

THEATRE  
FOR A **CHANGE**



**The Theatre for a Change UK Child and Vulnerable  
Adult Safeguarding Policy**

**2018**

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## 1. Introduction

Theatre for a Change UK is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in its work with children and vulnerable adults. The formulation of this Safeguarding Policy reflects this commitment.

The rights of the child and vulnerable adults are central to the beliefs that underpin every aspect of our work. The mission of Theatre for a Change UK is to use Interactive Theatre to provide a truly participatory context for vulnerable and marginalised people to articulate to themselves and to others their needs and aspirations and to identify the steps to be taken to achieve these aspirations. Establishing and protecting the rights of children and vulnerable adults is thus integral to our work.

Our work with children is informed by a set of principles that derive from the **UN Convention on the Rights of a Child:**

- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation
- All children should be encouraged to fulfill their potential and inequalities should be challenged
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children

However, we recognize that every child and young person is potentially at risk from abuse and exploitation, and that many of the young people that Theatre for a Change UK works with in developing countries may be experiencing, or may have experienced, abusive relationships.

In order for our work to uphold and strengthen the rights of children and vulnerable adults we work with, we have developed the following standards of care, which have been reviewed and approved by our board of Trustees.



## 2. Policy

This section is an overview of the whole policy and may be used as a stand-alone document. This policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates our commitment at Theatre for a Change UK to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children.

### Aims

The aims of this Safeguarding policy is to promote good practice by:

- Providing ALL children and vulnerable adults of whatever race, gender, age, religion or disability, sexual orientation, social background and culture with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care and supervision of Theatre for a Change UK staff and volunteers
- Allowing all staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific Safeguarding issues

### Scope

The scope of this policy includes:

- Workers, including volunteers, trainees and also temporary and sessional workers
- Children and vulnerable adults both directly involved in Theatre for a Change UK programmes and indirectly in the local communities in which Theatre for a Change UK operates

### Values and Principles

In all work with children and vulnerable adults, Theatre for a Change UK will ensure that the welfare and security of the child/vulnerable adults is paramount and that we constantly strive to provide an environment which promotes their human rights and which is free from abuse. This is achieved both explicitly as part of the curriculum of training in our methodology and through the implementation of appropriate policies and guidelines.

We value and will respond promptly and constructively to all information presented by children, vulnerable adults, or third parties regarding their safety and welfare.

### Recruitment, Vetting and Training

We ensure that staff recruitment and probationary practices include appropriate vetting procedures.



We ensure that all staff are aware of the risk of abuse and receive ongoing training in Safeguarding and Good Practice.

### **Responses: Team, Organisational and External**

Theatre for a Change UK responds swiftly and appropriately to all concerns or allegations of abuse with a procedure that:

1. Respects and empowers the child or vulnerable adult
2. Is supportive of Theatre for a Change UK workers
3. Avoids collusion with the suspected perpetrator of abuse

Theatre for a Change UK has an appointed Safeguarding Officer, who is the Executive Director. The overlap of these two roles is to ensure that wherever the Programme is being implemented that the Child Safeguarding policy is implemented.

The Safeguarding Officer has specific responsibility for monitoring and evaluating Safeguarding practice, ensuring the organisation is kept up to date with evolving Safeguarding practice and providing the main reference point for advising and coordinating any Safeguarding cases that arise.

Theatre for a Change UK also seeks external advice and expertise when reviewing its Safeguarding Policy, Practices and Guidelines.

### **Confidentiality**

Theatre for a Change UK will ensure access to confidential information is restricted to the appropriate Theatre for a Change UK workers and, if appropriate, to the relevant external authorities.

### **Scope of this Policy**

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, freelance and sessional workers (and organisations with whom Theatre for a Change UK may be working in partnership – see 12. below) It relates to all children and vulnerable adults, but particularly those with whom Theatre for a Change UK comes into contact directly or indirectly.

In our work in the UK and in international contexts, the term 'child' or 'children' refer to young people under 18 years of age.

Although this document outlines working practices for staff and volunteers whilst working with children and vulnerable adults, it also relates to their non-work related personal

conduct. Any inappropriate conduct outside work will be considered most seriously and appropriate action will be taken dependent on the situation.

### **Equity**

All children and vulnerable adults are at risk of abusive relationships, and some are particularly vulnerable. Theatre for a Change UK exists to empower people who as a result of their social or cultural status, gender, religion, sexual orientation or physical disabilities are placed at risk of abusive relationships.

All our policies and practices must reflect this belief in the right of all staff and participants in the work to absolute equity with regard to their human rights. Any behaviour which is discriminatory, offensive or violent will not be tolerated and complaints will be acted upon.

