

AVI

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Community-based child safe tourism toolkit

A practical resource for communities in Fiji to strengthen
child safety measures within tourism activities.



Background

The Child Safe Tourism Toolkit (Toolkit) was developed with the primary purpose of providing communities in Fiji with practical information to strengthen child safety measures within tourism activities. Building an inclusive approach for child safe environments creates a sense of empowerment and respect enabling community members to drive community actions.

This Toolkit provides a list of recommendations and practical tips to help communities, parents and caregivers, tour operators, and tourists take meaningful action to encourage the safeguarding of children in tourism.

To inform this Toolkit, key informant interviews took place with various stakeholders including government representatives, non-government organisations (NGOs) and tourism operators. Following this, desk-based research was undertaken and stakeholder feedback on the draft Toolkit was obtained.

AVI would like to thank the organisations consulted who provided valuable insight and shared their knowledge to inform this Toolkit.

Ministry of Commerce, Transport, Tourism and Trade (MCTTT), Fiji

Tourism Fiji

Think Pacific

Duavata Sustainable Tourism Collective

SOFTA

Homes of Hope

Save the Children Fiji

International Labour Organization, Fiji

Grace Trifam Ministry

Model Towns Charitable Trust

Fiji Hotel & Tourism Association

*Cover photo: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 /
Australian Volunteers Program*

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About this toolkit

The purpose of this Toolkit is to strengthen a community's understanding of the impacts of tourism on children. In the process, empower communities to support child safe tourism. This Toolkit provides information on simple things everyone can do towards making tourism safe for children and positive for everyone. It includes checklists, user-friendly templates and supporting materials for communities in the tourism sector.

Child Safe tourism is a leading global force for positive change, and we hope you find this Toolkit useful in your community. Vinaka Vakalevu.

AVI would like to thank the Ministry of Commerce, Transport, Tourism and Trade (MCTTT), Fiji for its support and partnership in child safeguarding in tourism and in the development of this Toolkit.



Definitions

Child safe tourism practices are those that 'do no harm' to children and young people.

Responsible tourism respects human dignity, equality and safety and everyone enjoys meeting and learning across different countries and cultures in a positive way.

How to use this toolkit

This Toolkit has been written for communities in Fiji. A community is made up of community leaders, community members, religious leaders, tourism operators, women's groups, teachers, children, youth and families. To achieve child safe tourism, the role of tourism operators and tourists is also very important, and this Toolkit provides guidance for these stakeholders.

The recommended actions suggested will help guide all community members and tourism players in their planning and response to safeguarding children in tourism.

Icon	Title	Cue
	Gender Equality Consideration	Indicates to take consideration of gender equality in the process or action
	Child Perspective Consideration	Indicates to take consideration of children in the process or action
	Inclusivity Consideration	Indicates to take consideration of inclusivity in the process or action
	Key point	Indicates a critical action to consider
	Meaningful participation/practice	Indicates a tip for inclusive and meaningful participation
	See annex	Indicates an attachment in the annex related to the topic

Chapter 1

Tourism and impact on children



Overview

Children are key participants and beneficiaries of tourism in Fiji. Alongside their communities, children and youth have a story to share about Fijian culture, traditions and hospitality.

Tourism brings people together and can be a positive and rich experience for both the host communities and visitors. Sometimes however tourists can have a negative impact or pose a risk to the safety and wellbeing of children either through misunderstanding or deliberate actions.

Communities play an important role, in partnership with tourism operators, families and tourists, in ensuring tourism experiences are child safe, positive and ethical.

Communities in Fiji regularly host and provide cultural activities for tourists. Community leaders and stakeholders can therefore work together to keep children safe when they are in contact with the tourism sector and protect children against any risk of harm, abuse or exploitation. They can also guide, structure and supervise tourism activities to create child safe environments within the community or village.

Children deserve and need the power of the tourism sector and service providers to adopt approaches that not only recognise their vulnerability but also seek to keep children safe.

Communities together with other stakeholders have enormous power and potential to help make destination and tourism activities safer for children. As with any human activity and business activities, there might be positive and negative impacts created along the way by the tourism sector.

Why child safe tourism?

1. Everyone wants to do the right thing for children, and tourism operators and communities in Fiji can be the leaders and educators in child safe tourism.
2. There is a growing demand from tourists for more ethical and child safe choices in travel experiences.
3. Child safe tourism is about sustainability. It involves continuing the social and economic benefits tourism brings without compromising the safety and wellbeing of children and communities.
4. Tourism operators in Fiji have a duty of care to community members and children when they organise community visits.
5. The tourism industry plays a role in keeping children safe.

Images right and above: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program

1.1 Positive and negative impacts of tourism

The stakeholders consulted for the Toolkit were asked what they saw as the positive and negative impacts of tourism.

Positive impact	Negative impact
New sources of income for communities	Natural environment changes affecting biodiversity
Job opportunities	Influx of tourists impacting cultural identity and traditions
Opportunity for cultural exchange	Risks to children when tourists visit villages having access to all areas and often unsupervised contact with children
Skills development	Stress on existing resources like freshwater
Promotion of Fijian culture, hospitality and Bula spirit	Disagreement amongst the communities over traditions or loss of cultural values
Tourism-based activities encourage environmental stewardship principles	Affect the daily life of the village if there are too many visitors
Opportunity to learn new languages and cultures	Loss of traditional wellbeing due to introduction of new dietary patterns
Improve conservation efforts through clean-up activities	Exposing children to strangers leading to risks of sexual abuse or exploitation
Economic development and post COVID recovery	Land confiscation and community displacement
Positive social impacts created through CSR programs	Development of sex tourism
Understanding behavioural lifestyle of other people and different perspectives	School visits affecting children and teachers during school hours
	Gifts to the children, unauthorised pictures of children
	Children engaged in work to support families
	Increase of exposure to consumption of alcohol and other harmful substances

It is important to consider both impacts of the sector but more specifically understand how these impacts can affect children. This will help to guide the conversation and more importantly the type of actions required by communities to encourage child safe tourism.

For example, as one stakeholder commented: 'There are strong links [between tourism and communities] in the Pacific especially on the islands since a lot of hotels/resorts are built next to the local communities.'

Tourism can positively provide:

- An opportunity for children to learn a new culture and language
- Strengthen children's and youth's confidence through exposure to new people
- Provide financial opportunities to parents and youth
- An opportunity to share Fiji's culture, environment and hospitality
- Tourism is economically and culturally important to Fiji

At the same time, tourism can negatively impact children:

- Photos taken that breach the privacy and dignity of a child or young person and taken without consent
- Tourists in contact with vulnerable children and young people
- Tourism activities that may embarrass a child or make them feel unsafe
- Tourists not supervised when visiting villages and family homes
- Tourists taking up spontaneous volunteering roles and they have not been properly checked or recorded as a volunteer

In tourism we show who we are.

Tourism Stakeholder Fiji

Tourism can play a leading role in the positive changes to community development and child safe policies.

Workshop participant Fiji

1.2 Role of stakeholders - everyone plays a part in child safe tourism

To prevent possible negative experiences or risks and to encourage a child safe environment, everyone should work together. This includes communities, parents and caregivers, government, tourism operators and tourists. Everyone has a role to play.

Communities will play a vital role when hosting tourists

Fiji CST workshop participant

There are a lot of tour operators who are having a great relationship with the villages where they bring the visitors.

