



Move the Body. Move the Mind.

PEDAL PROJECT NON-PROFIT COMPANY, REGISTRATION NUMBER:

2020/818589/08

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy is informed and guided by the following regulatory instruments:

1.1.1 The South African Constitution;

1.1.2 Child Justice Act, 75 of 2008;

1.1.3 Children's Act, No 38 of 2005;

1.1.4 Child Care Amendment Act (Act 96 of 1996); and

1.1.5 Sexual Offences and Related Matters Act of 2007.

2. NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

2.1 Pedal Project is an After School Program that uses the model of Sport for Change to support at-risk youth in South Africa through mountain biking and creating access to nature and mentorship.

2.2 Pedal Project recognises the importance of protecting children under its care and for this reason must ensure that any engagement with the programme's beneficiaries is governed by strict ethical principles.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Under this policy, clause headings and sub-headings are for convenience and shall

not be used to interpret such Policy, unless the context clearly indicates a contrary intention.

3.2 Any expression which denotes any gender includes the other gender.

3.3 The following expressions shall bear the meanings assigned to them below:

3.3.1 “**Beneficiary**” or “**Child**” refers to an individual under the age of 18 (Section 28(3)) of the South African Constitution.

3.3.2 “**Contractors**” all individuals working for Pedal Project on contract or in terms of a Memorandum of Understanding or Service Level Agreement.

3.3.3 “**Pedal Project**” means all employees, full and part-time, and programme volunteers, trustees, patrons, donors, teachers, facilitators, coaches and sponsors that may have any contact with any programme beneficiaries or access to Pedal Project facilities.

4. PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR CHILD PROTECTION

4.1 Principles:

4.1.1 All children have the right to participate in, enjoy and develop through sport in a safe and inclusive environment, free from all forms of abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation.

4.1.2 All individuals and organisations working with children and young people directly or indirectly have a responsibility to foster the care and protection of the children they impact on and must at all times act in the best interests of

the child.

4.1.3 Some children are more vulnerable than others to abuse, and steps must be taken to assess and address the different levels of risk that children in their programmes may face.

4.1.4 Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and not be discriminated against based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, beliefs, religious or political affiliation.

4.1.5 All beneficiaries must be treated equally and with respect and must be earnestly engaged in decisions that affect them as part of the Programme.

4.2 Guidelines:

4.2.1 No beneficiary may participate in the Pedal Project Programme unless the consent has been obtained from the parent/legal guardian, and no programme interventions will be conducted unless the consent has been obtained from the parent/legal guardian.

4.2.2 The identity of all beneficiaries is to remain anonymous and no information about the beneficiaries including photographs or images will be captured and shared across with third parties unless the consent has been obtained from the parent/legal.

4.2.3 Hereunder Pedal Project must:

4.2.3.1 Be committed to creating a culture of openness and mutual accountability to enable all child protection concerns to be raised and discussed;

4.2.3.2 At all times engage in appropriate behaviour and take all

reasonable steps to ensure that beneficiaries are safe and comfortable whilst participating in the programme and ancillary interventions;

- 4.2.3.3 Take the necessary steps to educate its beneficiaries on the country's child protection laws and encourage them to voice any concerns they have in a safe way;
- 4.2.3.4 Ensure staff are trained on the parts of the Child Protection law that relate to them and their work with children;
- 4.2.3.5 Use language or behaviour towards children that are at all times appropriate and in no way harassing, abusive, sexually provocative or demeaning;
- 4.2.3.6 Wherever possible, ensure that more than one adult is present when working in the proximity of children;
- 4.2.3.7 Ensure physical contact is at all times appropriate and not an invasion of the child's privacy; and
- 4.2.3.8 Use positive, non-violent methods to manage a child's behaviour and raise any concerns of inappropriate behaviour immediately.

5. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

- 5.1 PEDAL PROJECT acknowledges that creating a safe environment for children starts with the appointment of suitably qualified, skilled and legally vetted staff that have the

desired competencies and skills to carry out their function in an effective, efficient and safe manner.

