

Mahboba's Promise Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

Mahboba's Promise is dedicated to promoting the interests and safety of children. Child abuse is a serious global problem and is particularly prevalent in the world's most vulnerable communities, such as those that Mahboba's Promise works with. For this reason, this Child Protection Policy has been developed to ensure that Mahboba's Promise protects the rights and safety of the children that we come into contact with and that no child is harmed in any way as a result of their involvement in our work.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy aims to create a safe environment for all children that Mahboba's Promise stakeholders come into contact with. The Child Protection Policy applies to all Personnel and Associates of Mahboba's Promise.

'Personnel' refers to: full time, part time and volunteer staff in Afghanistan and Australia, and those engaged on short term contracts such as consultants and contractors.

'Associates' refers to: visitors to our programs (including media), board members, interns, supporters (donors, sponsors, advocates, ambassadors), trustees, staff in partnership agencies, and any other individuals or groups that have been brought in contact with children (including their personal information and images) while working with/supporting Mahboba's Promise.

The term 'stakeholders' as utilised in this policy refers to all personnel and associates of Mahboba's Promise.

3. Policy: Statement of Responsibility

As an organisation, Mahboba's Promise is committed to ensuring that all possible and necessary steps are taken to realise the rights of children and to actively safeguard all children that we work with from being exposed to any form of harm. Mahboba's Promise is committed to upholding Article 19 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989), which reads "Parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse."

Responsibilities:

- It is the responsibility of all personnel and associates working with Mahboba's Promise to report any form of child abuse they observe or are made aware of to the relevant Child Protection Officer.
- It is the responsibility of all personnel and associates to ensure they are actively following and enacting the Child Protection Policy in their work with Mahboba's Promise.
- It is the responsibility of the designated Child Protection Officers in Mahboba's Promise facilities to manage and respond to any child protection incidents and risks. This involves putting the needs of children first and ensuring the mitigation of potential risks and the timely investigation and resolution of any child abuse allegations. Any such allegations need to be reported to the management team in MPA and the Management Committee of MPI.
Officers are also responsible for the education and training of staff, volunteers and children in their facilities about child protection, forms of child abuse and how to enact this policy.
- It is the responsibility of the management team of MPA to oversee the implementation of this policy and the necessary education and development of personnel and associates of Mahboba's Promise work in Afghanistan.
- It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Representative of the Management Committee to liaise with the Child Protection Officers in Afghanistan and provide updates on the child protection situation in all facilities to the Management Committee at their meetings.

- It is the responsibility of the Management Committee of Mahboba's Promise to ensure the policy is enforced and upheld to ensure Mahboba's Promise remains a compliant organisation to ACFID and DFAT principles. The Management Committee will also review this policy annually at a minimum to maintain its effectiveness.

4. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate Mahboba's Promise's commitment to protect children from harm and abuse, and more specifically:

1. To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Mahboba's Promise or during the course of Mahboba's Promise development activities both in Australia and Afghanistan.
2. To ensure an organisational culture of child safety.
3. To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
4. To provide guidance to personnel and associates as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation.
5. To provide a clear statement to all personnel and associates forbidding any such abuse.
6. To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.
7. To comply with the ACFID Code of Conduct as part of the obligations of being a signatory to the Code.

5. Guiding Principles

Mahboba's Promise takes seriously our duty of care and fundamental legal and moral obligations to protect children from abuse and harm of any form. Our decisions and actions in response to child protection concerns will be guided by the principle of 'the best interests of the child'. The protection of children is the responsibility of all personnel and associates working

with/for Mahboba's Promise, and all personnel and associates must adhere to this Child Protection policy.

6. Context

Many children who are part of Mahboba's Promise programs have already been exposed to trauma, abuse and neglect. Abduction, human trafficking, child labour and an endemic culture of corporal punishment in schools and homes greatly affects the welfare of children in Afghanistan. While culture is not an excuse for inappropriate behaviour, acknowledgement of specific cultural issues will help to gain the commitment of the parties involved in improving children's lives. Further, the children that Mahboba's Promise works with are uniquely vulnerable to child abuse, as in many cases they are living without parental care and in a conflict situation. As such, the protection of children is of utmost seriousness and priority to Mahboba's Promise.