Tourism stakeholder Fiji



Communities

As a community you play an important role in keeping children safe when your community is involved in tourism activities. For example:

- Establishing clear culturally appropriate ways of engagement with visitors
- Having systems in place to protect children while receiving visitors
- Setting requirements for tour operators and tourists to follow which provides you with an opportunity to share your hospitality and culture while keeping your children and youth safe.

For more information, please go to Chapter 3.1

Tourism service providers

Tourism service providers play a role in making sure they provide a child safe environment when carrying out their activities. As part of child safe tourism, they focus on building their operations and services which prevent and minimise risks to children. Tourism service providers can work together as best practice leaders in the sector providing respectful and child safe tourism environments.

For more information, please go to Chapter 3.2



Children and youth

As parents and members of the community, you can encourage and motivate children and youth to participate in child safe tourism by teaching them:

- How to recognise safe and appropriate behaviour from tourists
- What to do if they observe or experience unsafe or inappropriate behaviour
- Building children's self-confidence and ability to openly speak out about any concerns to create an encouraging and supportive environment

For more information, please go to Chapter 3.3

Tourists

Supporting tourists to be informed and aware of child safe tourism helps reduce possible negative impacts on children during their visits or activities. For example, tourists often take photos of children without asking permission. When taking photos or videos tourists should obtain informed consent from both the child and/or their parents/caregiver. Informed consent means asking permission first, explaining how the photo will be used (i.e., social media), making sure the child is adequately dressed and not in school uniform and letting the child/parent know they can say no or withdraw consent for the photo at any time. Communities can provide information to tourists on:

- Awareness of Fijian traditions and culture
- Respect for the customs and boundaries
- To understand what is expected of them when interacting with children in the community
- Choosing responsible tourism providers

For more information, please go to Chapter 3.4

Parents and caregivers¹

Parents and caregivers are the closest people to a child and play an important role in child safe tourism.

Their key roles are:

- Allowing children (providing consent) to participate in safe and appropriate tourism activities
- Listening to any concerns from children
- Supervising tourists when they are visiting the community or village
- Deciding together with the community the type of behaviour that should be welcomed in the community



Image above: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program

1. <https://www.wvi.org/asia-pacific/publication/keeping-our-children-safe-sexual-abuse-english-language-0>

Chapter 2

Laws to protect children



This Chapter provides information on the laws in Fiji that protect children and how they can be used to support child safe tourism.

2.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child

Every person including children have rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out the rights of every child and young person under the age of 18 years.

Fiji supports the UNCRC which means the government needs to fulfil the requirements in the agreement and protect children's rights to the best of their ability and capacity.

In Fiji, The Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation is the agency responsible for reporting on the UNCRC.

For a child friendly version of the UNCRC go to <https://www.unicef.org/sop/convention-rights-child-child-friendly-version>

2.2 What laws exist to protect children

Children in Fiji are protected through laws that state children should be protected from abuse, neglect, any form of violence, inhumane treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labour.

There are a number of child protection laws relevant to the tourism sector that help create child safe environments. The Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation is the Ministry responsible for children.

Images left and above: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program

Laws in Fiji

Child Welfare Decree 2010

Sets out provisions on how to protect children in case their safety or wellbeing is at risk and how to report such cases

Crimes Decree 2009 also has laws for the protection of children and specifically towards the protection of children from sexual exploitation, harm and abuse.

Child Help Line 1325-MSP 24 HOUR CALL

The Online Safety Act 2018

Protects children under 18 years old from individuals recording and posting an 'intimate photograph, video, or digital image.' For example, naked or inadequately clothed images or images of children undressing or showering.

For information on online safety (internet, online platforms and social media) see the Online Safety Commission Fiji website where you can also lodge a complaint.

You can report an online abuse here:

<https://osc.com.fj/>

Employment Relations Act 2007

- Prevents the worst forms of child labour – the work that harms a child's wellbeing and restricts access to education and development
- Sets the minimum age of employment – to 15 years
- Children between 13 to 15 years can do light work - part-time and age-appropriate work that fits around and does not interfere with their education

- Children under 18 cannot do hazardous work – work which is by nature of the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children
- Prohibits children to be employed against the wishes of parent or guardian
- Children should be provided with a minimum wage and have other rights of workers
- Overtime is not permitted
- Sets hours of work and conditions for night employment

See ILO Fiji for more information:

<https://www.ilo.org/suva/countries-covered/fiji/lang-en/index.htm>

Hazardous Occupations prohibited to children under 18 years 2013

Provides a list of occupations or workplaces that are prohibited for children.

For example, logging, craftsmanship, working on the commercial farm, working in places where drinking is allowed.

See the full list here:

<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/106489/130663/F1351241620/FJ106489.pdf>

To report concerns about tourist conduct, see Annex 1



Image right: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program

Chapter 3

The important role communities play in child safe tourism



Creating a child safe environment takes a community. Understanding how tourism activities impact children and putting in place measures to protect children's safety and wellbeing is an important role.

Communities have the right to manage and control tourism activities and decide what contact children have with tourists and visitors.

As a community, you can explore the following actions to create a child safe environment and make sure everyone has a positive tourism experience.

3.1 Community measures

Where to start?

You can use the checklist below to determine how active your community is in creating a safe environment for children.

Depending on how active your community may be in creating a child safe environment, the following paragraphs provide more detail on key actions you can take to better understand your role and responsibility in your community.

Vulnerabilities in the community can be exploited. If you don't engage the community as a partner the community does not have an understanding or ownership of risk. Communities must have their own aims and outcomes and have a choice about the tourism/volunteer interactions

Tourism Stakeholder Fiji



How active is my community checklist?

1. The people in my community are aware of the impacts (positive and negative) of tourism on children
2. The people in my community feel comfortable talking to tourists about any unsafe or inappropriate conduct when they are visiting (for example, asking them not to enter a private house or take a photo of their child)
3. The tour operators in my community have a child protection policy
4. My community has a list of rules for all tourists and new visitors
5. There are members in my community who are actively involved in protecting children from physical, emotional and sexual abuse
6. There are organisations in my community that educate adults, youth and children on how to protect children from abuse
7. There is a process in place in my community to report children at risk of abuse
8. The children in my community have spoken up about when they have felt unsafe or harmed when interacting with tourists or participating in tourism activities.

3.2 Communities working together with tourism service providers

What are some questions communities should ask of tourism operators?

- What are the tourism activities you would like our community to engage in?
- What days and times can be decided upon for the visits?
- Does your company have a Child Protection Policy or child safe procedures?
- When visiting, how many staff and tourists will be coming?
- Agree on what photos/videos can be taken and what consent is needed.
- Do you intend to allow tourists to take photographs of children?
- How do you intend to regulate tourists from taking photos of children?

- Who can we report any concerns to within the company, either during the visit or afterwards?
- Agree on whether tourists can bring gifts for children and if so, how these will be accepted and distributed.
- Do you inform travellers that sexual exploitation of children is a crime?
- Are you and your accommodation partners training employees on how to recognise a suspicious situation and how to react when children may be in danger?
- What risks to child protection have you considered in your tourism activities?
- Do you intend to organise homestays or local community visits to travellers?
- Are visits to orphanages and/or other residential care centres included in your tourism products?



