

# CHILD WELFARE AND THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY: GLOBAL GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES



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## GUIDANCE

This version of the guidelines is a simplified and shortened version of Child Welfare and the Travel Industry: Global Good Practice Guidelines – Implementation Guide. The guidelines are in complete form and have not been amended from the original. This version removes case examples and tips that can be found in the Implementation Guide. It is meant for quick reference and use on the go. Materials presented in this document are intended to be clear and straightforward, in a format easy for companies to follow.

For guidance in the implementation or to obtain the expanded version of the guidelines, please contact ChildSafe Movement at [info@thinkchildsafe.org](mailto:info@thinkchildsafe.org). For more than a decade the ChildSafe Movement, a global protection initiative powered by Friends-International, has been safeguarding children and youth from abuse through creating protective environments in which they can thrive. The Movement has developed easily accessible tools and resources which raise awareness and provide solutions to child protection issues for all tiers of society and the international community.

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These guidelines cannot be used as justifications for applying standards below national legislation or to condone any instance of child abuse.

# ABOUT THE GUIDELINES

The Child Welfare and the Travel Industry: Global Good Practice Guidelines have been developed to provide a common understanding of child welfare issues throughout the travel industry and to provide all travel businesses with guidance to prevent all forms of exploitation and abuse of children that could be related to travellers and the tourism industry.

Developed in conjunction with key global stakeholders, the guidelines have been purposefully designed so that any tourism business should be able to implement them. All businesses operating in the tourism sector can use this document as a practical working tool to better understand the main risks they may face by not upholding child welfare practices and the subsequent impacts on children and communities. This tool will help businesses understand what key actions need to be taken to mitigate these risks and provide helpful guidance on how to uphold child welfare across all areas of business, including the supply chain.

There are 15 guidelines organized under four sections to offer businesses a structured approach for implementation. The four sections are as follows:

1. Guidelines to ensure your company is able to prevent and respond to child abuse arising from tourism interactions
2. Guidelines for your products and services to have the best impact on children
3. Guidelines to ensure your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives are reinforcing child welfare
4. Guidelines for implementation

Businesses are encouraged to seek assistance from tourism and child welfare specialists and to utilize the widely available industry tools and supports referenced throughout this document and annexes.

It is important to note that the Global Good Practice Guidelines have been developed to specifically address the welfare of children living in communities where tourism activities are occurring, and does not delve deeply into the welfare of children travelling as clients. Basic guidance has been provided on this subject, however, it is recommended that travel companies that frequently provide services to children as clients should reference the strong body of work already existing on this topic and integrate good practice into their operations alongside those laid out in this publication.

The Global Good Practice Guidelines builds on a number of existing policy documents and guidelines, in particular:

- › UN Children’s Rights and Business Principles
- › Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Industry Criteria (Version 3, December 2016)
- › Children’s Rights and Business Principles (UNICEF, Global Compact, Save the Children)
- › UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- › G Adventures Core Values and Traveller Conduct Policy
- › ChildSafe Movement 7 Standards for Businesses
- › ChildHope Child Safeguarding Policy (2014)
- › International Voluntourism Guidelines for Commercial Tour Operators, The International Ecotourism Society and Planeterra Foundation
- › The International Labor Organization Convention Article 3 (d) concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

# THE NEED FOR GLOBAL GUIDELINES

There has been a perception over the years when discussing child welfare in the tourism industry that this issue solely refers to the possible sexual exploitation and/or abuse of children. We have all seen explicit media reports of incidences of sexual abuse of children by tourists and travellers, and are aware of the reputation certain global destinations have gained in this regard. It is crucial that the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism is addressed by the industry, and one which engenders a strong emotional response in the public; however, it is only one of the many risks children can face from poorly managed tourism.

These risks vary depending on the environment in which the interaction takes place. Some may be obvious, such as safety requirements for children travelling as clients, while others may be less obvious, such as having fair wages and working conditions for employees to adequately care for their children, and educating travellers on how to react to children in impoverished communities. For example, do your clients know that giving money to (or buying gifts from) a begging child is harmful?

As the demand for experiential travel and social, cultural, and community-based tourism grows, so do the risk factors for children. The children selling souvenirs in and around cultural destinations, the children in villages where homestays are taking place, those shining shoes at busy intersections, and those in residential care and schools, all need effective protection systems in place to ensure their safety. They need businesses and the tourism industry to adopt approaches that not only recognize their vulnerability, but also seek to mitigate risks.

These guidelines are intended to assist travel companies in reinforcing and implementing good practices in child welfare both within and outside your business, to ensure that you are not only protecting children at all interaction points, but also protecting your staff and reputation. They will enable your business to respond in an appropriate and timely way to any child protection issue that may arise and will provide outcomes that will always be in the best interests of the child. In short, they will enable you to do good business.

## DEFINITIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

### WHAT IS A CHILD?

A child is a person who is under 18 years of age except if the national law of the concerned country states otherwise. In these guidelines we refer to “children and young people” to make sure adolescents and young adults (persons aged between 12 and 17 years of age) are clearly covered by the guidelines. This aims to maximize security and reduce risk for the implementers. When we are talking about children, they are our own children, the children of our employees and suppliers, the children who are travelling through our services, and the children in the communities where we work and visit.