## **3. Procedures and Systems**

### **Responsibilities**

The implementation of this policy is mandatory across the full scope of Theatre for a Change's work, and specific responsibilities are outlined below. All staff, as part of their contract, are expected to operate within codes of conduct outlined within the policies that support the work of Theatre for a Change. Any behaviour by a member of staff towards children or vulnerable adults that contravenes the terms of the Safeguarding Policy will be considered for disciplinary action, which in turn may lead to dismissal.

The Trustees of Theatre for a Change UK are ultimately responsible for the implementation of its Safeguarding Policy.

The Executive Director acts as Safeguarding Officer and is responsible for:

- Ensuring that Safeguarding implications are constantly reviewed and implemented across the geographical scope of the work of Theatre for a Change.
- Considering and authorizing any immediate changes in operational policy required due to a Safeguarding incident.
- Ensuring that Safeguarding is considered in all appointment of staff including freelance and volunteers.
- Supporting managers and staff with advice on Safeguarding issues and advising Trustees and Project Management Committees regarding decision and action to be taken in any Safeguarding situation.



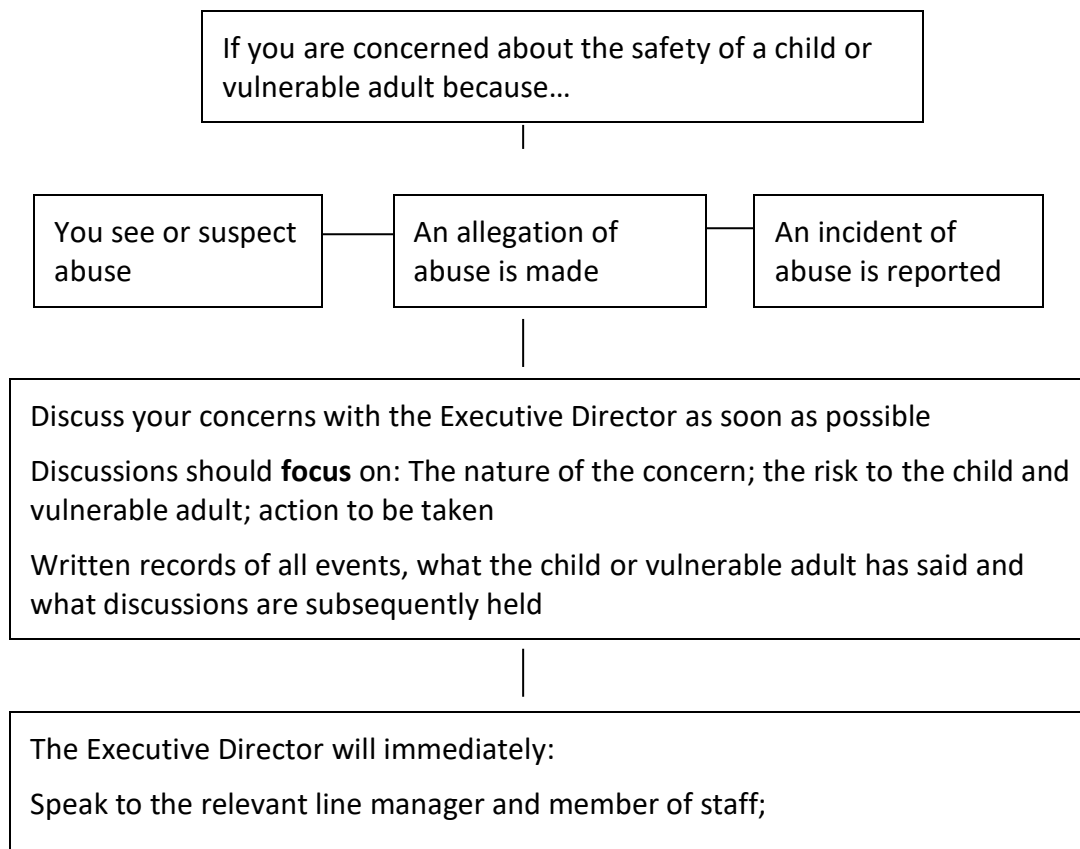
- Keeping and monitoring central records of all Safeguarding cases.
- Ensuring that all staff receive necessary training and that they are able to discuss Safeguarding issues confidentially and receive support and guidance as situations arise. An open and responsive management culture is essential if Theatre for a Change UK is to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and support staff effectively.

### Raising and Reporting Safeguarding Issues

Everyone working within Theatre for a Change UK can play an important part in promoting the safety and protection of young people and vulnerable adults with whom they are working.

Staff must raise all cases of suspected or alleged child abuse in line with the procedures identified in the following flow chart.

#### *Immediate actions for reporting Safeguarding Issues at Theatre for a Change*







Contact social welfare and legal authorities to implement the welfare and legal process;

Enact the Whistleblowing Policy below

**NB** Where there is an emergency and there is immediate risk to the child, ACT!  
It is essential to avoid delay and inaction may place the child at further risk

### Confidentiality Issues

At the earliest opportunity remind the child or vulnerable adult that you may not be able to keep this information to yourself, and that you may have to report it to your line manager for their protection.