7. Definitions

- 7.1 Child:** A child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, maturity is attained earlier.
- 7.2 Child Abuse:** Child abuse is physical, sexual, or emotional maltreatment or neglect of a child or children, including child labour, bullying and family violence. Abuse happens to both male and female children of all ages, ethnicity and social backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and political persuasion. Abuse can be inflicted on a child by both men and women, as well as by young people themselves and in some cases; professionals and other adults working with children in a position of trust.
- 7.3 Child Protection:** Child protection refers to preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children in any form.
- 7.4 Physical abuse:** Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns, or fractures.

- 7.5 Emotional abuse:** Emotional abuse is a chronic attack on a child or young person's self-esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child or young person.
- 7.6 Neglect:** Neglect is the failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter and supervision to the extent that the child's health and development are at risk.
- 7.7 Bullying:** Bullying is the repeated intimidation of the child by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written or emotional abuse or through attacks on their possessions. It may include, but not be limited to actions such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put downs, including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put downs, and extortion of money or possessions.
- 7.8 Duty of Care:** Duty of care refers to the responsibility of the organisation to provide children with an adequate level of protection against harm. It is the duty of the organisation to protect children from all reasonably foreseeable risk of injury.
- 7.9 Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse is when a person uses power or authority over the child to involve the child in sexual activity. Physical force is sometimes involved. Sexual abuse involves a range of sexual activity. This includes but is not limited to actions such as unwanted kissing or touching, unwanted rough or violent sexual activity, rape or attempted rape, sexual contact with someone who is drugged, unconscious or otherwise unable to give a clear and informed "no", threatening someone into unwanted sexual activity, pressuring or forcing someone to have sex or perform sexual acts, using sexual insults toward someone.
- 7.10 Cyber Abuse:** Computers and Internet access has the potential to expose children to risk of abuse. Spam emails, access to inappropriate sites, web cameras and direct email contact all have inherent dangers which are recognised by Mahboba's Promise. The use of children's' images and stories also opens up the potential for misuse. Staff and volunteers need to be aware of the dangers. Active monitoring of IT usage and preventing access to inappropriate content is required by management.
- 7.11 Exploitation:** Refers to the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel or harmful treatment of the child. These activities

are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development.

8. Child Protection Procedures

The key requirement of implementation is that all stakeholders are aware of the Child Protection Policy, Procedures, Guidelines and Code of Conduct and are clear about their responsibilities to prevent abuse and understand the process by which they can raise concerns. Stakeholders must also be aware of the consequences of breaching this policy and code of conduct. As such, all personnel and associates of Mahboba's Promise will be made aware of and required to read and sign our Child Protection policy and CoC at the commencement of their relationship with the organisation. Mahboba's Promise commits itself to the following procedures to enhance the protection of the children we work with.

8.1 Recruitment

- Job Descriptions will include a statement on our commitment to being a child safe organisation and expectations that applicants will commit to actively upholding the Child Protection Policy.
- Job descriptions will make applicants aware that Mahboba's Promise is unable to employ any applicant who has previous child abuse convictions.
- There will be provisions in employment contracts for MPI and MPA to dismiss any employee should there be a breach of contract in relation to child abuse.
- Employment contracts will also contain a provision preventing any personnel from working or coming into contact with children through Mahboba's Promise if they present any form of risk to children.
- For Australian personnel, a minimum of two verbal referees and a Working with Children Check (WWCC) will be requested/conducted for all Australian full-time, part-time and casual employees as well as volunteers and interns who come into direct contact with children. These must be supplied to the HR Co-ordinator for assessment by the Child Protection Officer prior to commencing work with Mahboba's Promise.

- All personnel and associates in Afghanistan must undertake a police background check to prove they have no prior convictions relating to child abuse, and a minimum of three verbal referee checks must be conducted for all personnel. This is done through the nearest office of the Ministry of the Interior. Applicants need to send a letter of explanation indicating why they are requesting a police certificate. The Ministry of the Interior will issue the police clearance document which must then be supplied to the Mahboba's Promise Afghanistan HR Co-ordinator for assessment by the Child Protection Officer prior to any personnel/associate commencing work with Mahboba's Promise.
- In the unlikely event that it proves impossible to obtain a criminal record check, statutory declarations may be accepted which outline efforts made to obtain a police check and also disclose any charges or spent convictions related to child exploitation.