### WHAT IS CHILD WELFARE?

Child welfare refers to ensuring the protection, safety and well-being of children with the broad term “child welfare.” By linking the term child welfare to include child abuse and child exploitation, we go one step further and show our ambition to not only ensure children are safe from abuse, but also contribute to building environments where children can develop emotionally, physically, cognitively, and socially.

### CHILD SAFETY

is making sure that children are safe from abuse and harm.

### CHILD ABUSE

is a general term describing any situation when someone, or an event, intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the healthy development of children and negatively affects their well-being. Child abuse can be one or a combination of physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual abuse.

### CHILD EXPLOITATION

is a specific type of child abuse that refers to the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child for personal gain. Child labour, for instance, is both a form of child abuse and exploitation as it prevents a child from accessing quality education, poses a threat to his/her physical development, and is driven by the intent of personal or commercial gain.



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# GUIDELINES TO ENSURE YOUR COMPANY PREVENTS AND RESPONDS TO CHILD ABUSE

**GUIDELINE 1.1**  
**Include child welfare elements in procedures for Human Resources for all company representatives**

KEY ACTIONS

Make sure a Child Welfare Code of Conduct is agreed upon by all company representatives.

- › Behaviors and actions of company representatives toward children (those that are encouraged and those that are not accepted) are clearly indicated and formally agreed upon by all company representatives. This can be done through the creation of a specific Child Welfare Code of Conduct or the integration of specific child welfare elements in existing and/or other documents (contracts, code of ethics, etc.). Any new or revised Code of Conduct or relevant document should be signed by all persons employed by or under contract with the company.

Make sure a Child Welfare Code of Conduct is presented and promoted to all travellers/clients.

- › Behaviors and actions of travellers toward children (those that are encouraged and those that are not accepted) are clearly outlined and formally shared with all travellers/clients.

IMPLEMENTATION TIP

You can share these behaviors with your clients, pre-departure and in destination, using your current communication channels. Consider sharing it in booking confirmation emails, itineraries, destination guides, and pre-departure information, and in destination during tour briefings and/or group orientation.

Make sure Child Welfare is integrated into your hiring processes.

- › Include a Child Welfare Statement on all job announcements. Inform applicants during job interviews that your company has a Child Welfare Policy in place and successful applicants will be expected to comply with it. For example, use wording such as: "Candidates will be expected to comply with the company's Child Welfare policy and other policies as applicable."
- › Carry out reference checks, including questions on child welfare, for all positions in which the person will be expected to work at a community level or in any settings where they may interact with children. Where applicable, seek police background checks.
- › Ensure any persons working with communities or directly with children meet national laws for working with children. In some countries, a specialized permit or license may be required.

Do not accept child labour and provide decent working conditions for all personnel to be able to look after their own children.

- › Ensure no children below the minimum working age, as defined by national law, are engaged to work at your company.
- › Ensure that young workers above the minimum working age are protected from work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.

In instances where national legislation permits children to participate in light work, such as in family businesses or homestays, ensure your company is protective of the safety, rights, and freedoms of those children.

- › As a minimum, your company should meet laws relating to fair wages, maternity, and paternity leave and offer flexible working hours to accommodate for pregnancy and child care needs. This may include breastfeeding, attending pre-natal care appointments or being at home with their children after school or at night.
- › Provide internships and training programs to local youth, potentially leading to career opportunities.

Integrate child welfare components in staff training systems.

- › Through training, you can ensure company representatives gain and maintain a basic understanding and practical knowledge of:

- Children's rights
- Common concerns and child welfare risks company representatives and clients may encounter
- Functioning child protection hotlines/helplines in their countries of residence and in their countries of work
- Your company's Child Welfare Code of Conduct and protocols for responding to questionable behavior (for example, using your company's incident reporting system). This may include common tourist-child interactions that may not be appropriate, as well as more serious forms of child abuse and exploitation or activities in contravention to these guidelines

IMPLEMENTATION TIP

Consider holding refresher training sessions that address feedback from your clients and employees on child welfare and any changes in the industry.

**GUIDELINE 1.2**  
**Include child welfare elements in procedures for communication and marketing**

KEY ACTIONS

Ensure all company communication and marketing respects the rights of children.

- › It's essential that the fundamental rights of the child — to privacy, safety and protection — are recognized in all the incoming and outgoing communications between your company and its stakeholders. Your company should not use imagery of children without informed consent from a parent or guardian, including product promotion. Imagery should not depict children in vulnerable or abusive situations, situations that insinuate sadness, poverty, hunger, or any situations with sexualized references. Similarly, any messaging accompanying an image must present children in a dignified manner to prevent sensationalism and secondary exploitation. Individual children should not be the focus of a photograph or readily identifiable, unless they are in a safe situation with their parent/guardian, where the photo is depicting typical residents of a destination that travellers may encounter in a positive manner and with informed consent.

Integrate marketing and communication standards into your company's standard operating procedures.

- › Within your company's internal policies and procedures, there should be child protection measures in place to ensure the creation or sharing of sensitive or abusive images or material relating to children is prohibited. These standards can be integrated into an existing policy or developed as a separate media and communications policy and shared with all stakeholders, including the media. You can base your standards on the Communication Guidelines in Annex 1.

IMPLEMENTATION TIP

Policies and procedures are only as good as their implementation. Consider face-to-face training and having a defined approval process to avoid making mistakes.

