

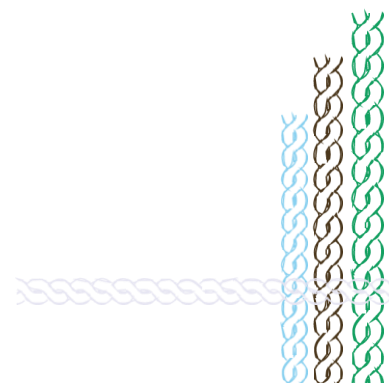
Child Protection Policy

Policy No: 003/2017

ABSTRACT

At eBASE Africa we seek to improve livelihoods through the use of innovation and best practices for underserved populations. We aspire to do this in an environment where children will be safe and well.

eBASE Africa



Person Responsible	DR MARVICE TEBID, BOARD LIAISON FOR EQUITY
Register of Systems	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Introduction

The organisation Effective Basic Services (herein referred to as eBASE Africa) values children and young people as being a vital part of the organisation and desires to see them grow in a healthy and safe environment to enable them flourish and attain their full potential.

eBASE Africa is committed to the safety and well-being of all children, young people as well as the vulnerable. The child protection officer for eBASE Africa is Dr Marvice Tebid, Board Liaison for equity.

Purposes

The purpose of eBASE Africa child protection document is to assist staff of the organisation to offer a safe, protective and welcoming environment where children and young people can grow, mature into adults, learn and flourish thereby promoting their well-being.

Aims

- 🌱 To provide an enabling and safe environment for children and young people to help them in the transition from childhood into adulthood and to provide support for them.
- 🌱 To enable the children/young people to be able to express themselves freely and support their development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- 🌱 To assist the children/young people to integrate into their various communities.
- 🌱 To help children/young people to be able to value the diversity of cultures.

Organisation (eBASE Africa)

1. Each child and young person should have a right to quality education irrespective of age, gender, religion and social origin which is in compliance with the national policies of Cameroon (Law No. 96/6 of 18 January 1996 to amend the constitution of 2 June 1972 (preamble) that the state shall guarantee the child's right of education; Section 7 of Law No. 98/004 of April 1998). However, the right of children to education is not fully protected in Cameroon.
2. Each child/young person has a right to protection, good health, living standard and protection. This is because children are most often victims of negative social and cultural practices and poor treatment (Section 1 of Law No.2005/015 of 29 December 2005)



Child Protection Representative

The organisation eBASE Africa has appointed a child protection representative, whose name is Dr Marvice Tebid Board Liaison for Equity and Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist. If any worker/member of the team/volunteer has any child safety concerns, they should discuss them with her. She will take on the following responsibilities:

- 🕒 Ensuring that the child policy procedures are being implemented.
- 🕒 Being the first point of contact for child protection issues;
- 🕒 Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;
- 🕒 Bringing any child protection concerns to the notice of the Management Committee and contacting the Local Authorities if necessary;
- 🕒 Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;
- 🕒 Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Representative.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that best practice is achieved and it meets its objectives.

Trips/Outings

1. When organising an event or a trip/outing, it is good to ensure a trip/outing form is completed. This should include details about the trip and a section for parents to give their consent. These forms must be returned to eBASE Africa before the event takes place and must be brought on the trip with the completed group information/consent forms. (If the group information/consent form has not been completed for a child or young person, it will have to be completed before the trip).
2. Ensure that there is adequate insurance to cover up for all activities.

Personal/Personnel Safety

- 🕒 Children or young people under the age of eighteen should not be left by themselves at any time. It is therefore the responsibility of all eBASE Africa staff to establish and maintain a safe and protective environment for children at all times.
- 🕒 Avoid being alone with a child or young person for a long time. If there is a need to be alone with a child or young person (e.g. first aid or he/she is distressed) ensure that another team member knows where you are and why.
- 🕒 At no time should a volunteer or staff from another external/partner organisation arrange a Therefore all meetings should be planned and have the approval of a member of the Committee (this must be someone other than the organiser themselves).
- 🕒 Teenage assistants should always be supervised.



Child Safety

1. Make sure that the area you are using for activities is fit for the purpose.
2. Make sure that all workers and volunteers know;
 - a. Where the emergency phone and number is and how to operate it
 - b. Where the first aid kit is found
 - c. Who is responsible for First Aid and how to record accidents or injuries in the incident book.
 - d. What to do in the event of a fire or any other emergency
3. Do not let children go home unaccompanied unless the parent has specifically said they may do so. Never let a child go with another adult unless the parent has informed you that this will happen.
4. If private cars are used for an outing, the drivers must be approved by the committee, be properly insured, have rested before driving, and should have an up valid license. There should always be at least one other responsible person (16 or over) in each vehicle. All vehicles should be fitted with full seatbelts. Full seatbelts should always be used.

