SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION IN THE CHURCH AND MISSION

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the term "child" applies to any person between the ages of 0 and 18.

"Protecting children means protecting their physical and psychosocial needs to safeguard their future."[1]

Every child has the right to be protected against all forms of violence in all environments. Child protection at home, at Church, and in the Mission is fundamental for their healthy and integral development.

> *We acknowledge that, unfortunately, there are risks of a child being a victim of violence in a church environment or in the context of missionary actions and projects. Often, leaders and those in charge do not know how to act, nor what to do. There are no clear protocols on the path to follow and which people and institutions should be contacted. We cannot wait until an episode of violence against children occurs to take action, trying to remedy a situation that will cause much harm. Prevention is the best approach.*[2]

The local church serves many children around the world through its social and missionary activities, therefore, it must be an environment that promotes not only education and growth, but also physical, emotional, and psychological safety.

This guide shares some updated items from the *My Church, A Safe Place for Children handbook*, produced in 2019 by the PEPE Network, as well as from the *International Standards for Organizational Child Safeguarding and Protection guide*, produced by the organization *Keeping Children Safe* in 2025. The content presents the foundations of safeguarding, the types of violence, and practical actions for child protection, especially in the context of the local church and the missionary agency, through the construction of a safeguarding and protection policy.

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[1] UNICEF, **Child protection**, available at https://www.unicef.org/child-protection

[2] Candieiro, Terezinha. **Booklet: My church, a safe place for children**, PEPE Network, 2019. Available at https://missoesmundiais.com.br , page 7

This material is the result of research, lectures, and courses developed by the author for the training of missionaries and educators in churches and social and missionary projects, aiming to facilitate the understanding of safeguarding and the implementation of actions for the protection of children.

Jesus said: *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these"* (Matthew 19:14).

Protection is one of the ways to let children come to Jesus, as it creates the fundamental conditions for them to have free access to the love of God and His Kingdom.

1 FOUNDATIONS FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION

The foundations for Safeguarding and Protection must be seen as a shared responsibility between government, society, and family. The lack of a common understanding about this principle can lead to negligence and the violation of children's rights. It is crucial that all sectors of society commit to ensuring that children grow up in a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment.

1.1 WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING AND WHAT IS CHILD PROTECTION

According to the organization Keeping Children Safe:

> *Safeguarding and organizational protection are the responsibility organizations have of ensuring that their staff, operations, and programs do not cause harm to children; that is, not exposing children to risks of harm and abuse, and any concerns the organization has about the safety of children in the communities where it works are reported to the competent authorities.*[3]

In other words, safeguarding is the set of measures and provisions taken by the organization to ensure the protection and preservation of children's rights.

Child protection concerns the action of protecting children, of keeping them safe from harm and danger, cooperating to guarantee their fundamental rights, such as the right to life, freedom, health, education, to their physical safety, and emotional well-being.

Many think that this responsibility belongs to the State; however, the local church, as a civil society organization — as well as its social and missionary activities and projects — needs to be in compliance with the laws that protect children.

[3] Keeping Children Safe. International Standards for Organizational Child Safeguarding and Protection. Available at https://www.keepingchildrensafe.global/es/biblioteca-de-recursos/, page 6.

Child protection is a fundamental right that needs to be based on solid principles to ensure their integral well-being. These foundations must include human dignity, respect for individuality, and the assurance of a safe and welcoming environment, free from any type of violence or exploitation. Without these bases, the construction of effective protection policies and practices becomes weakened, exposing children to vulnerabilities.

Furthermore, protection must be based on the understanding that children are in a crucial phase of physical, emotional, and psychological development. The legal and moral foundations that govern this protection ensure that their special needs are met, guaranteeing not only their survival but also their healthy and full development. International laws such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and national laws, such as the Child and Adolescent Statute (ECA, 1990), in Brazil, serve as essential frameworks to guide the care and defense of children's rights.

1.2 CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION AS RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

The local church is the community of Jesus' disciples, which gathers in specific locations for worship, teaching, spiritual growth, encouragement and mission. To fulfill its purposes, various activities are carried out, such as public services, meetings, Sunday school classes, camps and "indoor camps" with people of all age groups — especially children. In all these moments of gathering, the church must reflect the values of the Kingdom in its actions: love, respect, justice, and equity, recognizing the differences and needs of people so that they have the same opportunities.

If the church does not take the necessary measures for the prevention of violence and does not carry out actions for the protection of children, it is not reflecting the values of the Kingdom of God, and children will be vulnerable and unprotected.

Every day we see alarming statistics about victims of violence in all environments, including in the church environment, and children are the majority of these victims.

Therefore, caring, developing preventive actions, educating, and reporting violence are actions for the protection of children that are consistent with the conduct of citizens of the Kingdom of God.

1.3 THE CHURCH'S VISION OF THE CHILD AND THEIR PROTECTION

The narrative of Mark 10:13-14 records that the disciples rebuked the people who were bringing children to Jesus, as if children were that "lesser being" still incapable of understanding what was happening or interacting in society. Often, this happens in churches. Many still have the view that children hinder the progress of services, so they only seek to "occupy them" in another space so that they do not interrupt the liturgy.

The biblical text says: "People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them" (Matthew 19:13-15).

Jesus confronted his disciples and, despite the historical-social view of the child at the time, was categorical in maintaining that they are an integral part of the Kingdom of God and must be treated with dignity, respect, and love. That is how Jesus treated them.

Thus, if the church sees the child as a person who has rights to be guaranteed, it will act intentionally for their protection. The vision of children must be the same as Jesus', that they are the first in the Kingdom of Heaven.

1.4 THE VALUATION OF THE CHILD IN DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

The child has not always been valued and seen as a subject of rights in societies in general. This is a contemporary concept that has not yet been completely assimilated by everyone.

The way a society views the child directly influences the actions that said society takes in relation to them. Despite the advances, even today there is a distorted view of the child as someone of less value than an adult; this perception, in itself, is already a violence, from which other forms of violation are triggered.

Let us look at the concept of the child in some perspectives:

1.4.1 HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

From a historical perspective, the child was considered an object – an instrument toward which the actions of adults were directed. In ancient societies, they were seen as an inoperative being, without any autonomy and who needed to be trained.

The view of the child as a "miniature adult" or a "small adult" reflects a misguided perspective, which ignores the particulars of child development: the child is seen as an incomplete being, in a process of evolution that culminates only in adulthood, which results in the devaluation of their individuality and their potential in the present.