**GUIDELINE 1.3**  
**Establish and use procedures for responding to suspicions and disclosures of abuse**

KEY ACTIONS

In every destination, your company representatives should be able to readily identify and contact the appropriate local authorities / local partner to react quickly and appropriately in any suspected case of child abuse.

- › All travel companies should have a list of relevant local authorities and locals partners readily available to report any suspicions or disclosures of abuse. ChildSafe Movement offers a comprehensive list of organizations by region, here: <http://thinkchildsafe.org/report/>. If the authorities are not able to effectively support you, we recommend establishing relationships with local organizations that protect and support children in your company's destinations. For companies operating in multiple countries, we recommend establishing relationships and/or collaboration agreements with one or more international organizations that protect and support children to collaborate with if faced with suspicious situations.

Designate an existing or new employee to be the internal Child Welfare Officer (Child Protection Officer) for your company.

- › This person will act as the point of contact on all matters related to Child Welfare within your company. They will liaise with any international or local child protection organizations you work with. Going one step further, you could establish a Child Welfare Task Force to oversee the implementation of the guidelines and any child welfare issues within your company. This Task Force would be led by the Child Welfare Officer. For additional information, see the Seven Tips for Initial Implementation.

Establish a standardized reaction system to respond to any incidents.

- › Ensure all company representatives are able to respond promptly and objectively to reports indicating child abuse or risk. You can choose to integrate child abuse incidents into your existing reaction systems or adopt one from readily available industry tools and resources.

Ensure your incident report and reaction system is easily accessible.

Establish a mechanism for travellers and communities to report any child welfare incidents and/or concerns.

When dealing with child welfare incident reports ensure:

- › The physical and emotional well-being of the concerned child(ren) is the main priority. Make sure the child(ren) is/are in a safe and protective environment and collaborate with the local authorities or your local partner
- › All information collected on the incident is compiled and shared on a "need to know basis" with great confidentiality
- › In situations where those reporting the incident are themselves involved, the report needs to be taken to higher management. If higher management is involved or inadequate action has been taken, then the incident must be referred to a Board of Directors, relevant authorities or a local/international partner for immediate action.

**GUIDELINE 1.4**  
**Emergency response and relief**

Emergencies significantly increase risks for all persons, particularly children who might be separated from their families and are more susceptible to exploitation and violence. It's important that all travel companies have processes in place to protect children and respond in a timely and organized manner in the event of an emergency or natural disaster. Additional measures should also be considered for companies operating in areas or offering products and services that may increase risks for travellers, such as outdoor adventure activities

KEY ACTIONS

Ensure children are included as key stakeholders and their interests are considered when developing emergency or disaster contingency plans.

- › This includes taking special consideration for children with special needs, such as children with disabilities, medical needs and gender needs, such as feminine hygiene products.

Know the functioning emergency and disaster hotlines/response services in countries of operation.

Ensure any required emergency devices or equipment (life jackets, for example) are suitable for children and are maintained properly.

If contributing to relief efforts during disasters, coordinate efforts with local authorities and other organizations under a defined approach.

**GUIDELINE 1.5**  
**Influence business partners to implement child welfare guidelines**

It is very important that your commitment to child welfare is mirrored across your entire supply chain to ensure your clients receive safe, high-quality experiences and to avoid negative impacts from the misconduct of a supplier or contractor. Children could easily be harmed due to negligence or unknown participation in child exploitative practices on behalf of your suppliers. To uphold child welfare in all your products and services, your suppliers also need to act in the best interests of children.

KEY ACTIONS

Ask all suppliers to sign contracts with your company which highlight their commitment not to employ children under the age of employment as defined national law or International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention.

Encourage all your suppliers to endorse the Global Good Practice Guidelines to ensure child welfare and consequently adapt their policies and core contractual tools.

IMPLEMENTATION TIP

You can choose to implement an entirely new policy/contract for your suppliers or update existing ones with the required child welfare elements. It's important all suppliers and partners are aware of your policies and the consequences of breaching them. All existing and new supply chain members should read and agree to your revised policies.

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# GUIDELINES FOR YOUR COMPANY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES TO HAVE THE BEST IMPACT ON CHILDREN

The way you operate and the example you set for your clients can significantly impact the well-being of children who are directly or indirectly in contact with your company. It's important you have measures in place to protect children across all interaction points and that your clients are aware of how their behaviours impact child welfare.

For example, do you have a child risk assessment process in place when developing new products? Do your clients know that buying from child street-vendors is harmful to development?

This section will help you navigate these issues to identify the direct and indirect risks to children that may exist in your current products, and how to take effective, corrective action.

## **GUIDELINE 2.1**

### **Always identify and manage risks for children in areas visited by travellers**

#### KEY ACTIONS

Establish a procedure when designing new products and services to identify potential risks for children in communities.

- › Consult child welfare organizations to determine whether your products might lead to school dropout, family relocation, or situations where children have to spend time outside their regular care (family or other). Pay particular attention to situations where this occurs in evenings or overnight, such as performances that include children. Tourism products involving marginalized children, such as orphanage or school classroom visits, have been proven harmful to children, and are discussed in detail in Guideline 2.3

Establish a child welfare risk-management plan.

- › Together with child welfare organizations, take an active role in ensuring the identified risks are mitigated and documented in a risk-management plan or matrix.

Inform travellers about the correct ways of interacting with children in rural communities and when confronted with children begging or selling goods/services.