8.2 Interview Screening

Interviews with potential applicants/partners will involve the following:

- Direct questions about previous child abuse allegations and convictions.
- The reading and signing of the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct prior to commencing MP activities. The policy will be read through with prospective employees and volunteers to clarify the organisation's expectations and close any knowledge gaps about the policy.
- Behavioural based questions will be utilised during interviews to determine how an applicant may behave in specific situations involving children. All interviews with prospective personnel who will come into contact with children will contain a minimum of three questions relating to child protection.

8.3 Training and Development

A key step in reducing risks to children in our care is to increase awareness of child abuse risks and how to effectively manage them amongst personnel and associates of Mahboba's Promise.

This is done by ensuring:

- All stakeholders are made aware of their individual responsibility to uphold the Mahboba's Promise Child Protection Policy at the commencement of their relationship with Mahboba's Promise. This includes all personnel and associates of Mahboba's Promise.
- Stakeholders in Australia and Afghanistan are regularly trained and consulted about their awareness, responsibilities and knowledge of child protection and their knowledge of the policy and Code of Conduct. This involves providing initial child protection induction training to all personnel and to provide annual update training in January of each year.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the development and review of the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct to maximise the document's effectiveness in preventing child abuse in all its forms.
- Children whom Mahboba's Promise works with are involved in the continuous development of the Child Protection Policy, taking care that it is explained to them in a child-friendly manner.

Staff, volunteers and other individuals working at our Afghanistan facilities will undertake comprehensive, specialised training, consultation and knowledge development conducted by the MPA management team and Child Protection Officers to reduce negative cultural practices towards children and encourage positive, non-physical discipline techniques.

8.4 On-site Visits

All individuals entering our project sites must adhere to the following measures. Failure to do so will result in an investigation by the organization and the relevant authorities if necessary.

- All those wishing to visit a Mahboba's Promise facility will be required to read and sign the Child Protection Policy prior to their visit.
- All visitors will be given a *Code of Conduct for Visitors*, to be read and signed together with a *Facility or Child Visit Request Form* including a clause confirming that the visitor has no previous convictions for child related offences. Evidence confirming this, such as a police check, will be requested by our offices prior to accepting visitation requests.
- A visit must be confirmed a minimum of two months in advance with MPA. This confirmation will include the time, date, number of people and reason for visit. No visits outside the authorised time or from individuals or groups not previously confirmed will be permitted.
- Any visitor wishing to conduct a follow up visit must repeat the above actions.
- While visiting projects, individuals must be accompanied by a Mahboba's Promise staff member at all times. Under no circumstances should a visitor be allowed to spend time with an individual child unsupervised. Inappropriate or otherwise suspicious behaviour on the part of the visitor toward any child must be addressed immediately to the Child Protection Officer.
- Visitors will be asked to give feedback at the end of the visit with particular emphasis on the welfare of the children and any areas they believe need reviewing.
- A report will be produced and sent to the Child Protection Officer whom will present the report to the Management Committee after every visit.
- Return visits to the facility without the facilitation of Mahboba's Promise will be considered a breach of the CPP and CoC and follow up action will be taken by Mahboba's Promise, including reporting to authorities if deemed necessary.
- No photographs may be taken without permission of the child, their guardian and the staff member accompanying the visitor and the *Facility or Child Visit Request Form* will stipulate that those photographs cannot be used in any publication or passed around without express permission.
- The exchange of contact details with children or their families/guardians by visitors is expressly prohibited.

Mahboba's Promise Inc. has the right to refuse or cancel a visit at any time.

8.5 Partnerships

It is recognised that due to the nature of the relationship between MPI and its implementing agency MPA, it is beneficial for both organisations to collaborate in their approach to ensuring Mahboba's Promise promotes child protection at all levels of our work. As such, the international agreement between MPI and MPA directly states that both organisations utilise this policy for promoting child protection within Mahboba's Promise.

MPI, through the Child Protection Representative, assists MPA in developing their child protection capacities through consultation, site visits, training and discussion on child rights and protection. MPA assists MPI in providing in-country reporting and personnel needed to implement the policy in Mahboba's Promise facilities.