Such an idea harms the perception that childhood is a unique and indispensable phase for the integral growth of the human being, with its own rights and specific needs that must be respected and met. Recognizing the child as a full being at every stage of their life is fundamental to ensuring their healthy development and respect for their dignity.

The child plays a fundamental role, as they ensure the continuity of nations, groups, and ethnicities. If we do not conceive of them as a human being and a person of equal value to an adult, our intentions and actions will lead us toward acts of violation of rights and violence against them.

1.4.2 LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, of November 20, 1989, in its Article 1: "...a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."[4]

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, according to UNICEF, is the "most widely accepted human rights instrument in universal history." It has been ratified by 196 countries in the world. It is observed that, in some countries, the child reaches the age of majority at less than 18 years – hence the mention in Article 1. Therefore, all nations that have ratified this international document must treat the child as a full human being, with dignity and respect.

Article 19 of the cited document declares:

[4] Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, UN

> *States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*[5]

This is another important basis for the protection of children. According to this international legislation, the child is a human being and a subject of rights, achieving the right to integral and special protection. That is, they have the right to integral protection when the family, society, and the State guarantee the rights necessary for their full development. And they have the right to special protection when they can enjoy services that prevent risks and threats of personal or social violence.

In addition to international documents, in several countries there are national laws and regulations that strengthen the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adapting their application to local contexts.

1.4.3 BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

According to Patrick McDonald, founder of Rede Viva: "Children are the priority for the King and his Kingdom. They are many, they are strategic, they suffer; and the indisputable mandate in their favor calls for urgent action on the pages of Scripture."[6]

The Bible contains countless verses related to children. American author Roy Zuck, professor emeritus of Bible Exposition, in his book Precious in His Sight, states that the Scriptures list thousands of references to childhood, highlighting concepts such as: conception, birth, families, and descendants. This demonstrates how God and the Word itself value children.

In the Old Testament, children were seen as participants in faith rituals (Exodus 12:26-27; Joshua 8:34; Nehemiah 12:43). God frequently used children to do His work (Exodus 2:4-9; I Samuel 3; II Chronicles 34:2; Psalm 22:9-10). They were considered people of value and strategic importance.

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[5] Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, UN

[6] Dan Brewster, **Reaching out to One...and the Ninety-Nine** (Colorado Springs, Compassion International, 2007), p. 15

In the New Testament, we find three perspectives under which the view of children developed: that of Judaism, that of the Gentiles, and that of Jesus.

In Judaism, children were seen as the continuation of the family, which placed great emphasis on fertility and procreation; therefore, childhood education occupied a special place.

In Gentile society, however, measures were taken to limit the number of children, with infanticide and contraception being facilitated practices. Although parents "loved" their children, education was generally seen as the "training of an animal," as many considered the child a wild being that needed to be tamed to live in society. At that time, childhood lived in a complex scenario. Consequently, this thinking influenced the attitude of Jesus' disciples when they tried to stop children from coming to Him.

We can observe, through research, that the inclusion of the narrative of Jesus' birth in Matthew and Luke had consequences for the Christian understanding of childhood. At that time, it was difficult to associate the idea of Jesus, as a child, being completely God and man at the same time, because children were not seen as worthy.

However, Jesus presented a vision and approach different from that society. He told stories and brought revolutionary teaching about children. We can verify this through various biblical texts including children in His ministry, in His community, and in the Kingdom of God.

Once, in the midst of an argument, the disciples asked Jesus: "who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" To answer this theological question, the Bible reports that, "Jesus, calling a child, placed it in the middle of them, and said: – I assure you that, unless you convert and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever makes himself humble like this child, this is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven."[7]

From a theological perspective, true safeguarding is not just accordance to the law; it is the embodiment of the love that protects. A church or missionary organization that does not protect its vulnerable, fails in its primary mission of signaling and propagating the Kingdom of God.

The article published by Rede Mãos Dadas (2025), "*Safeguarding Sunday*: what the church in Brazil can learn," states that protecting children is a theological issue and not just a legal one; it is a biblical imperative, because caring for the

[7] **Holy Bible, Matthew 18:1-4**, New International Version

little ones is reflecting the character of God. Safeguarding has as its motivation the central value of the nature of Christian leadership; it is a mandate that we find in the pages of Scripture and that translates into practical action. "Safeguarding is the concrete expression of our theology."[8]

Therefore, the appreciation and vision of children from different perspectives – whether they are historical-social, legal, biblical, and theological – directly influence actions of protection against the forms of violence to which they may be subjected.

[8] REDE MÃOS DADAS. **Safeguarding Sunday:** what can the church learn? Available at https://www.maosdadas.ong.br/safeguarding-sunday-o-que-a-igreja-no-brasil-pode-aprender/

2. SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE

2.1 WHAT IS VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN?

Violence against children is a serious violation of human rights, with profound and lasting consequences for their integral development.

The impact of violence is not restricted to the moment of aggression; its marks can follow the child throughout their life, affecting their ability to form healthy relationships, to trust institutions, and to reach their full potential. Furthermore, violence perpetuates cycles of vulnerability, poverty and marginalization, since children who suffer abuse are more prone to present difficulties at school, mental health problems, and risk behaviors in adulthood. Combating it requires a joint effort from the family, the school, government institutions, and society in general, through the implementation of prevention, protection, and support policies.

It is fundamental that there be a clear understanding that any form of violence against children is unacceptable. These victims need support and justice to overcome trauma and live in safe, respectful environments that promote their integral wellbeing.

2.2 THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

There are various types of violence. Among them, we highlight, briefly, the following:

ABUSE: is the misuse of power, in a repetitive or intentional way, based on an asymmetry of authority or influence. It occurs when someone in a position of superiority uses this condition to manipulate the other and achieve their own goals, violating the integrity of the victim.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE: is a form of abuse characterized by the misuse of authority, influence, or power by anyone in a position of religious leadership (whether in the Church, in missionary organizations, or in the family). It occurs when religious practices are used to control, coerce, manipulate, or dominate the other, harming their autonomy.

MISTREATMENT: is a general term that encompasses both action and omission. It includes all forms of violence, as well as neglect.

VIOLENCE: is the intentional use of force or power, real or threatened, with the aim of dominating or annihilating another person. Violence presents itself in four main forms: physical, emotional, sexual (including abuse and commercial exploitation), and neglect. Although it manifests through aggression, violence is not limited to it.

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE: is the use of physical force against a child, intentionally and non-accidentally. It manifests through acts such as: hitting, shaking, pulling, pushing, pinching, burning, or any other conduct that causes pain, injury, or damage to bodily integrity.

EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE: is characterized by a form of psychological torture where there is constant depreciation, humiliation, or rejection. This includes: name-calling, intimidation, negative comparisons, forced isolation, emotional blackmail, or exposing the child to humiliating situations.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE: is any act or sexual insinuation between an adult and a child with the purpose of sexually stimulating them or using them to obtain sexual gratification. This includes activities with physical contact or other acts without physical contact that violate the child's privacy, such as undressing in front of them, spying on them, exposing them to pornographic materials, etc.

DIGITAL VIOLENCE: comprises aggressive and abusive behaviors practiced in a virtual environment, ranging from harassment and public insults to the use of digital platforms to inflict physical harm, including sexual assault, incitement to suicide, or homicide. This violence manifests through various practices, such as *cyberbullying, cyberstalking, oversharing, shaming, doxing, sexting, grooming*; but the most well-known is *cyberbullying*.

NEGLECT: as harmful as the previous categories, neglect represents an omission and the choice not to provide for a child's physical and emotional needs, in such a way that their wellbeing is impaired. There are several types of neglect: physical, educational, emotional, digital, and social.

CHILD EXPLOITATION: involves using a child for work or activities aimed at the benefit of third parties. This includes, but is not limited to, child labor and sexual exploitation (commercial or non-commercial). Such practices are harmful to the physical and mental health, education, and integral development of the child, depriving them of their childhood and dignity.

Violence against children causes deep harm, both physical and emotional, and occurs in all contexts, countries, and social classes. It is often perpetrated by people close to the victims, in places where they should be safe, such as: the home, the Church, and the Mission.

In most cases, the perpetrator of the violence is someone known to the child; statistically, most aggressors are male, although there are also occurrences involving females.

3. SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION IN ACTION

3.1 PROTECTION AT HOME AND SAFEGUARDING IN THE CHURCH AND MISSION

3.1.1 CHILD PROTECTION AT HOME

UNICEF data indicates that about 80% of physical violence cases are committed by relatives or close people who act as caregivers. In the case of sexual violence, according to the UN, this percentage rises to 90%.[9] Therefore, it is precisely within the family environment — where the child should have an environment conducive to their healthy development — that the highest incidence of violations occurs, including physical and sexual aggression.

Worldwide, one in four children under 5 years old (about 176 million) lives with a mother who is a victim of domestic violence. Furthermore, globally, 1.5 billion caregivers — which represents a little more than one in four — believe that physical punishment is essential to properly raise or educate children.

Currently, only 59 countries have adopted legislation that definitively prohibits the use of physical punishment against children in the domestic environment. In countries where there is no such legislation, more than 600 million children under 5 years old live without full legal protection in their own homes.[10]

In general terms, most countries' legislations, as well as international law, establish that children must be protected from all forms of mistreatment, violence, abuse, and exploitation. This protection must be guaranteed in all environments they attend, including their home, schools, and religious organizations.

Child protection at home is crucial once it is their first contact with the world. It is the environment where they form their first perceptions of love, care, and protection, if the child does not feel safe at home, they may carry traumas and insecurities that will impact all areas of their adult life. On the other hand, a safe home provides a solid foundation for them to develop self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to relate healthily to others.

[9] UNICEF. **A familiar face:** Violence in the lives of children and adolescents. Available at: https://prceu.usp.br/repositorio/um-rosto-familiar-a-violencia-na-vida-de-criancas-e-adolescentes/

[10] In Brazil, physical punishment was prohibited in 2014 by Law 13.010/2014, known as the Menino Bernardo Law.

Given this scenario, how can we promote child protection in their own home? UNICEF Brazil shares five guidelines to protect children against violence and strengthen family bonds:

a) take care of children and adolescents at home by trying to create an environment of patience, love, affection, and safety for the family. Offer support and try to set aside time to interact with the child;

b) take care of yourself, being careful not to take out stress or frustration on the child;

c) seek help from people and agencies in your local protection network;

d) report it if you witness, know of, or suspect any child is a victim of neglect, violence, exploitation, or abuse through the channels available on your locality or region;

e) know and publicize physical protection channels, such as public or private agencies, as well as digital channels, useful phone numbers, police, among others.[11]

According to UNICEF, in its 2023 Annual Report, programs that empower parents and caregivers with practical skills and new perspectives for abandoning violent discipline are a highly effective strategy in preventing child maltreatment.[12]

3.1.2 CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN THE CHURCH

Child protection is equally important in the local church, as this is the environment where values and principles are taught and where children seek spiritual guidance. The Church must be a refuge — a place where they feel welcomed and protected. Unfortunately, when episodes of abuse or neglect occur in these environments, trust is broken, which can result in a loss of faith and early withdrawal from the beliefs that were being formed.

The Church must act as an ally to the family in protecting the child, taking the Bible and the actions of Jesus as a reference.

According to the words of Jesus, His disciples are called to be the "salt of the

[11] UNICEF Brazil. **Five tips to protect children and adolescents in times of coronavirus**. Available at https://www.unicef.org/brazil/cinco-dicas-para-proteger-criancas-e-adolescentes-da-violencia-em-tempos-de-coronavirus . Accessed on: Dec 17, 2025

[12] UNICEF, **Global Annual Results Report**: Goal area 3, Available at https://www.unicef.org/media/161341/file/UNICEF%202023%20GARR%20Goal%20Area%203%20Chapter.pdf.pdf. Accessed on: Jan 10, 2025

earth" and the "light of the world" (Mt 5:13-14). This means that the Church has the responsibility to manifest the transforming flavor of the Kingdom of God on earth and to illuminate a world plunged in darkness.

Solomon challenges us to be the voice that defends those who lack protection: "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."[13] Who are the most needy in our current society if not the children who face helplessness and violence? It is essential that the Church raises its voice and takes a firm stand in favor of those who do not yet have an active voice in society. We cannot omit, deny, or ignore this reality.

To make this protection viable, it is fundamental to invest in the training of leaders and in their continuous capacity building, encouraging them to imitate the attitudes of Jesus. Furthermore, it is necessary to promote a culture of peace, justice, and equity, free from any form of discrimination. This must occur through practical actions such as: Bible studies on the topic, confronting misguided attitudes influenced by ideologies contrary to the Word, and cultivating healthy relationships.

There is, without a doubt, much that can be done by churches and institutions to prevent and minimize cases of violence against children. One of the preventive strategies in the institutional context, including the church, is the creation, implementation, and compliance with a Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy (CSPP).

However, among all the actions that will be mentioned and developed in this process, it is essential that the child is also educated to recognize the violence that may be committed against them, so that they are capable of reporting it and stopping its continuation. As Proverbs 22:6 says: "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it". Preventive education will allow the child to distinguish a gesture of affection from a violation, empowering them for their own protection.