- › Brief travellers on appropriate and inappropriate interactions with children as stated in Guideline 1.1, including but not limited to: giving candy or gifts to begging children, taking photographs with and/or of children, entering private areas without invitation, spending time alone with a child or children, and physical contact.

Establish mechanisms for communities and children to provide grievances or complaints against tourist/tourism activities.

- › Collaborate with key community stakeholders and child welfare organizations to ensure children and their communities can voice complaints or grievances against tourists. These mechanisms should be easily accessible, in their local language and promoted to community members and your company's management/sub-contractors.

## **GUIDELINE 2.2**

### **Establish specific measures to ensure child welfare in Homestay products**

#### KEY ACTIONS

Inform Homestays of, and ensure they agree to, your company's Child Welfare policy.

- › Establish a set of operational practices for homestay providers that address the welfare of children-as-clients, and the welfare of homestay families and children in the community
- › Screen, select and continuously monitor homestay providers using these operational practices
- › Inform hosts and communities of your code of conduct and expectations
- › Under no circumstances are travellers to share rooms with children, unless they are the child's parent or legal guardian

Inform Homestay hosts about your company's behavioral guidelines for travellers.

- › Hosts are informed of the company's behavioral guidelines for travellers and how to report inappropriate behavior.
- › Communities and hosts are informed that child welfare is a key concern for your company.
- › Your company should encourage host communities to inform travellers of cultural sensitivities and good behavior guidelines should be made available in pre-trip communications and/or tour guide notes.

Travellers and children-as-clients are informed of cultural sensitivities.

- › Roughhousing, hugging, and other types of physical contact that may feel normal for travellers but for children-as-clients this could be culturally inappropriate, or lead to unhealthy relationships or high-risk situations. Tour guides should brief travellers and children-as-clients on appropriate behaviours. Refer to Guideline 1.1 or Annex 1 for further information. If you are unsure about what is appropriate, consult a local partner or your homestay provider.

Monitoring of child welfare of all children involved in homestay products must follow a particularly strict process.

- › Homestay monitoring processes should address the welfare of children-as-clients, children of host families, and children living in host communities. To do this, your company should actively engage host providers, community leaders, child representatives, local child organizations and travellers. Host providers and community stakeholders should be given the ability to freely express themselves in the local language and be encouraged to do so. Your company may need to appoint a local representative as a Community Child Welfare Officer to achieve this.

## **GUIDELINE 2.3**

### **Avoid visits of orphanages and other children centres, including school classrooms**

#### KEY ACTIONS

Your company should avoid visits to orphanages and other centres that host children, including school classrooms.

- › Children centres are meant to be a safe place for children. They are not tourist attractions. Visiting school classrooms and orphanages not only disrupts child development but can also put children at risk of emotional or physical harm through direct or indirect contact with travellers with inadequate supervision. This inappropriate behaviour can also seed unhealthy child behaviours and ideals, encouraging situations of exploitation. For example, children may become accustomed to strangers taking their photograph, or to receiving money or gifts from travellers.

Discourage clients from donating directly to children centres, or to children directly. Advise your clients on reputable child-friendly organizations that they can donate to instead.

- › Many well-intentioned clients may want to donate money or gifts to children centres, such as orphanages or schools, but this can do more harm than good, as some institutions exploit children for commercial gain. Recommend that your clients donate to a reputable, registered, child-friendly organization, or purchase from a business that benefits local children and the community at large.

Inform your clients and other stakeholders why visiting children centres, including school classrooms, is harmful.

- › Your company should not include teaching or facilitating learning activities as part of a product or service. Children deserve more than good intentions. Teaching or facilitating development is a job for experts who know the local language, not for travellers seeking "culturally immersive activities." Engaging in such activities, even after school hours, can still disrupt development or put children at risk of abuse, as stated above. Children's needs and their right to healthy development should never be compromised for commercial gain.

#### VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOLS – A UNIQUE SCENARIO

A vocational training program that uses a tourism enterprise to create educational and employment pathways for adolescents and young adults is taking advantage of traveller visits to benefit youth for their futures. Students gain crucial work experience in a business setting, for instance a training restaurant, retail shop, beauty salon, as tour guides, or with cooking lessons. Interacting with customers as part of a curriculum can reinforce the skill development of adolescents and young adults.

The tourism industry can support youth employment in the communities in which they operate by visiting such vocational training programs when the following measures are in place:

- › Interaction with customers (tourists) is part of the curriculum
- › Visits take place in a structured manner that reinforces vocational training and does not disrupt the teaching of students
- › Travellers are informed of any codes of conduct for the community, which means dressing, speaking, and acting appropriately in front of the young adults

- › The training program or vocational school has a Child Welfare Policy in place
- › The visit or experience takes place in an area separate from where younger children not enrolled in the program may be learning
- › Students are either adolescents or young adults in line with local laws (in most cases this means 16 years of age and older)

## **GUIDELINE 2.4**

### **Ensure child welfare in corporate or individual voluntourism**

Public awareness of child welfare issues, including the trafficking of children, in connection with voluntourism is increasing globally, including the introduction of legislation banning orphanage volunteering. The global awareness of the potential harm to children in promoting this kind of tourism is growing too.

#### KEY ACTIONS

A travel company should never place volunteers, or travellers in general, in positions where they are responsible for caring for or teaching children.