5.2 Recruitment And Selection

5.2.1 Pedal Project follows stringent recruitment processes to ensure that all staff who are recruited understands and commits to its Policies and Procedures.

5.2.2 Reference checks are done on all potential recruitment of which at least one written reference from a previous employer is kept on file.

5.2.3 Before commencing employment, staff are required to attend an intense induction course where the Pedal Project policies, procedures and guidelines are discussed in detail to ensure there are no misunderstandings.

5.3 Screening

5.3.1 All Pedal Project staff will be screened in accordance with this policy and all staff and volunteers who work directly with children will be screened against both the National Child Protection Register and the Sexual Offences Register.

5.4 Written Application

5.4.1 All potential staff must complete and sign a written application form that will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions;

5.4.2 The application form will be maintained in a secure, confidential personnel file at the Pedal Project administrative office;

5.5 Personal Interview

5.5.1 A personal interview will be conducted with the applicant by management staff to discuss the position and the applicant's talents, qualifications and abilities; and

5.5.2 Multiple and/or group interviews may be conducted as appropriate.

5.6 Reference Checks

5.6.1 All applicants must provide at least three (3) references;

5.6.2 References may be personal or professional and be presented in written form or by providing phone contact information;

5.6.3 All references will be confirmed by management staff and documented in the applicant's personnel file; and

5.6.4 At least one reference will be from a personal contact if available.

5.7 Criminal Background Check

5.7.1 Criminal background checks will be conducted for all potential staff after they've completed an application;

5.7.2 Background checks will comply with applicable regulations governing programmes;

5.7.3 Applicants will not be considered for positions when checks show evidence of convictions for an offence involving children and/or for offences involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to the Pedal Project mission; and

5.7.4 Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form may also terminate an individual's application.

5.8 Training And Education

5.8.1 All staff will receive an orientation that includes:

5.8.1.1 Review and receipt of the Pedal Project Code of Conduct - an original signed copy will be kept in the individual's personnel file;

5.8.1.2 Review of policies related to safety, transportation, prevention and reporting of child abuse and emergency procedures - within the first week of their activation;

5.8.1.3 Training in recognizing signs of suspected child abuse - within three months of activation;

5.8.1.4 Training in the prevention of "Bullying" - within three months of activation;

5.8.1.5 Supervisors will be trained on hiring and screening potential staff members – within three months of activation;

5.8.1.6 Policy volunteers will review this policy as part of their initial orientation;

5.8.1.7 Staff training and orientations will be updated and refreshed each year

5.8.2 Documentation of all training will be maintained in each individual's personnel file.

5.8.3 Pedal Project will offer educational information and resources for the community, parents and children through workshops, programmes, and the use of printed and/or audio-visual resources.

5.8.3.1 At these training sessions, participants are introduced to all aspects of the research, information relating to acceptable behaviours and appropriate boundaries when working with children.

5.8.4 Staff are also equipped with the necessary containment skills to be able to respond appropriately when situations arise in the field including what steps should be taken to report any abuse or maltreatment of children that are disclosed to them during the course of their interviews with the children.

6. REPORTING

6.1 All Pedal Project sites must have a reporting box for children to insert a written report in private, should they lack the confidence to report any incident verbally.

6.2 All Pedal Project field sites must regularly inform all children about the following:

6.2.1 The importance of reporting abuse or neglect to a responsible adult;

6.2.2 The process to follow when making a report of abuse or neglect to Pedal Project staff;

6.2.3 What children can do if they report abuse or neglect to a Pedal Project staff member and no action is taken.

6.3 All Pedal Project field offices and programme venues must display a list of emergency contact numbers for children to use if they need to report abuse or

neglect.