As part of Mahboba's Promise Partnership Policy it is a requirement for new partners to sign and commit to our Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct. Mahboba's Promise also requires potential partners to demonstrate their track record of child safety and protection. All partnership agreements include a section underlining the requirement of the partner to implement this policy and its procedures into their work with Mahboba's Promise and explicitly state that failure to do so means Mahboba's Promise is unable to commit to the partnership.

As part of the larger process of project monitoring and evaluation, all Mahboba's Promise project monitoring reports completed by partners or implementing agencies will include a section discussing child protection, risk management strategies and how it is actively being implemented within the project. These reports will be presented to the Child Protection Officer for assessment.

8.6 Processes to ensure the safeguarding of children in Mahboba's Promise's care

As part of our international operations, Mahboba's Promise accepts the care of children through the schools and orphanages that Mahboba's Promise currently runs in Afghanistan. As such, our staff are directly responsible for the supervision, safety and protection of children. The staff involved in these programs have a significant responsibility to protect the children we care for from harm, and Mahboba's Promise takes the issue of child protection in our organisation extremely seriously.

To ensure the safety and protection of the children in our care, the Mahboba's Promise Afghanistan management team will ensure at a minimum:

- A child protection risk management assessment is conducted and control measures enforced by the Child Protection Officer at least three months prior to the commencement of any projects.
- Risk management assessments and monitoring for all current projects are continually conducted and control measures implemented by the Child Protection Officer in conjunction with the Mahboba's Promise Afghanistan management team by the end of each month at a minimum, to be presented to the Mahboba's Promise Management Committee.
- Staff working in our facilities conduct risk assessments and implement control measures prior to engaging in planned activities with the children in our care such as excursions.
- Staff working in our facilities whom are in contact with children are permanent employees who have passed their probationary period.
- Staff working in our facilities whom directly care for children such as teachers are appropriately qualified and such qualifications have been certified by the MPA HR Co-ordinator prior to the commencement of employment.
- Staff working in our facilities in Afghanistan whom are in contact with children have a complete police check, have received comprehensive, role-specific child protection training, including how to respond to incidents and reporting procedures and have read and signed the Mahboba's Promise Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Code of Conduct prior to commencing work with the organisation.

- At all times there are sufficient staff members on duty to ensure that no adults have unsupervised contact with children.
- All orphanages run by Mahboba's Promise have sleeping and bathroom facilities for males and females. In addition, both male and female supervisors must be available at all times for younger children whom require accompaniment to bathroom facilities.
- All staff are comprehensively trained in positive, safe, appropriate and non-physical discipline techniques, taking into account the role that culture plays in the discipline of children.
- The power dynamic between adults and children is monitored to prevent any impingement on the provision of a safe environment.
- All staff in our facilities, partners and project visitors are prohibited from providing illegal and inappropriate substances including but not limited to alcohol, drugs and gifts.
- All children in Mahboba's Promise's care are treated with respect and dignity regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

8.7 Accompanied Children

The abduction of children for trafficking and selling of body parts has been reported in Afghanistan for some years. It is accepted that children may wish to travel off site to visit family, attend functions, educational or sporting activities.

In order to protect children from this threat:

- Mahboba's Promise will not allow children to travel unaccompanied regardless of the distance and time of the journey.
- When a child is leaving with someone other than a nominated staff member, the accompanying adult must be known to the organisation and have completed a *Child Escort Form* which outlines the reason for leave, time of leave and planned location and itinerary for the child whilst away from the facility.

8.8 Making Children aware of their rights

Continuous engagement with the children in our care will be used to build trusting, secure relationships between staff and children. This will assist children when reporting any behaviour directed towards them which they feel uncomfortable about. Educational programs and information sessions will be conducted in a child-friendly way to allow children to understand their rights and what behaviour is and isn't acceptable towards them. Children in the care of Mahboba's Promise will be fully informed about the Mahboba's Promise reporting process and who to contact if they are at risk, have been abused, or are concerned about another child. Children will be educated about their right to report any behaviours towards them which they feel to be unacceptable to trusted staff of Mahboba's Promise.

Complaint boxes will also be available in all facilities to allow children to confidentially report behaviours which make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe to the Child Protection Officer of the facility. Face to face reporting with the Officer is also encouraged to allow the Officer to collect all information needed to complete a reporting form. Further, children will be consulted in the development of the Child Protection policy and will be asked to contribute to the Code of Conduct in regard to what they consider to be appropriate and inappropriate behaviours.

