 years.

### Risk Assessment Scoring:

#### Consequences: How severely could it hurt someone or damage something?

1. **Insignificant:** No injuries, low financial, or other impact.
2. **Minor:** First aid may be required, small harmful impact, financially or otherwise.
3. **Moderate:** Medical treatment or other medical intervention required, contained harmful impact, high cost.
4. **Major:** Severe injuries, extensive injuries, major harm caused, major cost.
5. **Catastrophic:** Death or multiple serious injuries, huge cost, serious irreversible harm, financial or environmental disaster.

#### Likelihood: How likely is it to happen?

1. **Rare:** May occur only in exceptional circumstances.
2. **Unlikely:** Could occur at some time
3. **Possible:** Might possibly occur in some circumstances.
4. **Likely:** Will probably occur in most circumstances.
5. **Very likely:** Expected to occur in most circumstances.

### Risk Matrix

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Catastrophic 5	Major 4	Moderate 3	Minor 2	Insignificant 1
Very likely 5	Extreme	Extreme	High	High	Medium
Likely 4	Extreme	High	High	Medium	Medium
Possible 3	High	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Unlikely 2	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
Rare 1	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low

### Risk Score:

Score	Category	Action
9-10	Extreme	Do not proceed with activity.
7-8	High	Reevaluate and change the activity to minimise the risk score.
5-6	Medium	Proceed with caution. Look for ways to minimise risk further or mitigate present risks identified.
2-4	Low	Manage with routine procedures.

**Risk Assessment** (to be filled out by appropriate Program Manager or person overseeing activity or event)

Activity name:

Date of activity:

Location of activity:

Number of children:

Other relevant details:

Specific risk / activity	Risk Score	Proposed Action

Name of KidsRights Representative conducting assessment:

Supervisor name:

Supervisor comments:

Signature:

Date:

9.2 [Appendix II- New Employee Criminal Convictions Declaration Form](#)

**Declaration of Criminal Convictions and Previous Allegations**

Have you ever been convicted of a crime?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Details:

Have you ever had investigations or allegations made against you regarding your conduct towards a child or the wellbeing of a child under your care?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Details:

If you have answered yes to either of these questions, please provide details of all criminal convictions, including those not concerning children and those considered 'spent', and provide details of any previous investigations or allegations made against you relating to your conduct towards or the wellbeing of a child. These will be kept confidential by the designated Child Protection Officer at KidsRights, who will assess whether they pose any risk or are not in conformity with KidsRights Child Protection Policy.

9.3 Appendix III- Character References Form for Employees

Please provide the name, address and contact details of two referees we can contact to provide a character reference. You must have known them for at least 2 years. They cannot be partners or family members.

Full name:	Full name:
Address:	Address:
Email: Telephone:	Email: Telephone:
Relationship to you:	Relationship to you:
How long have you known them?	How long have you known them?

#### 9.4 Appendix IV- Child Protection Reporting Form

If you have knowledge that a child might be at risk of harm, please complete this form to the best of your knowledge. Child protection concerns must be reported (orally or in writing) directly to the Child Protection Officer at KidsRights, preferably within the same working day. If necessary, Child Protection concerns can be reported to another KidsRights employee who must then fill out this form as a record of the concern raised. Please also use this form to report an accident or incident during a KidsRights visit, or a KidsRights organised activity. The report should be written and signed by you to guarantee confidentiality. It should be sent only to the Child Protection Officer, who will hold it in a safe and secure place and treat it with the strictest confidentiality.

#### **About you**

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation you work for: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of your contact with the child: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contact details:

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **About the child**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's age: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's parents/guardians: \_\_\_\_\_

Has any treatment been given to the child?