6.4 For purposes of this policy, “abuse”, in relation to a beneficiary, means any form of harm or ill-treatment deliberately inflicted on a child and includes—

6.4.1 Assaulting a child or inflicting any other form of deliberate injury to a child;

6.4.2 Sexually abusing a child or allowing a child to be sexually abused;

6.4.3 Bullying by another child;

6.4.4 A labour practice that exploits a child;

6.4.5 Exposing or subjecting a child to behaviour that may harm the child psychologically or emotionally

6.5 Supervisors are skilled to perform and address any performance-related issues that may have a negative impact on children, such as, but is not limited to the following:

6.5.1 Staff programme facilitation methods;

6.5.2 Staff communication skills;

6.5.3 Staff interpersonal skills; and

6.5.4 Staff counselling skills

6.6 Any irresponsible and unprofessional behaviour must be reported within 24 hours to the lead project facilitator. “Irresponsible and unprofessional behaviour” is defined as follows:

6.6.1 Any conduct or speech that might potentially cause emotional, physical or psychological harm to a child and in doing so, violates any rights the child may have in terms of the South African constitution, the Children’s Act and the Sexual Offences and Related Matters Act.

- 6.6.2 Any conduct or speech that breaches the South African Council for Social Service Professions Code of Conduct where the staff member in question is a social worker or a social auxiliary worker.
- 6.7 The safety of children is always our priority and therefore strict action is taken when concerns, witnessed or suspected disregard of the Child Protection Policy is reported.
- 6.8 The process documented in **Annexure A** must be followed once a report has been made. to be followed in order to below must be followed by all internal Pedal Project staff and external contractors:

7. SUPERVISION

- 7.1 Supervision of children, programmes, facilities and staff will be designed to protect children and staff at all times.
- 7.2 The practices to ensure a safe and caring environment will include:
- 7.2.1 Facilitators and staff supervisors will have their photo taken for an ID badge that will be worn at all times while on duty. The badge will also include the person's name. A copy of the photo will be included in each individual's personnel file.
- 7.2.2 Management staff may make unannounced visits at least two times per month to every programme.
- 7.2.3 A minimum of two staff should be assigned to each programme, operating site and vehicle.

- 7.2.4 Staff members will never be alone with an individual child where they are not observable by others.
- 7.2.5 Programme room doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.
- 7.2.6 All storage, maintenance and utility area doors will be secured when not in use.
- 7.2.7 All sites of operation will have access to a cellphone on location during operating hours.
- 7.2.8 Children will never be left unsupervised; including bathrooms, locker rooms, or showers.
- 7.2.9 Written restroom use practices will be in place for all child programmes.
- 7.2.10 Staff will never release a child to anyone other than the authorised parent(s), guardian(s), or an individual authorised by parents in writing or verified by phone.
- 7.2.11 Staff will check for signs of physical injury or emotional abnormality each time a child reports to the programme.
- 7.2.12 Staff will utilize constructive methods for maintaining group control and managing child behaviour.
- 7.2.13 Staff will not disrobe a child other than outer garments without the presence of another staff member.
- 7.2.14 Staff will avoid changing clothes in front of children.

7.2.15 All staff will fulfil a probationary period of three months until all training and orientation is completed.

8. CONTACT WITH CHILD

8.1 It is understood that caring quality staff will develop positive relationships with the beneficiaries while involved in the Pedal Project programmes.

8.2 The following practices will be followed to ensure the protection of both child and staff outside of Pedal Project programmes or activities:

8.2.1 Staff will not initiate contact with or accept supervisory responsibility for a child outside of Pedal Project and its activities, including babysitting or private instructions. Staff with prior or family relationships to a child may be relieved of this restriction with prior documented Executive approval.

8.2.2 Staff will not communicate with children outside of the Pedal Project programme via written, electronic or other means without express Executive approval.

8.2.3 Staff will appear and behave in a manner consistent with the mission and values of Pedal Project at all times while on or off duty; including electronic, written and verbal communications.

8.3 The following is a list of what is considered unacceptable behaviour and conduct;

8.3.1 Sexual activity with children is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.

8.3.2 Engaging children in any form of sexual activity, including paying for sexual services, i.e. exchange of money, employment, goods, or services, is illegal and prohibited.