8.9 Provision of Child Safe Play Areas

It is fundamental to the emotional needs of the child that they be able to play freely. Mahboba's Promise makes it a commitment that each facility permits girls to have a private area where they may play freely and safely.

8.10 Child Information Security

Mahboba's Promise will take every reasonable precaution to protect child information and picture folders from falling into the hands of individuals who do not share the organisation's commitment to the protection of children. Access to sensitive information and images relating to Mahboba's Promise supported children is restricted and available only to authorised individuals using the information for MP related purposes.

Access is controlled via the Office Managers of MPI and MPA.

Images of children and/or information related to children that could compromise their care and protection will not be made available through any form of communication or media without the proper precautions and understanding of their use. Moreover, any images of children should not be accompanied by detailed information relating to their place of residence.

Mahboba's Promise will not use the real name of any child when producing material for external audiences such as for promotion, fundraising and development education. Children whose images are included in videos or still photographs which are used for publicity purposes and their parent/guardian will sign a release form that is read to them in their local language. The individuals featured in any publications will be informed of what purpose their information and images are being used for. It will be explained to the children and parent/guardian that we cannot control the use of images once they are loaded onto the internet and that they can be viewed by anyone with internet access at any time.

Images and information about children in our care will be used in a respectful manner which upholds their dignity and safety at all times.

9. Risk Management

Mahboba's Promise will include specific child protection risk assessments and management strategies in all of our project proposals, regardless of whether the projects are directly targeted at children, to enable us to take the necessary measures to uphold the safety, security and wellbeing of the children in our care or whom we come into contact with.

Any risks to children, regardless of the likelihood and severity, which are identified during risk assessments will be meticulously managed and addressed throughout the project cycle by the Child Protection Officer.

The Child Protection Officer will conduct an initial risk assessment three months prior to the commencement of a project and then conduct continuous, effective monitoring of identified risk management and any new potential risks.

As Mahboba's Promise works closely with vulnerable children whom are by default at high risk of abuse, monitoring reports of risk management must be completed by the Child Protection Officer by the end of each month at a minimum to be presented to Mahboba's Promise's Management Committee. Monitoring reports will be based on information collected monthly from observation, beneficiaries, project partners and personnel involved. Regular contact between MPA, partners, Child Protection Officers and MPI Management Committee will be maintained to ensure that all are aware of any identified risks to children.

Mahboba's Promise commits itself to including child protection and risk management considerations at all stages of the project cycle. Mahboba's Promise will ensure that:

- Child protection risk assessment, management and monitoring are part of all Mahboba's Promise project design, project concept and progress report templates.
- Mahboba's Promise internal project management guidelines include a section underscoring the need to ensure child protection measures in all stages of our projects and guidance on how to do so.

Risks will be assessed and managed using the following framework:

Context:

- Where are we operating?
- Who is involved in the project?
- What will be involved?

Identify:

- Who is at risk?
- What level of contact with children and young people is there?
- What is the risk?

- Why is the risk present?

Assess:

- What measures are already in place at Mahboba's Promise to mitigate/remove the risk?

Example: Staff training, Child Protection Policy and Procedures, Code of Conduct

Evaluate:

What is the impact and likelihood of the risk occurring? Use AusAID's Risk Matrix to determine these factors.

Counter-treatment:

- What can be done to remove the risk? Is it possible to mitigate it?
- Is the risk too high to continue?
- What actions will be taken to mitigate the risk?
- By whom will these actions be taken?
- When will these actions be taken?
- What is the impact and likelihood of the risk occurring after the implementation of counter measures?
- Do the control measures take into account cultural factors?

Monitor:

- Do the risks still exist?
- Have they been reduced, controlled, managed by the existing strategies?
- Are there any new risks?
- What strategies/resources are needed to implement to reduce, remove, control these emerging risks?
- What is the current risk likelihood and impact based on the Risk Matrix?

Risk matrix¹

Likelihood	Impact				
	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Almost certain	Moderate	Moderate	High	Very High	Very High
Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Very High
Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
Rare	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High

10. Measures for breach of the Policy and Code of Conduct

The course of disciplinary action applied to any child abuse case which involves Mahboba's Promise stakeholders will be determined by the MPI Management Committee in consultation with MPA. Action may include police involvement and may result in a subsequent external investigation.