3.1.3 CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN MISSION

In mission — that is, in the Church's work of sharing the Gospel of Jesus through various activities, programs, and projects, or through a missionary agency — the safeguarding and protection of children are essential pillars for their full and healthy development and for the institution's testimony.

[13] **Holy Bible, Proverbs 31:8-9**, New International Version

The responsibility of the church or Mission includes the ethical and legal commitment to protect children from any form of violence, whether physical, emotional, psychological, or spiritual. This involves the implementation of clear safeguarding and protection policies, the constant training of educators and collaborators, and the creation of accessible channels so that children and adolescents can report any situation that compromises their safety and wellbeing.

Safe environments enable children to explore their skills and interests without the constant fear of being harmed or discriminated against. They feel encouraged to participate actively, to express their opinions, and to engage in new experiences that promote their personal and social growth. Furthermore, a respectful and safe environment reinforces children's self-esteem and confidence — crucial elements for the development of resilient individuals prepared for life's challenges.

It is equally important that the Mission promotes inclusion as a fundamental human right, which is based on their dignity in meeting their needs and the guarantee of their social rights. That is, considering that there are children with typical or atypical development, the Church must promote the participation of all with equal opportunities.

Therefore, protecting the child in all these contexts is protecting the present and the future of a society. It is ensuring that they have the tools and the environment necessary to become a healthy, confident adult capable of contributing positively to the world around them.

Protection is, in the final analysis, a collective responsibility and an investment in the well-being and prosperity of the present and future generations.

3.2 STRATEGIES FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION

These strategies aim to involve families, institutions, and the community in a joint effort to create safe and welcoming environments, addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of children in a coordinated and participatory manner. We suggest the following:

a) Promotion of Safe Environments

It is essential to foster the creation of safe environments where children feel protected and can actively participate in the development of rules for coexistence and safety, which will help them have a sense of belonging and shared responsibility.

Children's safety goes beyond surveillance; it lies in the quality of the environment. Therefore, creating a safe environment also implies ensuring adequate physical spaces, with robust infrastructure planned to meet children's needs, minimizing risks and optimizing the use of space.

b) Integrated Supervision

Encourage collaborative supervision, where parents, educators, and community members engage in the active protection of children, both in private and public spaces.

c) Conscious Use of Technology

Implement the use of monitoring technologies that respect children's privacy and serve as protection tools, such as cameras in common areas, communication apps, and others.

d) Education and Awareness About Protection

- **Education for protection:** develop comprehensive educational programs that include topics such as Children's Rights, abuse prevention, bullying, and safe internet use, applicable in all environments where children are present.

- **Adult training:** offer regular training for parents, educators, and other community members on how to recognize and respond to signs of abuse and neglect.

- **Development of socio-emotional skills:** include the development of socio-emotional skills such as empathy, conflict resolution, and the importance of respecting personal boundaries in the teaching curriculum and activities for children.

- **Self-protection:** teach children about self-protection and how to be assertive in situations of discomfort or risk, empowering them to act and seek help when necessary.

e) Structuring Reporting Channels

Create reporting channels within the institution that are accessible, safe, and adapted to children's needs, ensuring they can be used without fear of retaliation or exposure.

f) Strengthening Support Networks

- Collect and make available information about the protection network in the community (civil society organizations, social assistance services, guardianship

councils, and health professionals), creating a comprehensive and accessible support system.

• Ensure that children and their families have easy access to resources such as psychological, legal, and social support, especially in cases of abuse or neglect.

These basic strategies aim to create an effective and comprehensive protection network for children, mobilizing all social actors around the common goal of ensuring safe and welcoming environments. Integration and cooperation between families, institutions (churches, schools, etc.), and the community are fundamental to the success of these strategies, ensuring that every child has the necessary support for their healthy and protected development.

All the mentioned strategies converge towards a policy of safeguarding and protecting children. In other words, they indicate how the institution positions itself and deals with issues of violence for child protection, in accordance with established standards, protocols, and procedures.

3.3 INTERNATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS – *KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE*[14]

Safeguarding and protection are global themes that have been on the agenda of various organizations that work directly or indirectly with children. Therefore, the local Church and the Mission need to be aware of international safeguarding and protection standards in the development of their activities to ensure greater protection for children.

The organization *Keeping Children Safe* (KCS) is an international and independent organization that works to defend children's rights so that they are safe in all institutions that serve them.

KCS helps institutions fulfill the responsibilities established in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to protect childhoods from harm caused by their staff, activities, operations, and partners. Therefore, it proposes four international standards for institutions that work directly or indirectly with children: Protection Policy, People, Procedures, and Accountability.

The standards describe key elements that must exist to safeguard and protect childhoods and list the requirements that institutions must meet.[15]

[14] Keeping Children Safe. Available at: https://www.keepingchildrensafe.global/international-child-safeguarding-standards/

[15] Keeping Children Safe. Available at: https://www.keepingchildrensafe.global/international-child-safeguarding-standards/

3.3.1 SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION POLICY

The child safeguarding and protection policy, according to *Keeping Children Safe*, is a set of international guidelines that aims to ensure that all organizations working with children adopt effective safeguarding and protection practices. It establishes rigorous standards to prevent and respond to cases of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

The policy includes the creation of safe environments through recruitment, training, and management processes, as well as clear behavioral guidelines for adults and children. It also addresses the need for continuous monitoring, incident reports, and periodic external evaluations to ensure that safeguarding and protection measures are implemented and improved as necessary.

Thus, the organization develops a policy that describes its commitment to preventing and responding appropriately to harm against children.

The policy reflects children's rights to protection, as established in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

This policy is approved by the organization's governing body and applies to all employees and associates. Furthermore, the policy is appropriately disclosed, promoted, and widely distributed, including to children and their guardians.

3.3.2 PEOPLE

The organization establishes clear responsibilities and expectations for its staff and partners, offering support so they understand and act in accordance with these guidelines. Key staff are designated at different levels (including the management level) as "focal points," with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

Recruitment processes include rigorous child safeguarding and protection measures. There are written guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate behaviors of adults towards children, as well as of children towards other children. In addition, there are specific guidelines for the involvement of partners, communities, and children in child safeguarding and protection issues.

3.3.3 PROCEDURES

The organization creates a safe environment for children through the implementation of child safeguarding and protection procedures applied throughout the institution.

To this end, it carries out local mappings that provide information on legal, social welfare, and child protection arrangements. Risk assessments related to

safeguarding and child protection, along with mitigation strategies, are incorporated into existing risk assessment processes at all levels.