Top 5 community measures to keep children safe

1. Actively involve key members of your community to discuss and create a set of rules for visitors
2. Where possible form a community group focused on creating a child safe environment (The community group could be made up of representatives from women groups, youth leaders, community leaders etc.)
3. Coordinate with organisations or associations who can provide a child protection training or information session to community leaders and members
4. Hold a community meeting and share information on the community's rules for visitors and reporting systems
5. Tour operators and community leaders coordinate on community/village development plans to ensure visits are controlled and child safe.

See Annex 1 Reporting List



Planning visits to communities with tourism service providers

Tourism operators have the responsibility to include community leaders and members in decisions that affect them and their community. For example, tourism operators are responsible for including communities in the following decisions:

- Planning tourism activities
- Bringing tourists to the community
- Involving key community leaders and group leaders in the way activities are carried out, the time activities are carried out, and how children are involved.

Community leaders and a community-based tourism operator can work through this checklist together to plan positive, successful, respectful and child safe tourism activities for everyone in the community.

Tourism-based activities encourage environmental stewardship principles that strengthens unity and faith-based spirituality connection of the community members to their roots and forefathers that protect their environment and conserve their biodiversity

Tourism stakeholder Fiji



Checklist to plan child safe tourism activities

1. Is the community involved in decisions related to child safe tourism?

2. Do tourism operators have a policy on child safe tourism?

3. Do tourism operators promote practices and activities that are positive for communities and respects the rights of children?

4. Do tourism operators communicate regularly with the community about child safe policies and practices especially when tourists are in our village?

5. Do tourism operators encourage the community to get involved in planning tourism activities?

6. Are community leaders and groups included to discuss child safe tourism measure?

7. Are parents and/or caregivers made aware of the decisions and actions tourism operators will support to ensure child safe tourism?

8. Do tourism operators collect feedback from communities after a tour group has visited?

9. Has the community been able to say to tourism operators what activities are acceptable and what activities are unsafe and not appropriate for the children in the community to be involved in?

10. Is the community aware of what is appropriate behaviour toward tourist children and that the same vigilance and safe standards should be applied to the community members that interact with those children?

For instance, organise a discussion with community leaders and the tourism operator to focus on the areas for improvement for children participating in tourism activities. You can also create a community tourism management plan, to decide how risks identified will be managed and which community members should support them.

Wherever possible, encourage tour operators to:

- Respect the community leadership and development committees
- Respect religious leaders and traditional authorities
- Ensure children have a safe space during community consultation

3.3 Children and youth and communities



Asking children their opinions of tourists is a good starting point to understand what children think about tourists, what they like and don't like about the tourism activities, and most importantly how they generally feel about the presence of tourists in their communities.

Key questions to ask children

- Do you like seeing tourists?
- Are you comfortable when tourists are around you?
- What don't you like about tourists or visitors to your community/village?
- Do you enjoy the tourism activities that you are involved in?
- Have you ever felt unsafe in these activities?



Top 5 suggestions for working with tourism operators

Work closely with tour operators to decide and determine:

1. The type of activities your children will participate in
2. Preferred times and days for tourists to visit and for activities to take place
3. Preferred locations tourists can visit in the community
4. Community preference for reporting incidents
5. Identifying key members of the community that can work alongside tourism operators and represent the community voice and interest

See Annex 1 Reporting List

3.4 Engaging with tourists when visiting the community

Communities play an important role in helping tourists understand the cultural and traditional customs of Fiji and community life.

A guide can be shared on positive and safe ways tourists can interact with children. This can help avoid unintended misunderstandings and prevent any incidents or conduct that could place a child at risk of harm.

A guide could be a poster, a handout or a conversation as part of the welcome. Some of the points you may want to raise include:



- Tourists will be taken to the community hall once arriving in the community



- Tourists need to respect the privacy and dignity of all community members and not enter a home or building without asking permission first



- Tourists will be accompanied by the tour operator and/or a member of the community



- Provide information on tourists making donations or providing gifts to children (for example gifts not to be given to individual children but to the community leaders to distribute).



- Tourists should let community leaders or tour guides know if they have any questions or concerns when interacting with children



- Tourists should not be allowed to take photos of children unless permission is provided by the child and/or parent/caregiver



- Provide information if tourists have any questions or concerns to please speak to your community leaders (name and contact details) and/or your child safe tourism contact person (name and contact details)



- Appropriate dress when visiting the community



- Tourists should supervise their own children at all times

Images right and above right: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program



Chapter 4

Responsibilities of tourism service providers



This chapter provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities tourism service providers have, to safeguard children in the community especially when planning tourism activities and bringing tourists to the community.

Child safe tourism operators adopt approaches that not only recognise children’s vulnerability but also seek to assess their own practices and the impact they have on children. They also take action to mitigate risks to the safety and wellbeing of a child.

Where to start?

Go through the checklist below to determine how active your local tourism operators are in creating a safe environment for children.

Hotel and tourism operators are heavily involved in CSR programs and extend opportunities out to local communities. For example, donating schoolbooks to schools, building infrastructure for rural communities.

Tourism stakeholder Fiji



How responsible is the tourism operator checklist?

The tourism operator:

- Is a leader and educator in child-safe tourism
- Has a policy on child safe tourism or child protection
- Promotes tourism practices and activities that are positive for communities and respect the rights of children
- Regularly communicates with my community about child safe policies and practices especially when tourists are in our village
- Encourages our community to get involved in the tourism activity planning
- Includes community leaders and groups to identify child safe tourism measures
- Collects feedback from communities after a tour group has visited
- Excludes visits to orphanages

Image left: Tony Allison, Fiji, 2016 / Australian Volunteers Program

4.1. Principles of child safe tourism

The Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport (MCTTT) Fiji brochure below provides a summary of child safe tourism principles for tourism service providers

As a community, you can use this brochure to determine whether the local tourism operators in your community have included these actions. You can also use these points to discuss with tourism operators.

4.2 Involving communities



Top 5 suggestions for tourism operators when bringing tourists into communities

1. Have responses prepared for staff when tourists ask about activities that you have decided are harmful or negative for children and communities so this can be communicated in a positive and educative way.
2. As a team list all your tour activities and discuss what will have a positive impact and what may be harmful to children – ask the team what other activities should we offer?
3. Obtain feedback from the community after visiting with a tour group – ask what worked well, where there are any problems or concerns, if anything happened that made you upset, or worried about the safety of your children?
4. Promote your child's safe tourism message on your website, brochures, social media, at airports, hotels, posters, and T-shirts.
5. Ask children and young people how they would like to welcome tourists and what their ideas are to showcase Fiji to visitors.

See Annex 2 Child Safe Tourism Checklist

See Annex 3 Do No Harm Approach template

See Annex 4 Child Safe Tourism Policy template

See Annex 5 Example Policy



Promoting Responsible and Child Safe Tourism in Fiji

Information for Tourism Operators

The choices you make can impact children's lives!

Children rely on adults to keep them safe from harm, abuse and exploitation. No matter where we are, we carry this responsibility with us.

As tourism operators, we need to be responsible for the safety of children in the communities we operate. Be a Child Safe Tourism Operator.

Child Safe Tourism practices are those that 'do no harm' to children and young people.

WHY child safe tourism?