Under normal circumstances, workers should only give a lift home to a young person from group activities if the parents of the young person have specifically asked for them to do so. (If workers are asked to give a young person or child a lift home, they are not obliged to do so, it is left to their discretion).

In the case of trips or outings, it should be made clear if workers' cars will be used and where the children or young people will be returned to.

New Workers

Workers and assistants are by far the most valuable resource the group has for working with young people. When recruiting and selecting paid workers and volunteers the following steps will be taken:

- 🕒 The completion of an application form;
- 🕒 An interview by three people from the Committee, who will take the final decision;
- 🕒 Identifying reasons for gaps in employment, and other inconsistencies in the application;
- 🕒 Checking of the applicants' identity (birth certificate, National Identity card or passport, driving license, etc);
- 🕒 Obtaining references prior to the person starting work at eBASE Africa which will be documented in his/her file.
- 🕒 Ensuring criminal record checks have been carried out through relevant local agencies and evidence of check provided to eBASE Africa;
- 🕒 Allowing no unaccompanied access to children until all of the above have been completed;
- 🕒 A probationary period of 6 months for new paid workers and volunteers;
- 🕒 On-going supervision of paid workers and volunteers;
- 🕒 Ensuring good practice is followed in working with children and young people by providing appropriate training and guidance;
- 🕒 A written acknowledgement that he/she understands and agrees to comply with eBASE Africa's Child Protection Policy and associated Procedures.



Training

All workers and volunteers working in eBASE Africa will be obliged to undertake an online course on Child Protection for Teachers offered by a team at Queensland University of Technology called Future Learn (<https://www.futurelearn.com>) and obtain a certificate. It will also be of great benefit if workers undertake regular training for this type of work. The committee will keep workers informed of relevant courses.

What is child protection?

Child protection is the various ways in which children and young persons are protected from different forms of violence/abuse such as physical, mental, emotional, and intellectual and exploitation by the actions of another person.

CHILD: Any person under the age of 18.

ABUSE: Can consist of one or more of but is not restricted to the following:

1. **PHYSICAL ABUSE** – Any physical injury resulting from any of the following practices
 - a. Hitting
 - b. Punching
 - c. Kicking
 - d. Marks (e.g. from belt buckles, fingers)
 - e. Burning (e.g. from irons, cigarettes)
 - f. Biting
 - g. Pulling out hair
2. **SEXUAL ABUSE** - Any form of sexual act or threat to perform such an act on a child/young person. It might not necessarily involve contact with the genitals but is any act which erodes the sexual boundary between the child and the person involved.
3. **EMOTIONAL ABUSE** – This is behaviour that erodes the child’s development, self-esteem and social confidence over time. These include: extreme domestic violence in the child’s presence, devaluing, ignoring, rejecting isolating and terrorising.
4. **NEGLECT:** This is failure to provide for the child’s basic needs.

Equality

The circumstances of some children’s make them more vulnerable to abuse and they are less able to easily access services. These children often require a high degree of awareness and co-operation in identifying, recognising and reporting potential cases of abuse.



Ethical

At eBASE Africa, there are some behavioural acts of team members which are considered unacceptable although they may not be considered as abuse such as:

- 🚫 Inappropriate conversation of a sexual nature
- 🚫 Suggestive gestures or remarks
- 🚫 Jokes of a sexual nature
- 🚫 Inappropriate touching
- 🚫 Recording or filming without prior consent
- 🚫 Acts of violence committed by a member of staff in the course of an activity

What you should do or say if you suspect abuse

1. Listen carefully to the child/young person without showing any signs of shock or disbelief
2. Allow the child or young person to speak freely without your influence
3. Do not promise to keep anything he/she says confidential but always let the child/young person know why it might be necessary you tell anyone
4. Reassure the child/young person that what has happened is not his/her fault
5. Accept whatever the child says and emphasis it was the right thing to tell someone
6. Always take down notes of whatever is said in order to avoid speculations and assumptions and make a formal report immediately.
7. Explain to him/her what has to be done next and who is to be informed about it.
8. Do not ask question unless they are necessary for clarification purposes
9. It is not the responsibility of the member of staff to investigate any allegations. Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the child protection officer.
10. Speak immediately to the competent authority for further advice and guidance.

Extra considerations are to be given to children who find it difficult communication and those whose first language is not English. Most often, it is always important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age and language preference for understanding purposes.

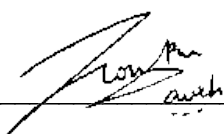
What you should *not* do

1. Staff /volunteers should not begin investigation on child abuse reports.
2. Do not discuss the issue with any other person except the competent authority.
3. Do not form your own opinions and decide to do nothing.



This policy was adopted by eBASE Africa on 3rd April 2017

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees by:

Signature 
DR PATRICK MBAH OKWEN

The policy has been reviewed by the Board of Trustees on:

Date 03.04.2017