If your company promotes volunteering or provides placement services where your clients might be in contact with children, it should be under strict child welfare conditions:

- › Voluntourism projects should be developed under the guidance of child welfare specialists to ensure the needs of the local children and community – rather than those of the travelers or the company— are the priority, and to ensure any voluntourism activities are carried out in a protective manner
- › A child welfare assessment must be conducted in collaboration with a child protection organization before the volunteering product is integrated into a company's portfolio
- › Specific guidelines for interactions between travellers and children are designed for each volunteering product
- › Travellers will receive a face-to-face briefing before participating in the volunteering project
- › Travellers can never be left to interact with children without the supervision of a well-trained staff member who speaks the local language and who is well-known to the children
- › Interactions with children are limited in time and do not take place more than once a week
- › Children who might be in contact with travellers are in regular contact with their caretakers (they are not orphans, or other groups of children without parental care)
- › Companies can also look for alternatives to child-based voluntourism activities. The ChildSafe Movement is one organization that can help you identify such alternatives

If your company promotes volunteering, the impact of volunteers should be sustainable and bring tangible benefits to the selected community and to the children living in that community.

- › For instance, your volunteers may train locals, thus transferring skills and ensuring that the positive impact of voluntourism will last long after the volunteers have returned home.

#### IMPLEMENTATION TIP

Your company should partner with a local child welfare organization to develop these good practices. You can use the traveller code of conduct as a starting point for establishing positive interactions.

**GUIDELINE 2.5**  
**Ensure child welfare and well-being of children travelling as clients**

It is important that all travel businesses consider the unique needs of children travelling as clients and implement protective measures to uphold their personal welfare and encourage positive interactions with children in the communities visited. This section outlines some basic good practice guidance. However, there is already a strong body of work on this topic that you should reference and integrate alongside the Global Good Practice Guidelines. See Annex 2 for Useful Resources.

KEY ACTIONS

- › Conduct safety checks for transportation, lodging, and Information Communication Technology (ICT) services
- › Companies should inspect safety belts and car seats, electric wiring, and sockets in rooms, check for the presence of glass, and inspect balcony safety-railing, cooking equipment, and furniture safety bumpers in rooms
- › Ensure babysitting/hotel child-care options for travelling parents are carefully selected and vetted
- › Ensure children can access age-appropriate play areas, including swimming pools, that meet safety requirements
- › Ensure children-as-clients are able to identify themselves if they get lost, especially in crowded areas, and inform the children and their caregiver of what to do in such an event
- › Ensure children-as-clients are aware of appropriate and inappropriate behaviours
- › Ensure company representatives meet legal standards for working with children in all operating countries
- › Establish a response system to uphold the wellbeing of children-as-clients in event an incident that incapacitates their parent/legal guardian. This can include a client incurring serious physical harm or death, a client going missing, being neglectful, or subject to legal action
- › Ensure emergency next of kin details are collected for every client and the contact person is contacted within a reasonable timeframe following an incident
- › If the parent/caregiver is travelling with the child-as-client, seek alternative emergency contact details of a person who is not on the tour
- › Train company representatives on how to identify child abuse and follow your company's Child Welfare Policy reaction systems in the event that child abuse is flagged

**GUIDELINE 2.6**  
**Managing donations and community support in the best interest of children**

KEY ACTIONS

Provide opportunities for travellers to purchase responsible souvenirs and handicrafts, or tourism services provided by social enterprises, rather than making direct donations.

- › Responsible souvenirs, which are made locally and without child labour, facilitate local employment and contribute to the social integration of vulnerable families. Purchasing locally made souvenirs and/or services provided by local social enterprises (meals, tours, accommodation, and/or transportation) should always be encouraged, as they are more supportive of the local economy.

Provide strategic support to existing community initiatives as part of your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy and encourage travellers to support those initiatives rather than developing isolated projects.

- › A plan for donations to sustainable projects should be in place. Feasibility of community support initiatives should be established beforehand (See Guideline 3.1)

In situations where travellers would like to make personal donations, discourage donations made directly to children or orphanages.

- › Encourage your clients to donate to a reputable, pre-identified organization or person who is in a position to provide a formal receipt, and ensure the donation has a positive impact upon children.

# 3

## GUIDELINES TO ENSURE CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) INITIATIVES ARE REINFORCING CHILD WELFARE

### GUIDELINE 3.1

#### Ensure community development initiatives are in the best interest of children

##### KEY ACTIONS

Recognize that you may not have the specific expertise to ensure your projects have maximum impact.

- › Children deserve more than good intentions. Engage the services of development professionals to ensure your projects achieve maximum impact.

Make every effort to ensure your community initiatives are in the best interests of children.

- › This does not mean your community initiatives have to specifically target children. It means ensuring your community initiatives ultimately have a positive effect on the lives of children in the concerned communities and do not, distract them from their education, do not lead to family separations, and do not contribute to increasing violence against children or among children.

Reinforce existing community and government efforts to ensure child welfare.

- › Collaborate with existing community structures or projects and build upon their successes.

Support a community development initiative only if it has been designed with community input and addresses a clear need identified by that community

- › Make sure that key community representatives (including child representatives, where appropriate) and local social stakeholders familiar with children's issues are engaged and have full ownership of the community support initiative. In order to accomplish this, you may wish to:
  - Conduct (or secure access to) a recent situational assessment to understand if other community development initiatives have taken place, and to become aware of the challenges, successes and lessons learned
  - Link to appropriate existing initiatives which have undergone due vetting processes
  - Inform local authorities about the initiative and gain all relevant approvals or permits as required

Design and implement a regular participatory monitoring and evaluation plan.