1. Everyone wants to do the right thing for children, and tourism operators can be the leaders and educators in child safe tourism.
2. There is a growing demand from tourists for more ethical and child safe choices in travel experiences
3. Child safe tourism is about sustainability. It involves continuing the social and economic benefits tourism brings without compromising the safety and wellbeing of children and communities.
4. Tourism operators are ambassadors for Fiji and children are part of this picture for Fiji.
5. Tourism operators have a duty of care to community members and children when they take visitors into communities. Tourism operators are part of the solution in keeping children safe.

WHAT is a child safe tourism operator?

PROACTIVE by promoting tourism practices and activities that are positive for communities and respect the rights of children.

PREVENTATIVE by understanding the impact and contact tour activities have with children and reducing the risks of harm to children and young people.

PRACTICAL by putting in place relevant and practical measures that ensure tourism activities and practices provide responsible and child safe tourism experiences.

POLICY by incorporating child safe policies and codes of conduct into operating and management systems.

AWARENESS by training staff and informing customers and communities about child safe policies and practices.

COLLABORATIVE by forming a network to work together and share knowledge to strengthen child safeguarding within the tourism sector.

For more information on Child Safe Volunteering & Tourism Hub, visit: <https://childsafevolunteering.com/>

Chapter 5

Responsibilities of tourists



This chapter provides communities with information to recognise responsible tourists and information to share with tourists to promote child safe tourism.

Most tourists and visitors want to do the right thing by children and community members. Sometimes due to misunderstanding harm may occur to a child.

By being proactive in your community, you can make sure children, community members and tourists have positive and child safe tourism experiences.

You will also be aware of any deliberate actions by tourists or visitors that may place children or youth at harm and immediately respond to this.

5.1. Where to start?

Go through the checklist below to discuss the responsible tourists you have met in your community.



The responsible tourists I've met

- The tourists I have met know a lot about Fiji's culture and history
- The tourists I have met always ask permission before taking a picture
- The tourists I have met dress appropriately
- The tourists I have met only use tour operators that have child protection policies
- The tourists I have met have asked to learn more about our community rules when interacting with our children
- The tourists I have met support local businesses and shops

Image left: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program

5.2 Guideline for tourists

As a tourist, deciding to visit a new country means respecting the people with whom you interact with on the trip.



Tourists are considered responsible when they have done one or more of the following actions before traveling:

- Learnt about the Pacific, its cultures and traditions, cultural norms and expectations
- Ask for permission when taking photographs of people especially children
- Respect boundaries such as hugging children and when unsure ask for permission
- Is aware of what is in the best interests of children and how tourism impacts children. For instance, will question whether a tourism activity negatively impacts a child's right to privacy and dignity, or affects a child's development, safety or wellbeing.
- Supports local businesses such as restaurants, craft markets, shops and community-based tourism
- Asks for a copy of child safety policy and practices from private tour operators
- Supports tour operators that provide ethical and child-safe travel experiences



5.3 Volunteering in communities

The guidelines and responsibilities that apply to tourists also apply to volunteers who may work and/or live in the community.

Volunteers and tourists may choose to stay within a village as a 'home stay'. As a community, ensure home stay volunteers and tourists have been provided with information on your child safe rules, including asking them not to be alone with a child wherever possible. (See also 3.4).

It is recommended a set period of time is determined for home stays, all community members including children and youth understand they should report any unsafe behaviour by the volunteer or tourist and the volunteer or tourist should be asked to immediately leave if they do not follow the community child safe rules.

For other information and resources on responsible and child safe volunteering see:

Tourism Fiji
<https://www.fiji.travel/things-to-do/volunteering>

AVI
<https://www.avi.org.au/responsible-volunteering/>

Australian Government
<https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/volunteers/smart-volunteering>

ACCIR ethical mission trips
<https://www.ethicalmissionstrips.org/>

Image above: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program

Chapter 6

Responsibilities of parents and caregivers



Parents and caregivers are the closest people to a child. They are the first frontier of protection of their children and play an important role in child safe tourism.

6.1 Awareness of child safe tourism role



These are some of the roles that parents and caregivers can support to make sure a child safe environment is maintained when hosting tourists or visitors:

- Children are aware of how to engage with tourists.
- Teaching children on how to recognise harmful behaviour and that it is the right thing to do to let someone they trust know when they feel unsafe
- Listening to any concerns children might have
- Supervising tourists when they are visiting the village
- Deciding together with the community the type of behaviour that should be welcomed in the community
- Paying attention to changes in my children's behaviour.
- Knowing what to do and who to talk to if my child or another child is a victim of unsafe tourism.
- Observing tourists and tour activities carefully in my community.
- Ask and request tourism businesses to offer sustainable and child safe tour activities.
- Know how to recognise when children are feeling unsafe or experiencing signs of abuse.
- Paying attention if someone (adult or an older child/youth) is behaving in an unusual way with my children.
- Confident to tell tourists how we as a community protect children.
- Aware of the organisations in my community advocating for child safe tourism.
- Aware of the responsible tourism organisations in my community and feel safe that my children are involved in their tourism activities.

Image left: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program



6.2. Information for children

It is important to educate your children from an early age that it is ok to speak up if they are being harmed or if they are unhappy about the way they are being treated.



Adults are responsible for the protection of children; however, you can help children to keep safe by letting them know you will always listen, take them seriously and answer their questions. Let children know if they ever want to share anything with you, they can, and this is the right thing to do.



Some tips to help to protect your children:

- Help your children feel comfortable to share concerns with you.
- Teach your children protective strategies from a young age. Contact Child Help Line about this by dialling 1325.
- Help children identify safe and trusted adults they can go to if they ever feel unsafe or worried.
- Teach children that it is “against the rules” for adults to act in a sexual way with them and use examples.
- Teach children not to give out personal information while using the Internet or social media, including email addresses, home addresses, and phone numbers.

Images above and above right: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program



6.3. What to do if you notice your child feels unsafe

If you have concerns that your child may be feeling unsafe or is at risk of harm, you should engage in the conversation with them. Let them know if they ever want to share anything with you, they can, and should not fear being punished. If a child does speak up, listen and respond to them sensitively.



The following strategies will help support children if they let you know that they have been harmed or abused:

- Try to keep calm and give the child your attention
- Listen to the child, do not ask leading questions
- Let the child take his or her time to tell what happened
- Let the child use his or her own words to tell
- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Let the child know what you will do next
- If the child is injured seek medical attention

If you identified harm caused to your child, you can contact relevant authorities and organisations for help – see Annex 1 Reporting List



6.4 Key questions to ask the tourism service provider and tourists

Tourism operator

- When you organise a tour, how do you make sure children are protected? What are the measures are put in place?
- Do you brief your clients – tourists – on the local culture and traditions: what is appropriate and what isn't in our culture?
- How would you like our children (my child) to participate in the tour program? Are you aware of local legislation?
- How will you make sure our children (my child) are protected during the visit of tourists?
- Do you have a person in charge who will be responsible for children's safety during the visit?
- Do you train your staff members (including field staff) to receive child protection guidance, child safe training and information about their roles and responsibilities with respect to child's rights?
- How do you commit to a child safe environment in our community?

Tourists

- Are you aware of our cultural norms and traditions?
- Did the tour operator brief you about how to participate in a tour without compromising children's safety and comfort?
- Are you aware of do's and don'ts in our community?

Chapter 7 Reporting



Once as a community you have established processes for a child safe environment, an important requirement is a reporting system within your community. A reporting system will help to prevent and respond to any concerns you have for the safety or wellbeing of children because of their interaction with tourists.