Treatment given by \_\_\_\_\_

Taken to hospital YES / NO

If yes, which hospital and how taken \_\_\_\_\_

#### **About your concern**

##### Details of incident

Was the incident (tick):

- Observed by you
- Suspected by you
- Disclosed by someone else

- Disclosed to you by the child

If the concern was shared by someone else, please state who and their relationship to the child: \_\_\_\_\_

What happened? Please provide as many details that are useful for the Child Protection Officer.

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Did the child/young person or another source say anything to you [if relevant] and how did you respond to them.

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Date of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the alleged perpetrator (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Were there any other children/people involved in the alleged incident? YES / NO

If so, who? \_\_\_\_\_

Are any other children at risk of harm? YES / NO

If so, who? \_\_\_\_\_

**Actions taken by you:**

Please detail any actions taken by you, apart from submitting this form.

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For completion by the KidsRights Child Protection Point of Contact:**

Incident/Accident investigated: Yes / No

Written investigation report necessary: Yes / No

In order to determine the cause of the incident or accident, it may be appropriate to interview parties who were involved. Witness detail, statements, etc. can be added here


**Investigation assessment outcome:**

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**Incident/Accident risk assessment:**

Seriousness:

Further risk to children:

**Actions / consequences proposed:**

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**Next steps to be taken:**

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9.5 Appendix V – Consent Form for State of Youth

### **Informed consent form for the use of image(s) and/ or video(s) on KidsRights social media platforms**

KidsRights is committed to protecting your privacy. Images and/or videos taken by you for your activities in relation to the State of Youth are confidential. **KidsRights may want to post these images and/or videos on KidsRights social media platforms, if you give your informed consent, for two reasons:**

1. KidsRights may want to show the impact you make in your community. In this way, more people are inspired and are becoming aware of the importance of children and young people taking action to bring a positive change in their communities.
2. KidsRights may want to show to the general public and other stakeholders the important work of young people and children in the State of Youth.

**However, KidsRights will only use your images and/or videos after your informed consent.**

Before consenting, it is important to know that:

- o KidsRights will never use your images and/or videos in ways that could harm you.
- o KidsRights will not edit or change your images and/or videos.
- o If KidsRights uses, after your consent, an image and/or video of your activity on KidsRights social media platforms, it will make sure that it will refer to you as the person having taken the image and/or video.
- o If you do not want KidsRights to refer your name, KidsRights will not do so.
- o You can always withdraw your consent in case you do not want to have your image and/or video posted on KidsRights social media platforms anymore.

### **Informed consent**

**Informed consent means that you have read the information provided in this form, you have understood it, and you agree to and/or accept it.**

Please check the boxes to which you consent:

I have read and I understand the provided information.

I understand that and at any time, I can ask KidsRights to stop posting my image(s) and or/video(s) on KidsRights social media platforms by emailing [action@stateofyouth.org](mailto:action@stateofyouth.org).

I consent to KidsRights using my image(s) and/or video(s) on KidsRights social media platforms.

I consent to KidsRights using my name/State of Youth Instagram handle on posts.

**Your signature**

**Stichting KidsRights signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

Name:

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name:

Date:

I represent that I am the parent or legal guardian of the minor individual (<16 years old) and I thereby consent to allowing my child give permission to KidsRights to post his/her image(s) of his/her activity in KidsRights social media.

**Signature of Child’s parent or legal guardian**

\_\_\_\_\_

Name:

Date:

9.6 Code of Conduct

KidsRights **envisions** a world in which their rights are guaranteed and works with children to enable them to realize their great potential. KidsRights is convinced that realizing children’s rights **cannot be done without** the perspective, experience and authority of children themselves. Together with children, KidsRights raises global attention for their power as *changemakers* and children’s rights issues. We also empower children as positive and resilient *changemakers*. We act with children, amplifying and accelerating their actions in their communities and beyond. Through our research we provide insight into the status of children’s rights worldwide.