- 8.3.3 Use of any device to access, view, create, download or distribute sexual images of children, is illegal and prohibited.
 - 8.3.4 Physical punishment or discipline or use of physical force of any kind towards children is illegal and prohibited.
 - 8.3.5 The use of children for domestic or other labour is illegal and prohibited when it is inappropriate for the child's age or developmental capacity interferes with the time available for education and recreational activities or places him or her at significant risk of injury, exploitation or abuse.
 - 8.3.6 It is inappropriate to spend time alone with children away from others or to take other people's children to your home, especially where they will be alone with you.
 - 8.3.7 Doing things of a personal nature for a child that they could do for themselves.
 - 8.3.8 Demonstrating or giving preferential treatment to a particular child to the exclusion of others (for example, promising gifts or enticements).
 - 8.3.9 Being intoxicated (under the influence of alcohol or drugs) prior to working with children.
 - 8.3.10 Acting in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of abuse.
 - 8.3.11 Taking a child alone in a vehicle unless it's absolutely necessary and with parental and managerial consent.
 - 8.3.12 Leaving children unsupervised with a visitor to a project.
- 8.4 Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and if you feel unsure about a situation or how to respond to a particular situation, you must seek guidance from a Pedal Project representative.

9. PUBLICITY, MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS REGARDING CHILDREN

- 9.1 Pedal Project will ensure that all images of children it uses for internal or external

communication, in whichever format, are appropriate and do not in any way exacerbate risks to children.

9.2 The following types of images will never be taken or disseminated by Pedal p\Project:

9.2.1 Inappropriate images of children that could be deemed to be sexual or to portray nudity);

9.2.2 Images of children that portray them in a demeaning or disrespectful light;

9.2.3 Images that could make a child easily identifiable and traceable.

9.3 When posting individual photos only the first name of the child can be disclosed along with the city. The last names, background, and city where the children reside should never be disclosed.

9.4 Only stories that reflect on the children positively, keeping in mind they may see the communications in the future may be shared.

9.5 Permission must be obtained from the staff, the beneficiaries and their parents or guardians prior to photos being taken or published.

9.6 If items are being posted on social media sites using your smartphone, location services must be disabled.

9.7 Beneficiaries will always be given the opportunity to opt out of participating in any photographs.

9.8 Partner organisations, media and publishing houses will need to sign release forms in accordance with this policy confirming that consent has been given to them to publish photographic or video content.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

10.1 Pedal Project will promote positive values and child protection strategies in its programmes, facilities, with parents and in the community.

- 10.2 Parents will receive regular written information about the content and schedules of the programme; feedback regarding their child's participation in the programme including behaviour and general health; and an introduction to the programme staff.
- 10.3 Parents will be allowed to observe programmes at any time as appropriate
- 10.4 Parents and the community will be made aware of the Pedal Project child protection efforts through regular written and/or electronic communication including but not limited to:
- 10.4.1 the staff code of conduct,
 - 10.4.2 abuse prevention training for staff and child,
 - 10.4.3 how to report suspicious behaviour; and
 - 10.4.4 that staff is not allowed to contact children outside of programmes.
- 10.5 Pedal Project will designate a spokesperson to the media and community in the event of any incident concerning abuse or neglect.

11. DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

- 11.1 Pedal Project is committed to ensuring that all relevant parties are informed about its policy and understand the importance of keeping children safe.
- 11.2 Pedal Project's Child Protection Policy must be:
- 11.2.1 Circulated and discussed with all current and future Pedal Project employees, contractors and consultants.
 - 11.2.2 Circulated and discussed with all existing and potential funders.

11.2.3 Circulated and discussed with all current and future board members.

11.2.4 Circulated and discussed with the communities with whom Pedal Project collaborates.

12. MONITORING

12.1 This policy will be reviewed and updated as needed by the Pedal Project Board of Directors or its designee on an annual basis.