7.1. Where to start?

Together with your community members, you can look at the list of questions to determine whether you have a good reporting system in place:



- I know who to contact if I notice inappropriate behaviour by tourists/tour operator
- If a child discloses an incident of child abuse, I know where to report that incident
- I know who to contact for any issues related to tourists in my community
- I know where to find contact information of the authorities to whom I should report
- I understand how the information reported will be handled and managed by authorities such as police and the government departments
- I know that my community will work on preventing such cases in the future

Images left and above: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program

7.2 Creating a reporting system – key suggestions

In creating an effective reporting system to protect children from harm it is important to work together engaging different stakeholders and structures which already exist in your community.



Some tips to help to protect your children:

- The best interests of the child should be the priority
- Designate at least two (focal points) people to be responsible for reporting the cases of harm, dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.
 - Having people in charge will allow community members to address their concerns to someone within their community avoiding direct engagement with tourists/operators which might not be culturally practiced.
 - Think of having gender balance appointing focal points.
 - These people should be trusted and respected in the community. Everyone in the village or community should know who they are and how to contact them.
- The Village or Community Development Committee can be also part of the consultation or reporting system.
- It is important to develop clear lines of communication within the community. The shorter the referral route, the simpler, clearer and therefore the better.
- Any child safe concerns should be communicated to tour operator and/or to the responsible authorities depending on the seriousness of the incident.
- For serious offences such as sexual abuse and exploitation against children these must be reported to the relevant authorities immediately. It's important that the issue is handled with sensitivity and respect within the community maintaining the confidentiality and respect to the child and his or her family.
- The nominated community members should have proper training regarding different issues which might happen and what process needs to be followed. They should also provide trainings/awareness sessions with community leaders, parents/caregivers, teachers, health workers and broader community on what needs to be reported.

7.3. Who should be involved?

There are several different people that could be included in reporting. Based on your community structure, the following people within the community might be engaged in this process:

- Community leaders
- Teachers
- Health workers
- Religious leaders
- Community leaders
- Youth leaders
- Women's group representatives

7.4 List of organisations and services

If the issue reported requires investigation, involvement of authorities or support of the organisations working in the field of child protection, see the information below for services and helplines in Fiji for children and youth.

You are doing the right thing by reporting concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a child. You do not need facts or evidence and it can just be something you observed, overheard, or suspected, or you might just feel uncomfortable about the behaviour of an adult with a child. You also should not question or interview the child or the person you suspect may be harming the child. Just report to the relevant authorities or services what you know, and they will take the next steps.

If a child is in immediate danger		
Fiji Sexual Offences Unit	Fiji Sexual Offences Unit	3318525 / 3318520
Police Emergency	General	917
Wellness Centre for Women	CWM Hospital Suva	3215435
For child abuse		
National Child Helpline Fiji		1325
Fiji Women's Crisis Centre	Counselling for violence and child abuse	Suva: +(679) 331 3300 / +(679) 920 9470 Nadi: +(679) 670 7558 / +(679) 918 2884 Ba: +(679) 667 0466 / +(679) 923 9775 Rakiraki: +(679) 669 4012 / +(679) 912 9790 Labasa: +(679) 881 4609 / +(679) 937 7784
Save the Children Fiji	Reporting child abuse and violence	Website: http://www.savethechildren.org.fj/
Homes of Hope	Providing safe places or supports for people experiencing in danger of forced sex	Website: https://www.hopefiji.org/
Lifeline		24/7 Crisis Helpline – Phone 132 454 Website: https://lifelinefiji.com/

Also see Annex 1 Reporting List



ANNEXURES

Annex 1. Reporting



Organisations and authorities to report concerns about tourists conduct

Tourism Police

Phone: 4502639 / 8307557

Suva Police Station

Phone: 331 1222

Nadi Police Station

Phone: 670 0222

Emergency – 911

Crime Stoppers - 919

To report suspected crimes committed by an Australian citizen, contact both local police and the Australian Federal Police:

Report a Commonwealth crime | Australian Federal Police:

<https://www.afp.gov.au/contact-us/report-commonwealth-crime>

These include crimes such as:

- Child sex offences by Australians in foreign countries
- Drug importation and exportation
- Human trafficking including trafficking for slavery, sexual, domestic and/or labour servitude and forced marriage
- Online Child Exploitation (child abuse material)

Reporting concerns about children being harmed or abused

To report concerns about children that have been harmed and/or abused the following agencies and organisations should be contacted.

Medical Services Pacific

Email: help@msp.org.fj

Phone: Child help line 1325

Website: <http://msp.org.fj/>

Department of Social Welfare:

Phone: Suva: 3315754; Nasinu: 3683395; Nausori: 3479449

Save the Children Fiji

Phone: +679 331 3178 / +679 999 9468

Email: Info.Fiji@savethechildren.org

Post: Postal: PO Box 2249, Government Buildings, Suva

Fax: +679 330 2214

Website: <http://www.savethechildren.org.fj/>

Address: Suva Office: 25 Pender Street, Suva

Labasa Office: 86 Sarwan Singh Street, Labasa

Lautoka Office: Office 3 Eddie Hin Building, 1 Nede Street, Lautoka

Fiji Women's Crisis Centre

Domestic Violence Helpline Number: 1560, 3313300 (24 hours), 9209470 (24 Hours)

Phone: Suva 3313300/9209470; Nadi 670 7558/7404760; Ba 6670466/9239775; Rakiraki 6694012/9129790; Labasa 8814609/9377784

Reporting concerns of a child sex offender posing a risk to children

To report suspected concerns of a child sex offender grooming or posing a risk to children the following agencies and organisations should be contacted.

Fiji Sexual Offences Unit – Toorak
3318525/3318520

Image left: Darren James, Fiji, 2019 / Australian Volunteers Program

Annex 2. Checklist for tourism operators

Child safe tourism checklist for tourism stakeholders

Action	Description	Assess
Risk assessment	<p>A great place to start.</p> <p>By conducting a risk assessment, you can:</p> <p>(i) identify how your tourism activities/practices come into contact with children or impact children</p> <p>(ii) assess whether your tourism activities/practices are having a positive or negative/harmful effect on children and communities</p> <p>This assessment can help you decide what policy and other measures you need to put in place to help remove or reduce the risk of harm as well as confirm what you are doing well.</p> <p>TIP: do the risk assessment as a team exercise as everyone will have unique observations and ideas about how your business interacts with children and how to make your practices child safe.</p> <p>USE: AVI Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Do No Harm Tools</p>	

Action	Description	Assess
Child safe tourism policy OR including child safe measures in standard operating procedures/manual	<p>Develop and implement a child safe policy that is suitable to your organisation size and activities and reflects your values.</p> <p>Include in your policy or measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statement or commitment to be a child safe tourism business • Promotion of your child safe and responsible tourism commitment • Role of leadership/management • Ongoing child safe risk assessment for new activities • Engagement with community leaders to coordinate on village and community development plans to incorporate child safe tourism measures • Police and reference checks in recruitment of staff to ensure they are safe and positive representatives of your business especially when working in communities • Training for staff on your child safe policy and measures • Reference to relevant local laws and government policies/codes • Regular review of policy and measures <p>TIP: Promote your child safe tourism message on your website, brochures, social media, at airports, hotels, posters, T-shirts</p>	