Disciplinary action may include the following:

- Meeting to discuss breach and opportunity for person to provide their account/understanding of the situation.
- Performance management and/or disciplinary action.
- Further education on the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Formal warning and monitoring.
- Transfer to other duties.
- Suspension pending investigation.
- Internal investigation.

¹ AusAID Risk Matrix

- Report to Police.
- Dismissal.

11. Policy Review and Audit

Mahboba's Promise's Child Protection Policy will be reviewed once annually by the management committee and such review will be informed by the Child Protection Officer with specific input from personnel, associates and children in our care.

12. Raising and Reporting Concerns of Child Abuse

Mahboba's Promise is committed to upholding the rights, security and dignity of the children we work with. This is done through effective management systems to ensure that every means possible is undertaken to reduce the potential incidence of child abuse within Mahboba's Promise activities and facilities. The possibility of staff, volunteers, donors or visitors abusing children is something Mahboba's Promise takes with the utmost of seriousness and we are committed to taking **all** necessary steps to stop abuse and hold accountable those who abuse children.

All stakeholders involved in Mahboba's Promise work are responsible for the identification and timely response to concerns regarding the possible sexual, physical, psychological and/or emotional abuse or neglect of a child. If any allegation of abuse is observed or brought to the attention of any individual or group involved in Mahboba's Promise work then it is a requirement that a '*Reporting Form for Child Abuse*' is completed and submitted. This report is given to the Child Protection Officer of the facility which the allegation was made in if occurring in Afghanistan. If outside of a facility, the report is given to the Child Protection Officer of Hope House Kabul. If the allegation is based in Australia, the report must be given to the Child Protection Representative of MPI.

Any suspected incidence of Child Abuse will be treated with utmost seriousness by Mahboba's Promise. Once a Child Protection Officer or Representative has received a reporting form, they

will conduct further investigation of the allegations and ensure that the child/children's health and safety are the priority. The Management of MPI and MPA will be made aware of the allegations and the course of the investigation. The relevant law enforcement authorities will also be contacted.

Document Control	
Risk Level:	Very High (One year)
Approval Date:	Operationally approved 09/05/2023
Next Review Date:	09/05/2025
Responsible Position:	Operations Manager

Appendix 1:

Reporting Procedures for alleged breaches of the Mahboba's Promise Child Protection Policy or Code of Conduct

1. Report

Any allegation and/or suspicion of child abuse or breach of this Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct (past or present) must be reported immediately to the Child Protection Officer of the site where the alleged abuse or breach occurred. If this occurred outside of an MPA facility, the report will be given to the Child Protection Officer of Kabul Hope House in Afghanistan. If in Australia, the incident must be reported to the Child Protection Representative of MPI. This is done by completing a *'Reporting Form for Suspected Child Abuse or Breach of CPP'*.

If it is a child that reports an incident, the child must be taken seriously and listened to carefully and supported as they discuss their allegations. If there is a risk of an individual committing further abuse or breaches, it is advisable that the person the allegations are made against be removed from the environment, pending further investigation.

2. Notify the relevant authorities

After a report has been made to the Child Protection Officer/Representative, who has passed on the report to the Management Committee of MPI and MPA, the relevant law enforcement authorities need to be informed.

3. Distance those the allegations are made against

The best interests of the child may warrant the suspension of a staff member, volunteer, intern or other individual undertaking Mahboba's Promise work while the allegations are investigated. This is at the discretion of the Management Committee of MPI. Any individual who is

suspended in these circumstances is entitled to a just process that does not presuppose guilt. The decision to suspend should be documented and filed. The Child Protection Representative on Mahboba's Promise Board needs to be included in all consultations.

4. Confidentiality

All cases of child abuse or breach of policy, whether alleged or proven, will be handled with the utmost confidentiality for involved all parties. This confidentiality applies to both verbal and written material.

5. Counselling

Support to or debriefing of the victim(s), their family and the staff/volunteers making the report will take place as soon as possible to assist them in any way possible.

6. Investigations

The Management Committee and Child Protection Officer will ensure all measures available are used to assist the police and other authorities in their investigation. The Management Committee will also undertake an internal investigation to verify any abuse or breach claims and determine the correct course of action with the best interests of the child in mind.