- › Together with each stakeholder of the initiative, agree on how you will define success and how to measure the impact of the initiative. Generally, the stakeholders may include travellers, children and their families, local partners, community members, your company, and any donors.

Ensure a community grievance and complaint process is in place and is easily accessible to community members and child representatives (in collaboration with your local partner).

Ensure the initiative operates transparently and in accordance with local laws.

##### IMPLEMENTATION TIP

Consider engaging a third party to conduct regular monitoring and provide short reports on the development of the community initiative.

### GUIDELINE 3.2

#### Educate travellers and promote responsible behaviours

##### KEY ACTIONS

Regularly share practical tips for travellers across your company's communication channels that explain how to actively contribute to the protection of children.

Advice and tips for travellers should be developed with representative groups of travellers and should, at a minimum, include practical information covering:

- › How and where to do research if one is interested in voluntourism or other community-based forms of tourism
- › Why it is harmful to visit or donate/give gifts to orphanages
- › Why it is harmful to give money, candy or gifts to children who we do not know
- › Why it is important not to be alone with children
- › Why and how to manage photographs/videos with children (including online sharing)
- › The legal consequences of having a sexual relationship with a minor – whether online or in person
- › How to report suspicions and direct disclosures of child abuse
- › How to report suspicions of child labour
- › How to spread the word about child welfare in tourism

In these tips, your company should also promote hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, taxi services, and other businesses with child-welfare protection policies.

Provide travellers with online and printed means to share child welfare in tourism tips with other travellers and their communities back home. One well-established freely available resource is the ChildSafe 7 Tips, please contact ChildSafe Movement team for resources and links [info@thinkchildsafe.org](mailto:info@thinkchildsafe.org)

### GUIDELINE 3.3

#### Develop synergies with other organizations committed to the Global Guidelines

Upholding child welfare in tourism requires the commitment and collaboration from all actors and businesses on a local and international level.

##### KEY ACTIONS

Collaborate with other local and global actors in the child protection and education sector with effective services and partnerships.

Use the services of other businesses, such as hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, taxi services etc., that are committed to child welfare as much as possible.

Collaborate with other stakeholders in the tourism industry to share good practices and lessons learned.

##### IMPLEMENTATION TIP

You can find local child safe businesses to partner with, and free advocacy resources, at [www.thinkchildsafe.org](http://www.thinkchildsafe.org)

## 4

# GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of these guidelines will assist you in addressing child welfare risks by reinforcing and implementing good practices in child welfare both from within and outside of your business. This will ensure you are not only protecting children at all interaction points, but also protecting your staff and your reputation.

This can be done to different degrees and may vary from one company to the next according to size, the nature and scope of each company's services, the destinations in which it operates, and any existing child welfare regulations in place.

Internal analysis, solutions, impact assessment, monitoring and reporting frameworks can be integrated into your own structure and processes established according to your resources and capacity.

There are various existing, tried and tested industry resources, procedures, and instruments that you can reference when implementing the guidelines, such as those provided by UNICEF and the United Nations. See Annex for additional useful resources.

To uphold the implementation and sustainability of the guidelines, a Child Welfare Task Force can be established, comprising of internal personnel and external consultants or specialists. Additionally, you could officially be part of the ChildSafe Movement to protect children by becoming ChildSafe Supporter or ChildSafe Certified.



# SEVEN TIPS FOR INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

For companies committed to applying the guidelines within their business, but who may not have the adequate resources to develop company-specific policies and procedures at this time, below are seven tips for initial implementation:

## 1. Make your commitment public

Announce your commitment to enhancing child welfare in your operations via the Global Good Practice Guidelines both publicly and internally with reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children's Rights and Business Principles and/or the ChildSafe Movement.

## 2. Company Policies and Codes of Conduct

Incorporate child welfare elements into existing relevant policies and codes of conduct. At a minimum, this should include:

- › An explicit commitment to respecting children's rights
- › Defining children's rights as those enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- › Specifications regarding company representatives' behaviours and actions in regard to children
- › Prioritization of labour and non-labour children's rights issues, for inclusion in company policies to establish expectations for employees, suppliers, subcontractors, customers and other business partners
- › Stipulated labour and non-labour child rights issues in employee, supplier and other codes of conduct, which will depend on the nature of the business and the areas in which it operates and its specific impacts on children.

## 3. Designate a Child Welfare Officer

Designate an existing or new employee to be the internal Child Welfare Officer (or Child Protection Officer) for your company. This person will act as the point of contact on all matters related to child welfare within your company. They will liaise with any international or local child-protection organizations you work with. Should you choose to establish a Child Welfare Task Force within your company, this person would lead it.

## 4. Establish a clear response mechanism

Ensure all company representatives are able to respond promptly and objectively to reports indicating a child might be at risk, or has been abused. You can choose to integrate child abuse incidents into your existing reaction systems or adopt one from readily available industry tools and resources.

## 5. Assess your products and services

Assess existing and future products/services to identify potential risks for children, and systematically avoid visits to orphanages and other children centres, including school classroom visits and child performances.

## 6. Assess and set standards for media and communications

Ensure children are portrayed with dignity in all marketing, media, and communications collateral, and that all representatives and clients are aware of and follow your guidelines.