Action	Description	Assess
Child safe Code of Conduct for staff	<p>This can be a one-page document that staff sign to agree to safe, respectful and positive conduct with children when representing your business. A Code of Conduct is a supportive document that clearly sets out what is safe and unsafe behaviour with children.</p> <p>The Code can include guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating all children with respect regardless of race, gender, religion, ability, age etc • Being a positive role model in communities • Use of language • Ensuring interactions with children and young people are not abusive, exploitative or unlawful • Use of computers, mobile phones, social media • Taking photos or videos and obtaining informed consent from children and parents • Reporting any concerns for the safety of a child to management <p>TIP: Ask applicants what they think about the Code of Conduct in interviews and discuss the Code in staff inductions or team meetings – its important to keep the conversation going about child safeguarding</p>	
Reporting	<p>Develop a clear process whereby staff and clients can raise any concerns or complaints with you about the safety of a child or conduct of a staff member with a child.</p> <p>This process should be managed in a fair, safe and confidential way.</p> <p>Staff should be encouraged to raise any concern they have, and not suffer negative consequences for doing so, even if their concern results in no further action needed. In this way your business will not miss any risks and will be able to continuously improve practices.</p> <p>TIP: Appoint two senior staff members as the child safe contact officers and let staff know they can discuss concerns with them at any time.</p>	

Action	Description	Assess
Feedback forms and processes	<p>Obtain feedback from the community after visiting with a tour group – ask what worked well, where there any problems or concerns, anything happen that made you upset, worried about the safety of your children?</p> <p>Include questions in your client feedback form about your child safe practices.</p> <p>TIP: Ask children and young people how they would like to welcome tourists and what their ideas are to show Fiji to visitors</p>	
Tourists/clients pre-briefing	<p>Through a brochure, online tour booking or verbal briefing, explain your child safe and responsible tourism commitment and ask your clients to share in that responsibility to keep children in Fiji safe.</p> <p>This information can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise tourists of the practices the community has adopted to ensure the safety of tourist children while in the community • What is ok and not ok when taking photos of children (privacy and dignity) and obtaining consent for photos, videos and social media posts • Safe and child friendly conduct when visiting communities, schools and villages and respecting private areas/spaces • Appropriate dress standards for visiting communities • Reporting any concerns during and after a tour • Your policy on gifts for children <p>TIP: Have responses prepared for staff when tourists ask about activities that you have decided are harmful or negative for children and communities so this can be communicated in a positive and educative way.</p> <p>TIP: Tour operators can provide tourist children with coloured wristbands or some other indicator to identify children with a tour group and that any activity undertaken by the children must be with parental/guardian consent and under adult supervision.</p>	

What next?

Use this checklist to develop your action plan to implement child safe tourism measures

Annex 3. Do no harm approach template

1. Analyse the context	Who works for you and what groups (stakeholder / ethnic / religious) do they represent?	Who benefits from your business activity?	Who are your partners, who do you collaborate with?	Which authorities, national or local, do you work with?		
2. Analyse the business activity	What are you doing?	Where is your activity taking place?	When is your activity taking place?	Criteria - Why did you make this decision?	What are you doing?	Are children engaged either directly or indirectly in your activities?
	Example: Tour for visitors to Sand dune Park	Example: Sigatoka Sand Dunes, National Park, Fiji	Example: During Bula Festival in Nadi	Example: The annual festival will be tourist attraction	Example: Guides will take tourists on a 3 hour walking tour of the Park	Example: children will participate as tourists with their parents
3. Using the information from steps 1 & 2 identify the sources of risk and opportunities	List the risks to the safety or wellbeing of children	List the risks to the safety or wellbeing of the community	List the risks to the safety or wellbeing of the workforce	List the positive impacts or opportunities for children	List the positive impacts or opportunities for community	List the positive impacts or opportunities for workforce
	Example: Most farms are located on the river bank	Example: sand dune is in close proximity of agricultural land				
4. Develop strategies	List the strategies to reduce the risk of children being harmed	List the strategies to reduce the risk of the community being harmed	List the strategies to reduce the risk of the workforce being harmed	List the strategies to implement opportunities for children	List the strategies to implement opportunities for the community	List the strategies to implement opportunities for the workforce

Annex 4. Policy template

Child safe/protection policy template

A Child Safe or Child Protection Policy will provide the framework for your business or organisation to create and maintain a protective environment for children in your operations, activities, and the communities in which you work.

Draw on what exists in the community, culture and your organisation or business that already provides protection for children and youth and include these in your policy.

If working with communities include the community voice and how your organisation or business will work in partnership with the community in creating a child safe environment.

TIP: Before writing your Policy conduct a risk or impact assessment on your organisation and its operations and activities. This will help you identify areas of strength and risk that you can make sure are covered in the Policy.

This template is a guide, and you should use your own style and language and ensure it is relevant to your values, context, and activities.

Suggested structure	Suggested wording and inclusions
1. Name of policy	Child Safeguarding in Tourism Policy Child Safe Tourism Policy Child Protection Policy Policy for Child Safe and Ethical Tourism Child and Community Safe Tourism Policy
2. Statement	A statement about your values and commitment to keeping children safe when they are in contact with your organisation or business activities. You can mention your organisation upholds the rights of all children as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child The statement should reflect your organisation and the local context
3. Purpose/objectives	For example, "The purpose of this policy is to: - safeguard children from all forms of harm in all our operations and activities - create and maintain a safe environment for children in our operations, activities and the communities in which we work - to implement tourism practices and activities that are positive for communities and respect the rights of children. - provide leadership in child safeguarding and the promotion of responsible and child safe tourism practices
4. Scope	State to whom the policy applies: such as staff, volunteers, members and contractors
5. Definitions	Definition of a child - can use United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Fiji's Child Welfare Decree definitions that state 'a child is anyone under the age of 18 years' Definitions of child abuse and exploitation

Suggested structure	Suggested wording and inclusions
6. Awareness Raising/ Communication	Include a statement about how the policy will be communicated, displayed and made available to your personnel, clients, customers/tourists and the communities you operate in. For example, website, brochures, posters, promotional videos
7. Local Laws and Policies	Your policy can refer to local child protection, employment and labour laws and national policies on ethical and responsible tourism and child safeguarding
8. Personnel Recruitment and Screening	Include procedures for recruiting and screening personnel especially for those in contact with or working with children such as police and reference checks. Can include a statement that you will not permit any personnel to work with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety and wellbeing Include a statement to ensure the employment of children under 18 years of age is conducted in accordance with the law, for example children involved in entertainment groups or promotional videos and images (See p.14 Laws in Fiji)
9. Roles and Responsibilities	Include specific child safeguarding roles and responsibilities within the organisation or business such as managers or board members Can include a child safe focal point/champion
10. Code of Conduct/ Behavioural Protocols	Include a Code or Protocol on expected and safe behaviours for your personnel when interacting with children in the performance of their duties with your organisation or business
11. Training and Induction	Include a statement on the requirement for personnel to attend child safeguarding/protection training and/or induction and in what period from commencement of employment Can include refresher trainings for personnel
12. Reporting/Raising Concerns	Include a statement that it is mandatory for all personnel to report any concerns they have for the safety or wellbeing of a child Provide details on the reporting process, to whom they should report to, how to report, in what time You can include a flow chart to explain the process clearly Provide details on how reports will be handled, such as confidentiality and in a timely manner with everyone's rights respected Include the principle that the best interests of the child will be followed at all times and how to report concerns about customers/tourists' unsafe behaviour with children to the appropriate authorities Can include procedures for obtaining feedback from communities, children/youth (child friendly mechanisms) and customers Ensure that the three principles of a survivor centred approach should be implemented being respect, confidentiality and safety
13. Risk Management	Include how you will assess your operations and activities impact on children and what you will put in place to reduce the risk of harm to children and young people. Can also Include how you will incorporate feedback from communities and children/youth into continuous improvement in your child safe tourism practices
14. Review	State how often the Policy will be reviewed

Annex 5. Example policy with many thanks to Duavata Sustainable Tourism Collective



Child Protection Policy

Talanoa Treks and Talanoa Consulting are registered business names for the registered company Walks and Trails (Fiji) Pte Limited (registration #: RCBS2013L1791) and herein “the Company”.