7. Disciplinary Actions

The findings of the investigation will determine the course of action taken by MPI Management Committee in resolving the case. Should the alleged individual be found guilty of their accusations, the Management Committee has full permission to terminate the perpetrator's involvement with Mahboba's Promise without pay. The Management Committee may also determine that the perpetrator needs further training and education on the Child Protection Policy (CPP) and Code of Conduct (CoC), the seriousness of child abuse and the severity in

which Mahboba's Promise treats such actions. This course of action is particularly relevant to less severe cases of abuse which may be between two or more children in our facilities.

8. Media Coverage

Should the media become involved; the Child Protection Officer/Representative will act as spokesperson for the organisation. All efforts must be taken to ensure any publicity does no further damage to the victim, the alleged perpetrator or the organisation.

Appendix 2:

Child Protection Code of Conduct

I, _____, agree that while implementing Mahboba's Promise's funded activities, I must:

- Treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- Not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
- Not engage children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts.
- Ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children.
- Not invite unaccompanied children into my company, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible.
- Not use physical punishment on children.
- Not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour.
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse in accordance with appropriate procedures.
- Immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with Mahboba's Promise that relate to child exploitation and abuse.

When photographing or filming a child or using children's images for work-related purposes, I must:

- Assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child.
- Obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this, I must explain how the photograph or film will be used.
- Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts.
- Ensure file labels, Meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.
- I understand that the onus is on me, as a person associated with Mahboba's Promise, to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 2:

Mahboba's Promise Reporting Form for Suspected Child Abuse

1. Reporters Details

Reporter's Name	
Relation to Mahboba's Promise	
<u>or</u> *Other Address for response to report	
Contact Phone No	

2. Details about the Child (If more than one child is involved, record their names in section 5.)

Child's name (or description of child if name unknown)	
Date of birth:	Or approximate age:
<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
Interpreter required? Y/N	Language of interpreter required:
Current residence of alleged victim:	

2. Person Responsible for Alleged Abuse or Breach of CPP/CoC (if known)

First Name:	Last Name:
Address:	Suburb/Town/Location:
Phone:	Email:
Relationship to alleged victim (if known)	
Do you know if this person is known to Police?	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	

5. Detailed Report of the Incident

Please provide details about why you believe that the above named child has been the subject of any form of abuse or is the subject of ongoing abuse. If reporting a breach of policy or code of conduct, outline what section of either the policy or code of conduct is believed to be breached and what happened. This can be in written or drawn form and should give any information related to the allegation, including what kind of abuse, where and when it has happened.

You may also provide information that you think is of concern and has informed your belief that child abuse or breach is alleged to have occurred or is likely to occur. Attach additional page if required.

6. Concern for Safety of Child

Is there a concern for the immediate safety of the child concerned?

Yes No

7. Signature

You will, to the best of your ability, ensure the information detailed in this report will remain confidential whilst an investigation into the allegation is occurring. Reporting an incident does not mean the alleged abuser is guilty and investigation into the allegations will be conducted by internal and external channels.

Reporter's signature

Child's signature

8. Form Submission.

Please submit this form to the Child Protection Representative of Mahboba's Promise

Incorporated:

Mahboba Rawi:

Email address: mahbobarawi@iinet.net.au

Contact number: +61402145017

Appendix 4

Child Escort Form

Mahboba's Promise is committed to the safety of the children in our Care. You have asked to take:

Child _____ MP ID # _____

Who stays in our _____ (name of facility).

1 Name of person escorting the child. Please give us your personal details:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

2 What is your relationship to the Child? _____

3. Where are you taking the Child? _____

4. What date is the child going? _____

What date is the child returning? _____

5. Details of any Criminal Conviction for the neglect or assault of a child:

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence relating to the neglect or assault (including sexual assault) of a child?

Yes

No

If "Yes", please give further details.

6. Have you received permission from the child's usual guardian?

Yes

No

Name of Guardian: _____

7. Conduct:

Please respect the rules we have and do not allow the child that you are taking for a visit to be hurt, shouted at or abused in any way.

8. Confirmation:

I confirm that the information given on this form is complete and accurate.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Document Control	
Risk Level:	Very High (one year)
Approval Date:	Operationally Approved (15/05/2023)
Next Review Date:	15/05/2024
Responsible Position:	Operations Manager