Safeguarding and child protection measures are integrated into already established systems, such as strategic planning, budgeting, recruitment, program cycle management, performance management, procurement, partner agreements, and management systems. Furthermore, a notification and response process for incidents and concerns is developed in a manner appropriate to the local context.

3.3.4 ACCOUNTABILITY

The organization assesses and reviews its safeguarding and child protection measures. The implementation of policies and procedures is regularly monitored, and progress, performance, and lessons learned are reported to key stakeholders (management forums and, where relevant, external or independent bodies), and are also included in annual reports.

The learning obtained from practical cases contributes to policy review and the implementation of changes in safeguarding and child protection measures. Policies and practices are reviewed at regular intervals and formally evaluated by an external auditor every three years.

4. BUILDING A CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION POLICY (CSPP)

4.1 WHAT IS A CSPP

A Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy (CSPP) is a set of guidelines, actions, and procedures developed to prevent, identify, and respond to any form of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect that may affect children. In practical terms, the CSPP establishes clear standards to protect this group in various environments, such as schools, churches, communities, organizations, and public spaces.

Why is it necessary to build a CSPP? It functions as a foundation that organizes protection actions in various contexts — family, church, school, community, and public spaces — ensuring that everyone involved (educators, family members, and members of society) has a common understanding of their responsibilities and the appropriate procedures to take action in risk situations. Furthermore, a CSPP promotes awareness and continuous training, creating a culture of respect and valuing children's rights, which is essential for their safe and integral development.

Building a CSPP is a process. First of all, there has to be an effort on raising awareness among institutional leadership about this topic. From the moment the leadership is sensitized to reflect and prepare for the construction of a child safeguarding and protection policy, it is necessary to form a team responsible for drafting the document and developing a work plan that must include: actions for construction, implementation, and monitoring, as well as the roadmap for drafting the final CSPP document.

Furthermore, a CSPP must provide information on accessible and safe channels for reporting, ensuring that children know where and how to seek help, and that their voices are heard without fear of retaliation. The CSPP promotes the creation of a welcoming and trusting environment, where the well-being of children is the priority, establishing a culture of protection at all levels of the organization or community.

4.2 STEPS FOR DRAFTING A CSPP

Drafting a CSPP is an essential process to ensure the integral protection of children. The practical steps to develop an effective policy are: initial diagnosis and context analysis, definition of principles and objectives, formation and training, structuring and writing the policy, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and review for continuous improvement.

a) Initial Diagnosis and Context Analysis

• Environment Assessment: conduct a detailed analysis of the location where the policy will be implemented (schools, churches, communities, etc.), identifying potential risks and vulnerabilities for children.

• Consultation with *stakeholders*: involve all interested parties, such as parents, educators, leaders (community, religious, or institutional), and the children themselves, to collect perceptions about protection needs and existing challenges.

• Participatory listening: promote listening to the children who are part of the institution to define the characteristics of an environment where they feel truly safe. This action can be carried out through workshops or discussion circles.

b) Definition of Principles and Objectives

• Guiding principles: define the principles that will guide the policy, such as respect for children's rights, confidentiality, welcoming, and immediate response to risk incidents.

• Clear objectives: establish specific objectives for the CSPP, such as, for example, preventing violence, creating safe environments, and promoting the training of responsible adults.

• To make these definitions viable, it is fundamental to provide an opportunity for the team responsible for drafting the CSPP to participate in a training program on Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy.

c) Formation and Training

• Formation of the responsible team: select and train the team responsible for introducing the topic of child protection, as well as for drafting, implementing, and monitoring the CSPP. It is essential to ensure that these members are prepared to deal with cases of violence and child protection.

• Team composition: it is suggested that members of the institution's leadership — especially from children's and youth ministries — and professionals from related areas be part of this group. This will be the reference team for child protection matters in the church or institution.

• Continuous training: after implementation, it will be necessary to develop continuous training programs for everyone involved (parents, educators, volunteers, and community members) on the prevention and identification of violence.

Furthermore, the topic should be included in studies and various spaces, such as: forums, debates, and other opportune occasions.

d) Structuring and writing the Policy

• Creation of guidelines and protocols: develop clear standards regarding appropriate and inappropriate conduct, procedures for identifying and reporting abuse, and response measures. The process should begin with listening to the children and be finalized with the formal approval of the document by the institution.

• Reporting procedures: establish safe and accessible channels for children to report risk situations, defining the communication flow and the instances responsible for receiving these reports.

After the drafting and approval of the CSPP, the process advances to the implementation phase.

e) Implementation

• Ongoing training: plan and provide training for the entire church or institution, segmented by interest groups or age groups.

• Dissemination and communication: communicate the policy clearly to all members and stakeholders, using different means (meetings, booklets, social media) to ensure everyone understands their responsibilities.

• Execution of protocols: put protection protocols into practice, including adequate supervision, monitoring of environments, and conducting awareness activities with children.

f) Monitoring and Evaluation

• Monitoring system: establish continuous tracking mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy, including collecting feedback from children, families, and collaborators.

• Periodic evaluation: conduct regular reviews of the CSPP, adjusting strategies as necessary to respond to new threats or challenges identified in the institutional context.

g) Review and Continuous Improvement

• Regular review: analyze the CSPP regularly to ensure it remains updated and relevant, incorporating new practices and lessons learned.

• Participation and listening: encourage the active participation of children and other stakeholders in the review process, ensuring that the policy continues to meet their real needs and concerns.

These steps provide a structured path for creating a CSPP that is robust, practical, and applicable. The key to success is ensuring that the policy is a "living document," adaptable to changes in context and capable of responding effectively to the demands of child protection.

4.3 PRACTICAL EXAMPLE: DRAFTING THE DOCUMENT

The basic structure of the written CSPP document, based on the updated guide on Developing Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (2024) by Keeping Children Safe,[16] presents the following elements:

- Introduction
- Statement of Commitment
- Prevention: Child Protection And The Problem Of Violence
- Risk Analysis
- Recruitment and Selection
- Code of Conduct
- Communication of the CSPP
- Responses to Suspicions And Reports
- Responsibilities of the Reference Team
- Confidentiality
- Accountability
- Implementation: Monitoring and Review

[16] **Keeping Children Safe.** Available at: https://www.keepingchildrensafe.global/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/KCS-Developing-Child-Safeguarding-200218.pdf Accessed on: Sep 24, 2024

To facilitate understanding of the document's drafting, we present below a brief explanation of each item in the structure, accompanied by examples extracted from the Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy of the World Missions Board (JMM/CBB, 2025).