Talanoa Treks operates in a sensitive environment where we operate a social enterprise that seeks to be a sustainable business, positively benefit the communities we are partnered with, and conserves the environment that guests enjoy.

Talanoa Consulting is a Pacific based and focussed consultancy firm. We are multidisciplinary, proud of our local context, and will always seek to provide this perspective alongside caring, professional advice and expertise.

The company is a member of the Duavata Sustainable Tourism Collective. Duavata is a collective of like-minded tourism operators who believe tourism should enhance cultural heritage and the environment. Duavata champions the sustainable interconnection between experiences within local communities, the environment and culture. The Collective is passionate about creating conservation awareness in communities with and through young people.

This Child Protection Policy was jointly developed by the Collective with the support of Medical Services Pacific and Australia Volunteers International.

Title:	Talanoa Treks and Talanoa Consulting Child Protection Policy
Reference Number:	Version 1.1
Approval Date:	4 June 2021
Administrative Responsibility:	Office Manager
Approver:	Managing Director

Core values

The work of Talanoa Treks and Talanoa Consulting will be guided and informed by our ethos, our character, our conduct, our beliefs and commitment to:

INCLUSIVENESS. We respect people. We value diversity and are committed to equality and fairness. We are open to all those who wish to contribute and actively listen to differing voices. We will always strive to improve and enhance our cross cultural communication skills.

QUALITY. We set high standards and expect them to be maintained. We pursue excellence through continuous learning and improvement. We strongly believe that as we better ourselves, those around us are bettered. We take pride in what we do, and we are accountable for our actions.

OPENNESS. We are committed to a culture of sharing, teamwork and collaboration. We trust each other and those around us. We recognise the trust that others place in us. We listen to understand. We act with honesty and integrity and we will try our best to stay genuine, to be real!

SUSTAINABILITY. We will build resilience in our business, in each other, and with our partners. We commit to economic, social, cultural, and environmental sustainable practices in all that we do. We are part of and proud of our Pacific community. We care about the present and the future.

Policy

In consideration of these core values, the Company strongly values the concept of child protection and as further outlined below we will always aim to uphold the protection and well-being of children. We define a child as a person below the age of 18 years old as defined in the Convention on the Rights of a Child and Fiji's Child Welfare Act.

1. Objective

- 1.1 To create and maintain a protective environment for children in our operations, activities and the communities in which we work.
- 1.2 To understand the purpose of a child protection policy and related procedures.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The policy applies to the Company, its staff, volunteers, contractors and guests. All staff, volunteers, and contractors are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of any child encountered in its operations, activities and communities.

3. Policy overview

- 3.1 The Company:

- 3.1.1 is committed to child protection and the prevention of all forms of child abuse and exploitation;
- 3.1.2 recognizes the right of the child to be protected from child abuse and exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development;
- 3.1.3 will establish a procedure when designing new products or activities or services to identify potential risks for children in communities, ensuring the risks are mitigated and documented in a risk-management plan or matrix;
- 3.1.4 must inform guests about the correct ways of interacting with children in our communities, taking photographs and videos, entering private areas without invitation, and of spending time alone with a child or physical contact;
- 3.1.5 will ensure children can access age-appropriate play areas, including swimming pools, that meet safety requirements; and
- 3.1.6 must train its staff, volunteers, and contractors on how to identify child abuse and exploitation and follow the reporting pathways in the event that child abuse and/or exploitation is flagged.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 **Child** – according to Fiji's Child Welfare Act and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is anyone under the age of 18.
- 4.2 **Child abuse and neglect** – sometimes also referred to as child maltreatment is defined as all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity.
- 4.3 **Physical abuse** – the use of physical force against a child (including hitting, shaking, punching, kicking, burning and poisoning) that causes harm to a child.
- 4.4 **Sexual abuse** – use of children for sexual benefit by an adult or older child, includes the showing a child pornography, or using sexual verbal words or sexual messages online.
- 4.5 **Emotional abuse** – verbal or other acts towards children can damage a child's self-esteem or confidence. Includes online abuse.
- 4.6 **Neglect** – the failure to provide a child (when they could do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their development and wellbeing.
- 4.7 **Child exploitation** – using children for profit, labour, sexual benefit, or for other personal or financial advantage. Includes producing, obtaining or distributing child exploitation material.

5. Personnel recruitment

- 5.1 The Company will not permit any personnel to work with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety and well-being.
- 5.2 Child-safe recruitment and screening processes, including criminal record checks prior to engagement, targeted interview questions and verbal referee checks are used for all personnel (including volunteers and contracted individuals) who are likely to work with children or around children.
- 5.3 Where criminal record checks are required, they are conducted for each country in which the individual has lived for 12 months or longer over the past five years. Individuals need to give consent to a criminal record check and are informed of the purpose for which the resulting police clearance will be used.
- 5.4 A Child Protection Code of Conduct is signed by all staff who are likely to be working with children. All signed codes of conduct must be retained by HR/Admin.
- 5.5 The Company will ensure babysitting/child care options for travelling parents are carefully selected and vetted.
- 5.6 We undertake to include a provision in all employment contracts that we have the right to dismiss the employee/volunteer or transfer the employee/staff to other duties for breach of the code of conduct.
- 5.7 All new personnel to work with children must attend an orientation on child protection within a month of commencement, or as soon as practical.
- 5.8 All existing personnel are required to attend a child protection refresher approximately every two years and make themselves aware of the child protection procedures.

6. Management structure

- 6.1 Directors and managers of the Company will:
 - 6.1.1 assess and eliminate or mitigate the risk of any child abuse and exploitation associated with their operations and/or activities;
 - 6.1.2 not knowingly engage directly or indirectly anyone who poses an unacceptable risk to children;
 - 6.1.3 ensure that all partners, their board, staff, volunteers, contractors comply with the child protection policy;
 - 6.1.4 ensure appropriate training and development programs designed to aid compliance with this policy;
 - 6.1.5 provide supervisors and other staff members with support and assistance during any complaint or dismissal process;
 - 6.1.6 arrange and maintain records of criminal record checks; and
 - 6.1.7 ensure all reports of child abuse or exploitation are acted on immediately, treated as strictly confidential and managed according to procedural fairness principles.