## 7. Promote good practices

Encourage all your suppliers and partners to endorse the Child Welfare and the Travel Industry: Global Good Practice Guidelines so they can actively contribute to child welfare and ensure all your clients are aware of how to best interact with and protect children. It will also help mitigate incidences of supplier negligence that may negatively impact your brand.

# ANNEX 1: COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

## Part of the Child Welfare and the Travel Industry: Global Good Practice Guidelines

### Producing and distributing images and stories

Images of children and their real stories can make engaging communication and marketing materials, particularly as your company is actively engaged in ensuring their safety and well-being.

The aim of these guidelines is to help you portray children with dignity in your company's high-level social practices while respecting the privacy and safety of the depicted children. These guidelines also aim to protect your communications representatives, the communities in which you operate, and your company as a whole.

When starting a new communication project, always ask yourself: "Could this communication or marketing project have potential negative consequences for any children?" If there is any doubt, review the project and make changes as appropriate.

### Guidelines for the production of images and stories

Focus on group images or stories rather than on individual ones that would single out a child and thus increase his/her vulnerability.

Inform children and their parents/caregivers/guardians about the purpose of filming, photography, or interviewing, and ask adults for their written consent. Consent is not needed for individuals in the background of a photo or video who are not readily identifiable, but as a general rule it is always recommended to ask people if they agree to a photograph being taken.

Children involved in photographs must always feel in control. Filming, photographing or interviewing must conclude immediately if the child wishes or appears uncomfortable or distressed. A child must be aware they can stop at any time.

Language used verbally or in written form must not degrade, victimize, exploit or shame a child and should not allow viewers to identify that child by name, location, etc.

In all forms of media, children should always be dressed appropriately and should never be depicted in any poses that could be interpreted as sexually provocative. Photos or footage of naked children should never be taken; if done so inadvertently, all copies must be immediately deleted.

File text, photo, and video materials with care to ensure the identities of children interviewed are protected.

External journalists, photographers or film crews must be given your Code of Conduct/Communications Guidelines and sign their commitment to it.

### IF YOU PLAN TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW

- › Children are not to be interviewed alone; they must be accompanied by a trusted adult of their choosing
- › Discuss your questions with the child's parents/caregivers/guardians before asking them
- › Avoid questions that risk causing distress, victimizing, or stigmatizing the child
- › Children can participate in an interview only in their preferred language, which may require a local translator
- › Conduct the interview in a place where the child feels familiar or comfortable, such as in their home
- › No politically sensitive questions may be asked, as discussing such topics may place you, your team, and the interviewee at risk

### Guidelines for the distribution of images and stories

The portrayal of children must not be manipulated or sensationalized in any way. Images and stories should provide a balanced depiction of the child's life and circumstances, balancing any negatives with empowering images and/or a narrative showing the progress that children are making.

Avoid linking an image of an individual to a specific story; instead, you can use a group photo.

Make sure portraits do not mention the full name of the child and their exact location. An alias should be used, unless otherwise specifically requested by the child. Nobody should be able to trace a child to where he or she lives. External materials should state: "Names of the children and their parents/caregivers/guardians have been changed, and photographs are not those of the children mentioned in the story. All children have given permission for (company name) to use and share their images and stories."

Whenever possible, send an example of the published materials to the local company representative so they can share it with the children and adults who have been portrayed.

If an image is used that is not connected with the story being published, make sure to use a disclaimer. This applies to photos/footage that you or your team personally take as well as stock photos/footage.



# ANNEX 2: SOURCES AND USEFUL RESOURCES

Below is a list of useful resources used to develop these guidelines, which your company can use to better understand the child welfare issues discussed in this publication and to access industry resources and tools to action child welfare measures in your operations.

## STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES

- › The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, available at [www.ohchr.or](http://www.ohchr.or)
- › Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) criteria (Version 3, December 2016), available at <https://www.gstcouncil.org>
- › UN Children's Rights and Business Principles, available at [www.childrenandbusiness.org](http://www.childrenandbusiness.org)
- › UN Global Compact Principles, available at [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)
- › The ChildSafe Movement 7 Business Standards, available at [www.thinkchildsafe.org](http://www.thinkchildsafe.org)
- › Child Safe Guarding Policy, ChildHope (2017), available at [www.childhope.org.u](http://www.childhope.org.u)
- › Child Protection Policy, Friends-International (2008) available at [www.friends-international.org/resources](http://www.friends-international.org/resources)
- › Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), available at [www.ethics.unwto.org](http://www.ethics.unwto.org)
- › Children's rights in impact assessments: A guide for integrating children's rights into impact assessments and taking action for children, UNICEF (2013) available at [www.unicef.org/csr](http://www.unicef.org/csr)
- › Children's Rights in Policies and Codes of Conduct, UNICEF(2013) available at [www.unicef.org/csr](http://www.unicef.org/csr)
- › A Guide for Business: How to develop a human rights policy', UNICEF (2011), available at [www.unicef.org/csr](http://www.unicef.org/csr)
- › Children are everyone's business: Workbook 2.0, UNICEF available at [www.unicef.org/csr](http://www.unicef.org/csr)
- › Round table of Human Rights in tourism, available at [www.unicef.org/csr/travel\\_guidance.html](http://www.unicef.org/csr/travel_guidance.html)
- › Certification for sustainable tour operator, Travel Life, available at [www.travelife.org](http://www.travelife.org)
- › Every Child Everywhere online training available at [www.everychildeverywhere.com](http://www.everychildeverywhere.com)

## SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN TOURISM

- › Expert Paper: International Volunteering and child sexual abuse, Better Volunteering Better Care(2016) available at [www.globalstudysectt.org](http://www.globalstudysectt.org)
- › The Global study in sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, ECPAT, available at [www.europol.europa.eu](http://www.europol.europa.eu)
- › The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism (The Code), available at [www.thecode.org](http://www.thecode.org)
- › Offenders on the move: Global study on sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, ECPAT International jointly with Defense for Children-ECPAT Netherlands (2016) available [www.globalstudysectt.org/global-report](http://www.globalstudysectt.org/global-report)

## VOLUNTOURISM

- › International Voluntourism Guidelines for Commercial Tour Operators, The International Ecotourism Society and Planeterra Foundation, available at [www.planeterra.org/voluntourism-guidelines](http://www.planeterra.org/voluntourism-guidelines)
- › From Volunteering to Voluntourism Challenges for the Responsible Development of a Growing Travel Trend, ECPAT Germany, Tourism Watch, Bread for the World, Working Group (2015)
- › The paradox of orphanage volunteering, Next Generation Nepal (2014) available at [www.nextgenerationnepal.org/File/The-Paradox-of-Orphanage-Volunteering.pdf](http://www.nextgenerationnepal.org/File/The-Paradox-of-Orphanage-Volunteering.pdf)
- › Moves to Stop Volunteering at Overseas Orphanages, Probono News Australia (2017) available at [www.probonoaustralia.com.au](http://www.probonoaustralia.com.au)
- › Overseas orphanages under scrutiny as Australians told to withdraw support, Sydney Morning Herald (2017) available at [www.smh.com.au/world/overseas-orphanages-under-scrutiny-as-australians-told-to-withdraw-support-20170816-gxxkqr.html](http://www.smh.com.au/world/overseas-orphanages-under-scrutiny-as-australians-told-to-withdraw-support-20170816-gxxkqr.html)
- › Push to end orphanage volunteering as World Challenge stops trips for students, ABC News (2017) available at [www.abc.net.au/news/2017-09-12/world-challenge-to-end-student-volunteer-trips-to-orphanages/8892142](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-09-12/world-challenge-to-end-student-volunteer-trips-to-orphanages/8892142)
- › Orphanage Volunteering – Why to say no, Better Volunteering, Better Care, available at [www.bettercarenetwork.org](http://www.bettercarenetwork.org)
- › International volunteers' perceptions of children's residential care in Cambodia, Friends-International (2015) available at [www.friends-international.org/resources](http://www.friends-international.org/resources)
- › Voluntourism Guidelines, ABTA available at [www.abta.com/services-for-business/abta-shop](http://www.abta.com/services-for-business/abta-shop)

## MARGINALIZED CHILDREN

- › The Nature and Scope of the Foreign Child Beggar Issue (especially as related to Cambodian Child Beggars) in Bangkok, Friends-International (2006) available at [www.friends-international.org/resources](http://www.friends-international.org/resources)
- › Street Children Profile Bangkok, Friends-International (2010) available at [www.friends-international.org/resources](http://www.friends-international.org/resources)
- › Street Children Profile Cambodia, Friends-International (2015) available at [www.friends-international.org/resources](http://www.friends-international.org/resources)

## HOMESTAYS AND COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM

- › ASEAN Homestay Standard, ASEAN (2016) available at [www.asean.org](http://www.asean.org)
- › ASEAN Community Based Tourism Standard, ASEAN (2016) available at [www.asean.org](http://www.asean.org)

## CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL CARE AND ORPHANAGE TOURISM

- › Keeping Children out of Harmful Institutions, Save the Children, (date) available at [www.savethechildren.org.uk](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk)
- › Alternative Care of Children by the UN General Assembly, UNICEF (2009)
- › The Nature and Scope of the Foreign Child Beggar Issue (especially as related to Cambodian Child Beggars) in Bangkok (2006)
- › National estimation of children in residential care institutions in Cambodia: A modeling study, Authored by Lindsay Stark Beth L Rubenstein, Kimchoeun Pak, Sok Kosal (2017) available at [www.bmjopen.bmj.com/content/7/1/e013888](http://www.bmjopen.bmj.com/content/7/1/e013888)
- › Factsheet: Residential Care in Cambodia, UNICEF (2011) available at [www.unicef.org/cambodia/Fact\\_sheet\\_-\\_residential\\_care\\_Cambodia.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/cambodia/Fact_sheet_-_residential_care_Cambodia.pdf)
- › State of the World's Children in Numbers: Every Child Counts, UNICEF (2014) available at [www.unicef.org/publications](http://www.unicef.org/publications)
- › Mapping of Residential Care Facilities in the Capital and 24 Provinces of the Kingdom of Cambodia, UNICEF & Royal Cambodia Government (2017) available at [www.unicef.org/cambodia/Mapping\\_Report\\_English.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/cambodia/Mapping_Report_English.pdf)
- › With the Best Intentions - Study of Attitudes Towards Residential Care in Cambodia, UNICEF & Royal Cambodia Government, available at [www.unicef.org/cambodia/Study\\_Attitudes\\_towards\\_RC-English.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/cambodia/Study_Attitudes_towards_RC-English.pdf)