INTRODUCTION

The introduction briefly presents the profile of the church or institution, the justification for developing the document, and its target audience.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

> *The World Missions Board (JMM) is an executive organization of the Brazilian Baptist Convention (CBB), created in 1907, with the purpose of expanding missionary work beyond the borders of Brazil. Throughout its history, it has worked in the awakening and preparation of those called, in evangelism, in church planting, and in the development of compassion and justice actions, contributing to the proclamation of the Gospel among the peoples... The JMM recognizes, based on studies and reports from national and international bodies, that there are real risks of violence against children, in its various categories, such as abuse, exploitation, and neglect, in all contexts. Violence against this public is a sad global reality, which compromises the well-being, development, and dignity of millions of boys and girls. We believe that everyone involved in the mission has an essential duty to care for, protect, and value every child, ensuring them safe and welcoming environments.*[17]

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

This section formalizes the institution's commitment to keeping children safe from any form of violence in its institutional space. This statement must be based on national and international legislation and, in the case of churches and missionary agencies, also based on biblical principles.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

[17] World Missions Board) of the CBB. **Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy.** Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 5. Available at: https://www.missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/politica-de-salvaguarda-e-protecao-as-infancias.pdf

> *The World Missions Board (JMM), through all its collaborators, missionaries, volunteers, and partners, reaffirms its commitment to the promotion of the well-being and integral protection of children and adolescents in all regions where it operates. The JMM adopts and recommends the best practices and procedures for child protection, guiding its team and partners based on standards of excellence in the development of actions and in the provision of adequate support to missionary fields, with the objective of ensuring safe, welcoming environments free from any form of violence. The JMM firmly positions itself against any and all forms of violence against children, based on biblical principles and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The JMM is co-responsible for the protection of children in all its spheres of operation. In the event of omission, structural failure, or negligence in its safeguarding systems, the organization assumes responsibility for the consequences...*[18]

PREVENTION: CHILD PROTECTION AND CONFRONTING VIOLENCE

In this item, the church or institution details the strategic measures adopted to prevent situations of violence. It also includes the definition of technical terms used.

Prevention comprises the set of practices intended to anticipate, identify, and reduce potential situations of risk or abuse. It is based on the creation of safe environments and continuous awareness regarding appropriate behaviors and practices.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

> *The JMM will adopt the following prevention measures, which must be integrated into all areas and management systems of the organization:*

[18] World Missions Board) of the CBB. **Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy**. Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 7. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

Code of conduct and monitoring

- *Implement and reinforce a strict code of conduct that establishes clear rules and standards of behavior with severe sanctions for violations.*
- *Create safe physical and institutional environments, with constant supervision.*
- *Request formal authorization for the use of images.*
- *Ensure the privacy and dignity of children in any institutional disclosure.*
- *Disseminate the protection policy through the organization's internal and external channels, including selection processes and training.*
- *Register and forward all reports or suspicions of violence to the person responsible for protection in the organization, without trivialization or omission, and ensuring seriousness and confidentiality.*[19]

RISK ANALYSIS

It is the systematic process of identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing potential threats to the safety and well-being of children within the organization. The analysis considers specific vulnerabilities, physical or digital environments, and situations that may favor abuse, proposing mitigation strategies.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

The JMM will adopt, as one of its action and operational strategies, the identification and evaluation of risks, in order to minimize and prevent negative impacts that may cause harm to children. Below are important items that must be observed by those responsible for mission areas, programs, projects, and initiatives:

a) The sociocultural context where JMM activities *take place, considering that one type of violence may be more recurrent*

[19] World Missions Board) of the CBB. **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**. Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 15. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf about:blank

in a certain context than in another. For example, female genital mutilation.

b) The characteristics of projects, *programs, and activities in general, evaluating whether there are situations that may expose children to risks.*

c) The profile of collaborators, *missionaries, volunteers, and partners, including history, background checks, and training.*

d) The physical and virtual environments *used in JMM actions, to identify structural or technological vulnerabilities.*

e) The procedures for communication, *transportation, use of images, and personal information of children.*

f) Institutional violence *in places such as shelters (care homes), schools, hospitals, detention centers, or care programs, through: bullying, discrimination, corporal punishment, sexual harassment, social exclusion, and other forms of violence between peers or practiced by adults.*

g) Child trafficking, *with the aim of combating sexual exploitation, forced labor, illegal adoption, forced begging, recruitment for armed conflicts, or other forms of exploitation.*

h) Discrimination and exclusion, *to identify risks related to discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, migration status, religion, or any other condition, leading to social exclusion, violation, and denial of rights.*

i) Online violence and cybercrimes, *such as cyberbullying, grooming, child sexual exploitation, identity theft, blackmail, and other digital crimes.*[20]

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

This item details the criteria and procedures adopted for hiring collaborators and admitting volunteers.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

[20] World Missions Board) of the CBB. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 17. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

People who work or develop projects with children, directly and regularly, for the JMM, will be recruited according to previously established criteria, with a focus on risk prevention and the promotion of safe environments, and their backgrounds will be verified according to the legal and cultural instances of each country of operation. The World Missions Board adopts the following mandatory procedures in the process of recruiting, selecting, and sending missionaries, collaborators, and volunteers:

a) Screening form with a focus on protection: *All candidates must fill out a form with personal information, history of work with children and adolescents, motivation to work in the mission, in addition to a self-declaration of ethical and legal suitability.*

b) Background check: *Each candidate must present a clean criminal record certificate (from Brazil or the country where they will operate) and a declaration that they are not and have not been subject to proceedings involving abuse, negligence, or mistreatment against children and adolescents.*

c) References and pastoral letter: *A letter from the local church leadership attesting to the candidate's Christian testimony, personal ethics, and previous experience with children and adolescents will be mandatorily required, in addition to a second personal or professional reference.*

d) Structured interview focusing on conduct and values: *A thorough interview will be conducted with candidates, seeking to understand their family, professional, spiritual, and behavioral history, as well as their relational ethics and vision regarding the care and protection of children and adolescents.*

e) Mandatory documentation: *The presentation of an official identity document or passport (in the case of foreigners) will be requested for internal registration.*

f) Mandatory prior training: No candidate may begin any activity with children without having participated in the initial training on the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

g) Commitment Agreement to the CSPP: *All candidates must declare their awareness of and adherence to the principles and*

standards of the CSPP by signing the Commitment Agreement (Appendix A) before beginning their duties.[21]

CONDUCT

In the Code of Conduct, it is important to establish safety standards for interaction with children, both in relationships and in the use of spaces. These standards protect both the children and the organization's employees and members.