7 Behaviour protocols

- 7.1 All directors, staff, volunteers, and contractors are expected to adhere to the following behaviours while performing their duties (see Annex I: Child Protection Code of Conduct):
 - 7.1.1 behave in a manner consistent with the company's values, code of conduct, and as a representative of the company;
 - 7.1.2 follow company policy and guidelines regarding the safety of children as outlined in this Child Protection Policy;
 - 7.1.3 treat children with respect regardless of their race, gender, language, religion, political or other opinions, ethnicity or cultural background, disability or other status;
 - 7.1.4 not use any language or behaviours towards children that is harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
 - 7.1.5 not engage children in any form of sexual intercourse, sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts;
 - 7.1.6 wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children;
 - 7.1.7 not invite unaccompanied children into your home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or physical danger;
 - 7.1.8 never use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media to exploit or harass children, or access child exploitation material through any medium;
 - 7.1.9 not access pornography or expose children to pornography;
 - 7.1.10 refrain from physical or verbal punishment of all children you are associated with;
 - 7.1.11 not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or development stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
 - 7.1.12 immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse or exploitation in accordance with appropriate procedures;
 - 7.1.13 immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or during the association with the Company that relate to child abuse and exploitation;
 - 7.1.14 be aware of behaviour and avoid actions or behaviours that could be perceived by others as child exploitation and abuse;
 - 7.1.15 obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child - an explanation of how the photograph or film will be used must be provided;

- 7.1.16 ensure the child is presented in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner, is adequately clothed and not instructed to pose in any way that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- 7.1.17 ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- 7.1.18 ensure file labels or descriptions of photos or films do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

8. Reporting, reaction and ramifications

- 8.1 A clear and effective reporting procedure and response plan for handling allegations or suspicions of alleged misconduct toward children will be developed. This reporting format must also be provided to communities that the Company works in. (See Annex II: Child Protection Report form).
- 8.2 The privacy, safety and the protection of the child is of prime importance. Ensure the child is in a safe and protective environment during the reporting process.
- 8.3 A risk matrix will be continuously updated by the team to ensure any new risks to children are captured and mitigations put in place.
- 8.4 Anyone from the Company, including staff, volunteers, contractors, guests and communities who suspects that a child is at risk of harm, child abuse and/or exploitation should immediately report it to their supervisor or the designated child protection officer:

Matthew Capper
Managing Director
+679 9472731
matt@talanoa-treks-fiji.com
- 8.5 Any person reporting is not required to confirm their suspicions or provide solid proof before making a report.
- 8.6 The supervisor and/or the designated child protection officer will immediately put into effect internal reporting steps, seek instructions from Management and report to local authorities as required.
- 8.7 All information collected on the incident is compiled and shared on a “need to know basis” with strict confidentiality.
- 8.8 In situations where those reporting the incident or the designated child protection officer are involved, the report needs to be taken to higher management or another Company Director.
- 8.9 The child protection officer/management may initiate an internal investigation. The person involved will be encouraged to participate in the investigation by providing information or names of witnesses. The person will not be allowed to contact the child.

- 8.10 At the conclusion of the investigation, the reported person will be informed of the result of the investigation and what corrective action, if any, will be taken.
- 8.11 Management must make efforts to contain the situation internally and maintain confidential processes externally. Staff must be reminded to maintain confidentiality of information until the matter is resolved.

9. Policy review

- 9.1 This Child Protection Policy is subject to review every five years or earlier if warranted.

10. Miscellaneous

- 10.1 The annexes form an integral part of the policy.
- 10.2 For further information or clarification, please contact the Company on +679 9985220 or info@talanoa-treks-fiji.com.
- 10.3 Related documents and policies, include:
 - 10.3.1 Office manual
 - 10.3.2 HR Policy
 - 10.3.3 Guide Code of Conduct
 - 10.3.4 Staff and contractor contracts

11. Document history

Revision #	Date	Description of changes	Completed By
01/2020	November 2020	Drafted new policy	Rachana Kumari
02/2021	May 2021	Comments provided by AVI incorporated in the policy	Rachana Kumari
06/2021	June 2021	Policy redrafted for relevance to Talanoa Treks and Talanoa Consulting	Matthew Capper
06/2021	6 June 2021	Policy approved	Matthew Capper

Annex I: Child Protection Code of Conduct

Child Protection Code of Conduct/Professional Behaviours

I, _____, engaged by or associated with Talanoa Treks or Talanoa Consulting acknowledge that I have read and understand this Code of Conduct, and the accompanying Child Protection Policy, and agree that in the course of my duties with Talanoa Treks or Talanoa Consulting,

I will:

1. behave in a manner consistent with the company's values, code of conduct, and as a representative of the company;
2. follow company policy and guidelines regarding the safety of children as outlined in the Child Protection Policy;
3. treat children with respect regardless of their race, gender, language, religion, political or other opinions, ethnicity or cultural background, disability or other status;
4. not use any language or behaviours towards children that is harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
5. not engage children in any form of sexual intercourse, sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts;
6. wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children;
7. not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or physical danger;
8. never use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media to exploit or harass children, or access child exploitation material through any medium;
9. not access pornography or expose children to pornography or inappropriate content;
10. refrain from physical or verbal punishment of all children I am associated with;
11. not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or development stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
12. immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse and exploitation in accordance with appropriate procedures;
13. immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or during the association with the Company that relate to child abuse and exploitation;
14. be aware of behaviour and avoid actions or behaviours that could be perceived by others as child exploitation and abuse.

Filming and photographing children and Use of children's images

I further agree that, while engaged by or associated with Talanoa Treks or Talanoa Consulting, and when photographing or filming a child or using children's images for work-related purposes, I must:

15. obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child - an explanation of how the photograph or film will be used must be provided;
16. ensure the child is presented in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner, is adequately clothed and not instructed to pose in any way that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
17. ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
18. ensure file labels or descriptions of photos or films 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 Talanoa Treks or Talanoa Consulting, to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse.

I also understand that any breach of the Policy or the Child Protection Code of Conduct / Professional Behaviours is a violation of my obligations and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, termination of services, legal action, and/or criminal investigation and prosecution.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Annex II: Child Protection Report Form

Child Protection Report Form

Once completed the information disclosed in this form is to be treated as private and confidential. If more than one child/young person is involved in the incident being reported, please use a separate form for each child/young person.

1.	Name of person making the report:		Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
	Address and or phone number:			
2.	Name of child/young person who has been harmed/abused (if different from person making report):			
	Child/young person's home province:			
	Child/young person's date of birth:		Age of child/young person:	
	Child's address and phone number:			
	Name and address of parents / care provider:			
3.	Date of incident(s):			
	Time of incident(s):			
	Location of incident(s):			
	Witnesses' names and contact information:			
	Brief description of incident(s) and type of abuse/harm/exploitation:			
4.	Who is the alleged perpetrator:			
	What is the alleged perpetrators position:	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff or representative <input type="checkbox"/> Staff of a Partner organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Someone in the community:		
	Where is the perpetrator now (if known):			
5.	Has the child/young person or their parents/ care provider sought assistance from any other agency?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, which agency and what has the agency done?			

	If you made a referral, name the agency and person you referred to:	
	When did you refer:	
	What has the agency done or what is the agency going to do?	
6.	Form completed by (Name, Position):	
	Date Form Completed:	
	Date Form sent to CEO/ Director/ Supervisor or Protection Officer:	

For all reports a Child Protection Reporting Form must be completed and sent to the Director within 24 hours of the initial incident report.

For an incident involving a report against a staff member or associate, a copy of this Form must also be sent to the Human Resource Manager where it will be stored on the staff member's personal file.