KidsRights is committed to creating a safe environment for children and youth. KidsRights expects from everybody directly or indirectly involved in our projects to adhere to our core principles of Child Protection. All KidsRights employees, representatives or partner organisations are obliged to sign this code of conduct. In addition, all employees and representatives are obliged to report any possible incident, abuse or concerns in relation to child safeguarding/child protection.

\_\_\_\_\_  
I agree that I will:

1. Respect the rights, dignity, and best interests of children and youth, irrespective of age, gender, identity, orientation, nationality, ethnicity, race, language, beliefs, marital status, disability, health, family, socio-economic status, culture, class, or legal history.
2. Create an atmosphere of openness so that every subject and everything that concerns young people is discussable, being receptive to the stories of young people regarding interactions with staff and others and listening to them so that they can discuss matters that bother them.
3. Encourage a sense of responsibility among all involved in the projects of KidsRights, wherein they identify, monitor, and report unprofessional behaviour, potentially offensive conduct, and misconduct.
4. Display high standards of professional behaviour.
5. Comply with all relevant international standards and local legislation in relation to child labour, and refrain from using children (those aged below 18 years) for domestic or other labour, if such work is inappropriate, exploitative or harmful given their age or developmental capacity, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury, exploitation, or violence.

I agree that:

1. I will not be alone with a child under 18 or youth involved or affiliated to our programs in an enclosed space out of sight of other adults.<sup>2</sup>
2. I will not use language or behave towards a child or youth involved in KidsRights programs in a way that is inappropriate, offensive, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
3. In case of telephone/Teams/Skype/WhatsApp or calls using other means:
  - a. The parents/caretakes of children under 12 have given their written consent in interacting with them, and I will not have one-on-one contact with children under 12 years old out of sight or earshot of other adults;
  - b. Parents/caretakes have given their consent to interact with children between 12-18 years old and these conversations will take place whenever possible with other youth and/or adults or within earshot of other adults;
  - c. Calls with youth above 18 participating in our programs or in other ways involved will whenever possible take place in groups involving other youth or adults.
4. I will not have physical contact with children/youth other than culturally accepted physical interactions between strangers (shaking hands, high-fives, boxes). Cuddling, hugs, kisses are explicitly forbidden.
5. I will not enter personal relations/friendships or sexual relations with children/youth involved in or affiliated to our programs. I will not maintain relationships with children/youth outside the scope of KidsRights work and I will not invite children/youth to my home or meet with them outside the scope of KidsRights work.
6. I will not have a child/youth participant with whom I am in contact in a work-related context, stay overnight at my home or any other personal residential location or

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<sup>2</sup> There is a distinction between youth participating in our programs and youth above 18 that are employees/interns of KidsRights. The code of conduct is meant for children/youth participating in/affiliated to KidsRights programs.

accommodation. Neither will I sleep in the same room as a child/youth affiliated to our program.

7. I will not ask for personal contact details unless it is in the direct interest of KidsRights. I will not share contact details of children/youth unless it is with their consent (or for children below 12, their parents/caretakers).
8. In photos or videos made for KidsRights children/youth are portrayed powerfully with respect to their dignity and privacy,. Youth need to give their written consent for using the materials (on- or offline). For children portrayed below 12 their parents/caretakers' consent is obligatory.
9. I will not use drugs or drink alcohol if I am responsible for children/youth during visits, events or related activities.
10. I will report and respond to any concerns, suspicions, incidents or allegations of actual or potential abuse to a child or programme participant in accordance with applicable procedures. I will cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns or allegations of abuse to children and programme participants.
11. I will not withhold information about (pending) criminal convictions, charges or civil proceedings related to children, vulnerable groups or (physical) abuse during the time I represent KidsRights.

The above is not an exhaustive list.

I confirm that I have read and understood the code of conduct, and that I will abide by the code of conduct during my work for KidsRights. I declare that I am never convicted by court in the Netherlands or any other country for (child) abuse and/or the violation of children's rights. I understand that any violation of the code of conduct is taken extremely seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

Name and date

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Signature

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