13. ADOPTION

13.1 Adopted on _____ by the _____ Board of Directors.

Chairperson

Secretary

ANNEXURE A

Pedal Project is committed to acting upon and investigating disclosures and child protection concerns swiftly. At all times, the welfare of the child is of paramount consideration.

1. STEP 1: THE DISCLOSURE

1.1 If a child discloses that he/she, or someone they know is being abused by a party external to Pedal Project:

1.1.1 A Pedal Project representative must listen to the child and accept what is being said; allow the child to speak freely, ask only open questions to establish the basic facts or nature of the complaint.

1.1.2 They should reassure the child that they have done the right thing by disclosing what is happening to them and further that the necessary steps will be taken to address the matter.

1.2 Where the risk of harm to the child is high or if there is a medical emergency then the designated child protection officer should immediately report the matter to the emergency services and/or to local law enforcement if a crime has been committed or suspected.

1.3 It is not the responsibility of Pedal Project to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place, but to report the disclosure to to the Child Protection Officer who will then refer the matter to either a designated social worker and/or police officer as per Section 54 of the Sexual Offences Act and 110 of the Children's Act in the correct format as outlined in the Coaches Manual.

2. STEP 2: RECORDAL

2.1 Any reported, known or suspected child abuse must immediately or within 24 hours,

be recorded and escalated taking note of the following:

2.1.1 Child's name, address and telephone number.

2.1.2 Parents or guardians names and telephone numbers.

2.1.3 Reasons for concern and any relevant statements made by the child.

2.2 A person may also make a report on an anonymous basis to jaco@pedalproject.co.za.

3. STEP 3: CONSIDERATION

3.1.1 Staff will follow an internal chain of command for the reporting of abuse to the relevant line manager and may make a report directly to the Pedal Project programme facilitator if their line manager does not handle any report immediately.

3.1.2 The report must be assessed by the relevant line manager or programme facilitator.

4. STEP 4: IF THE INCIDENT IS INTERNAL TO PEDAL PROJECT

4.1 If an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at or during Pedal Project programmes or activities, the following procedure shall be followed by the programme facilitator:

4.1.1 The parent or guardian of the child will immediately be notified;

4.1.2 The appropriate authorities will be notified, consistent with applicable

legislation;

- 4.1.3 The alleged perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be suspended from the Pedal Project pending an investigation

5. STEP 4: IF THE INCIDENT IS EXTERNAL TO PEDAL PROJECT

5.1 If an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at or during Pedal Project programmes or activities, the following procedure shall be followed by the programme facilitator:

5.1.1 An adult caregiver who is not associated with the abuse immediately be notified; and

5.1.2 The appropriate authorities will be notified, consistent with applicable legislation.

6. STEP 5: NOTIFYING THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES

6.1 The designated personnel should contact a Social Worker from a Child protection organization such as a Child Welfare Society or the Department of Social Development, or the Child Protection Officer of the South African Police Services.

6.2 The following should be noted:

6.2.1 The name of the person making the call;

6.2.2 The name of the intake worker receiving the call;

- 6.2.3 The date and time of the call; and
- 6.2.4 The action proposed by the person to whom the abuse has been reported.
- 6.3 The social worker and the police, in some cases, will interview the child as soon as possible.
- 6.4 Pedal Project staff must cooperate with this process, as and where requested by the relevant authorities.
- 6.5 If response up is slow and particularly if the child remains at risk, the referring person should follow up until the child is safe.

7. STEP 7: FOLLOW UP PROCEDURES

- 7.1 Once the official investigation has been completed, Pedal Project will pursue internal disciplinary proceedings, as and when necessary.
- 7.2 A detailed report must be submitted of findings pertaining to any investigations.
- 7.3 In the event there is no investigation of the incident by state or local authorities, a management team will be formed to investigate the circumstances of the incident in consultation with Pedal Project's attorney.
- 7.4 Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position with Pedal Project.