It is also necessary to clarify to children what their rights are, what is acceptable or not, and what they can do if a problem or situation of violence occurs.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

Children were created in the image of God and must be treated with love, respect, attention, and dignity. Therefore, all missionaries, employees, volunteers, partners, or people who have any connection with the JMM, who interact directly or indirectly with children, must adopt the following established conduct:

7.1 Mandatory conduct:

a) Act with respect, empathy, patience, and integrity in all interactions with children.

b) Treat all children in a way that reflects God's love for them.

c) Be careful, protecting yourself from any possibility of allegations of violence made against children.

d) Always prioritize the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of children.

e) Build healthy relationships based on mutual trust, without favoritism or exclusion.

f) Never remain alone with a child. Even in private conversations, another adult must be present or in visual contact.

g) Visits to the homes of children participating in the organization's programs must occur only with the consent of legal guar-

[21] CBB WORLD MISSIONS BOARD. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 18. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

dians and with the presence of an adult from the family. Visits should not be made to homes where the child is unaccompanied.

h) As an adult, always be responsible for your own behavior. Be attentive to inappropriate behavior by children and guide them with firmness and respect, always communicating what happened to the direct leadership.

i) Immediately communicate to the focal group responsible for protection in your country any suspicion, indication, or report of rights violations, abuse, or exploitation involving children.

j) Always accompany people who are not part of the team on visits to projects, programs, and/or activities with children.

k) Physical contact with children must occur exclusively in public environments and never in a hidden manner. Even in situations where the child shows emotional and/or physical fragility, demanding closer care and assistance, the initial guidance must be respected.

l) Ensure that any transportation of children is authorized in advance in writing by legal guardians.

m) If medical consultation is needed, the child must be examined by a healthcare professional with the presence of a family guardian.

n) Have written authorization, record, and inform guardians of any medical care or first aid provided.

o) Protect the image and privacy of children. Photos and videos may only be taken with formal authorization from parents or legal guardians, in addition to the assent/consent of the child themselves (Appendix B).

p) The publication of individual photos of children with their real personal data on digital platforms is prohibited. Their names must be changed in newsletters, and any specific geographical reference must be suppressed. Images should prioritize children in activity and collective contexts, using angles that preserve their identity, such as profile shots, from behind, or from a superior perspective. The organization adopts the stance of not focusing on faces that expose situations of vulnerability, neglect, or exploitation. All communication must, mandatorily, be guided by respect and decency, celebrating the child's humanity and

protecting them from any narrative that exploits their circumstances in a humiliating way.

q) Clarify to children what their rights are and the safe reporting channels for suspected or confirmed cases of violence.

r) All communication with children must occur exclusively through authorized institutional means. Private or informal contacts with people served in the projects are prohibited, whether by email, WhatsApp, social media, or any other channels not authorized by the organization.[22]

CSPP COMMUNICATION

In this item, it must be established how to communicate the CSPP document both inside and outside its institutional space.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

JMM commits to establishing an internal communication plan that covers everyone from directors to people involved directly or indirectly in activities with children.

The Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy (CSPP) of the World Missions Board (JMM) must be widely disseminated across all its communication channels, both inside and outside the institutional space, seeking the widest possible reach. For this, it is essential to invest in the production and distribution of multi-format materials. All materials produced must have a specific CSPP visual identity, ensuring communication that is visually coherent and easily recognizable.

The language used must be accessible and adapted to the level of understanding of children, in addition to considering different contexts and specificities, such as the deaf community, blind people, illiterate people, among others. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to develop versions of the CSPP that respect the specificities of each context.

This dissemination must occur through different languages and media:

[22] CBB WORLD MISSIONS BOARD. **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**. Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Pages 21 and 22. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

Digital: *institutional website, social media, newsletters, podcasts, etc.*

Visual: *illustrated leaflets, infographics, short videos, posters, etc.*

Written: *manuals, practical guides, informative emails, comic books, etc.*

Oral: *missionary promotion meetings, workshops, seminars, lectures, etc.*

The JMM CSPP must be present in the selection process for collaborators for the headquarters and for candidates for the missionary career, whether long-term or fixed-term, so that candidates know and commit to its guidelines.[23]

RESPONSE TO SUSPICIONS AND REPORTS

In cases of suspicion and reports of situations of violence, a suggested protocol is presented below:

JMM will ensure procedures in response to suspicions, reports, and disclosures about violence against children, maintaining the confidentiality of information, respecting the child's privacy, and following data protection laws.

All missionaries, collaborators, volunteers, and partners have the responsibility to be alert to signs of violence (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, cyberbullying, exploitation, among others) and to bring any concern, suspicion, or complaint to the ***Technical Reference Team for Child Protection****, designated by JMM, under the responsibility of the* ***Rights Advocacy area****.*

Every report of suspicion or proven case of violence against a child, whether this suspicion or report is received verbally or in writing, from children, collaborators, parents, or guardians, must be duly registered in an appropriate document – suspicion and report form – and immediately informed to the ***Technical Reference Team*** *for child protection. This team will take the appropriate measures according to the internal procedure and will provide guidance on reporting to the competent authorities.*

[23] World Missions Board) of the CBB. **Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy.** Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 23. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

> *Parents or guardians of the child victim of violence within JMM ministries must be initially informed, with the exception of cases in which they are suspected or indicated as perpetrators by the child or third parties.*
>
> *We support and believe the child until proven otherwise. We will inform the child, in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding, about the next steps and the support that will be offered.*
>
> *Any and all reports made will be investigated within JMM's procedures and protocols. After this investigation, we will follow the guidelines of the Child and Adolescent Statute for forwarding occurrences in Brazil. For occurrences in JMM's fields of operation, it will follow the guidelines of local laws and international guidance. And in all cases, we will monitor the development of the process and the measures taken by the authorities.*
>
> *JMM will make every effort to provide adequate care to victims and perpetrators of violence, aiming for treatment, restoration, and healing.*[24]

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REFERENCE TEAM

This item clarifies the responsibilities of the reference team in the church or institution, such as introducing the topic of protection, providing guidance and training, implementing actions and guidance for everyone, and ensuring that, in the event of violence, the necessary referral flow is followed. Furthermore, this team will be responsible for how the institution will articulate with other organizations for the defense of children's rights.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

In the context of a large institution like the World Missions Board, a more expanded structure becomes necessary, beyond the reference team. In summary, the specific responsibilities of this team, in addition to those mentioned above, are as follows:

[24] World Missions Board) of the CBB. **Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy**. Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 28. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

CSPP Technical Reference Team:

- *Validates received reports and ensures the fairness and impartiality of the investigation process.*
- *Issues technical opinions on internal cases and recommendations on external referrals.*
- *Acts as a link between the different levels of the organization, ensuring impartiality and accuracy in the processes. Acts as a bridge between reports, HR/Board of Directors, and the Advisory Committee.*[25]

CONFIDENTIALITY

In this item, it must be recorded that the Church commits to maintaining the confidentiality of information regarding reports of suspected and confirmed cases related to violence against children. Information about an incident must be shared only among people belonging to the team responsible for the church's Safeguarding and Child Protection initiative. The Safeguarding and Child Protection team is the one that will decide who else will need to know about the incident to assist in resolving the problem.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

The Board of World Missions reaffirms its commitment to the confidentiality, integrity, and dignity of all children involved in its programs and actions.

All information related to reports — whether suspected or confirmed cases — of any form of violence will be treated with the highest degree of secrecy, respect, and responsibility. The commitment to confidentiality does not prevent, under any circumstances, mandatory notification to legal authorities, in accordance with the legislation in force in each country where the JMM operates.

The JMM ensures that its reporting channels will remain accessible, secure, and adapted to the communication and comprehen-

[25] World Missions Board. Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy. Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 30. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

> *sion needs of different audiences, including specific resources for people with disabilities. This encompasses in-person contact, telephone, physical correspondence, and electronic means, with a guarantee of ethical and inclusive reception...* [26]

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

This item establishes the procedures for recording incidents or concerns, ensuring that all steps are documented and evaluated. Accountability ensures that the organization is transparent and responsible to stakeholders and regulatory bodies, following ethical standards.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

> *People who work directly with children will report regularly, using a specific form (Appendix H), to the coordination of the programs or projects, which, in turn, will consolidate the information for broader reports.*
>
> *Accountability for the CSPP will be conducted in a transparent and accessible manner, ensuring that actions are duly monitored and evaluated.*
>
> *Monitoring of CSPP measures will include surveys on how standards are being met, whether they are effective, and which aspects need to be improved. The evaluation of the CSPP will include indicators such as:*
>
> *(a) percentage of trained collaborators;*
>
> *(b) number of cases reported and handled;*
>
> *(c) level of knowledge of the CSPP by children (measured by discussion circles or adapted forms).*
>
> *To document and provide evidence of accountability, internal audit reports will be used, allowing for a clear view of compliance with the CSPP and the effectiveness of the actions implemented.*[27]

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[26] BOARD OF WORLD MISSIONS OF THE CBB. **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.** Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 30. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

[27] BOARD OF WORLD MISSIONS. **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**. Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 33. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND REVIEW

Refers to the process of putting the safeguarding and protection policy into practice through training, guidance, and the creation of continuous supervision mechanisms. Monitoring ensures that preventive and reactive measures are effective and adapted as new needs arise. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy must be reviewed regularly — at least every three years.

Practical example (JMM/CBB):

> *To ensure the effective implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (CSPP), the Board of World Missions (JMM) will adopt institutional and operational measures that ensure its full integration into the organizational culture and internal processes in all regions of operation.*
>
> ***a)*** *The Rights Advocacy area will be responsible for the general coordination of the implementation of the CSPP, at the governance level, working in conjunction with the Program Managers (DC and DNA) and the Advisory Council. At the operational level, the Protection Coordinators — appointed by the Program Managers from among the missionaries in their areas — assume the role of local reference for the implementation of the policy, sensitization of teams, and monitoring of Protection Focus Groups. Still at the operational level, missionaries, collaborators, volunteers, and focus groups will be directly responsible for the practical experience of the CSPP in the field, ensuring that the principles of the policy are present in all activities, projects, and institutional relationships.*
>
> ***b)*** *The policy will be incorporated into strategic and operational plans, in all areas of the organization, and included in welcome materials for new missionaries, collaborators, and volunteers.*
>
> ***c)*** *All missionaries, collaborators, volunteers, and partners will receive mandatory, initial, and ongoing training, through accessible and contextualized methodologies, made available by the WMU platform or in person, with specific attention to people with physical, sensory, intellectual, or atypical disabilities. The contents will address violence prevention, ethical and safe response to incidents, responsible communication, and the creation of safe environments.*

d) *Implementation also provides for the formal commitment of all involved, through the reading, understanding, and signing of the Declaration of Commitment to the CSPP. Furthermore, transparent communication with parents and legal guardians of children participating in the programs will be guaranteed, so that they know the principles of the policy and the institutional duties of the JMM.*

e) *Partnerships with networks, agencies, and organizations that share the same commitment to the protection of childhood and adolescence will be strengthened, including through participation in conferences, forums, and collaborative spaces.*

f) *The monitoring of the CSPP will be conducted by the Rights Advocacy area, in coordination with the Protection Coordinators and the Reference Technical Team, ensuring a continuous, systematic, and transparent process. This process will include: periodic evaluations, risk analysis, monitoring of reporting flows, follow-up reports, and active listening to beneficiaries. The results will be consolidated and presented to the CSPP Management and the Advisory Board, ensuring institutional transparency, alignment with international safeguarding standards, and effective accountability at all levels of the organization.*

g) *The review of the CSPP will be carried out every three years, or whenever necessary, respecting the principles of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement, and aligning with the most up-to-date international guidelines.*[28]

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is an essential and urgent step to ensure a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment in our ecclesiastical community and our institutions. This project is not just a response to current needs, but a continuous commitment to the principles of the Gospel of Jesus, which values and protects the most vulnerable among us.

[28] JMM (World Missions Board) OF THE CBB. **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.** Rio de Janeiro, 2026. Page 37. Available at: https://missoesmundiais.com.br/attachments/article/451/POLITICA%20DE%20PROTE%C3%87%C3%83O%20%C3%80%20CRIAN%C3%87A%20E%20AO%20ADOLESCENTE%20DA%20JMM.pdf

Through this policy, we seek not only to prevent and combat violence but also to educate, empower and engage our leadership, members, and families in order to make everyone an active defender of children's rights. The proposed actions — such as training, awareness campaigns, and the establishment of clear guidelines — reinforce our commitment to a culture of peace, respect, and justice.

It is fundamental that everyone understands that the protection of children is a collective responsibility and that the success of this policy depends on the collaboration of all involved. By aligning ourselves with the values of the Kingdom of God, we reaffirm that every child must be treated with dignity, love, and care, reflecting the very heart of Jesus.

May this policy not be just a formal document, but a living practice that transforms our community into a true refuge of safety and welcome for all children. We will remain firm in this purpose, with the commitment to protect, educate, and love, as Jesus taught us.

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