Information held internally by Theatre for a Change UK will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people.

### What to do if a child or vulnerable adults tells you that she or he has been or is being abused

- React calmly
- Reassure him or her that it is not their fault
- Remind them that there are reporting procedures at Theatre for a Change UK that you have to adhere to, and that you may not be able to keep this to yourself
- Listen carefully
- Clarify what you have heard
- Make notes during or immediately after the interview
- Follow procedures as outlined in the above section

### Whistleblowing (Public Interest) Policy

Employees who raise concerns or report another's wrongdoing are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Theatre for a Change UK recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if concerns about breaches or failures are to be effectively dealt with.



This policy is designed to provide guidance to all those who work with or within Theatre for a Change UK (including any casual or temporary staff) who may from time to time feel that they need to raise certain issues relating to Theatre for a Change UK with someone in confidence.

Any person who in the public interest raises genuine concerns under this policy will not under any circumstances be subjected to any form of detriment or disadvantage as a result of having raised their concerns. The victimisation or harassment of an individual making a protected disclosure is a disciplinary offence.

This policy applies where you reasonably believe that one of the following sets of circumstances is occurring, has occurred or may occur within TFAC or a partner organisation and that your disclosure is in the public interest:

- A criminal offence or a breach of this policy has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed;
- A person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject;
- A miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur;
- Information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

It is not necessary that you prove the breach or failure that you are alleging has occurred or is likely to occur, you may simply raise a simple suspicion. However, you should note that you will not be protected from the consequences of making such a disclosure if, by doing so, you commit a criminal offence or if you make the disclosure motivated by a reason which is not in good faith.

If you believe that any of the above practices are happening within TFAC or a partner organisation the following procedure should be followed:

First raise the issue with the Executive Director who will treat the matter in confidence;

If it is not appropriate to raise the issues with the Executive Director you should raise the issue with a Trustee.

If there are grounds to believe that the allegations of illegal activity are well founded, the member of staff will:

- be informed and given the opportunity to respond
- be removed from duties without prejudice and the case will be considered by Trustees and the Executive Director for handing over to the appropriate local authorities, e.g. the Police



If there is no doubt that the report against the member of staff is accurate, she or he will be immediately handed over to the Police.

At all times, it must be remembered that the protection of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount, and these procedures must be known by all staff working for Theatre for a Change, and, if it is felt appropriate, by children and young people and their guardian.

If it is likely that an investigation will be necessary you may be required to attend an investigatory meeting and/or a disciplinary hearing (as a witness).

At the investigation meeting you will need to explain fully the nature and extend of what you believe is the problem. You may bring a colleague to help you explain the situation more clearly if you wish.

Depending on the nature of your complaint, it may not be possible to find an immediate solution but your concerns will be investigated as quickly as possible and you will be advised of the outcome of the investigation in due course.

Where it is necessary for you to attend a disciplinary or investigative hearing as a witness, appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that your working environment and/or working relationship is/are not prejudiced by the fact of the disclosure.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of this procedure you may raise the matter with the Chair of the Board of Trustees. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have the right to express your concerns to the relevant Prescribed Person designated by the Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014 or any statute or statutory instrument which subsequently supersedes this legislation.

If you reasonably believe that the relevant failure as listed in any of the above practices relates wholly or mainly to the conduct of a person other than someone in TFAC UK or any other matter for which an organisation other than TFAC UK has legal responsibility, then you should make that disclosure to that other organisation.

Also, you may make such a disclosure to Public Concern at Work (<http://www.pcaw.org.uk/>), the leading authority on public interest whistleblowing, if you consider that it has an interest in the matter and, despite the best efforts of TFAC UK, you believe that disclosure within TFAC UK is inappropriate or as noted previously has been unsuccessful. Disclosures made to legal advisors in the course of obtaining legal advice will be protected.

If any disclosure concerns information which you do not substantially believe is true or is made in bad faith (for instance, in order to cause disruption within TFAC), or indeed if the disclosure is made for personal gain, then the person issuing the false claim will become subject to action under the Disciplinary Procedure, which could include dismissal.

## 4. Prevention

Theatre for a Change UK recognizes that anyone may have the potential to abuse a child or a vulnerable adult in some way and therefore all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable individuals are prevented from working in and for Theatre for a Change.

All positions will be recruited in line with the following guidelines:

- All staff and volunteers must complete an application form. The application form should elicit information about the applicant's past and self-disclosures about any criminal record.
- All prospective staff must be vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales, the Criminal Records Office in Scotland and through the appropriate social service in other countries of operation
- Two confidential references must be taken up in writing in all cases, including wherever possible one regarding previous work with children and vulnerable young people and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity such as passport or driving licence with photo in addition to the original birth certificate must be obtained, photocopied and kept in the personnel file.
- Evidence of qualifications must be obtained and must include sight of original certificates.

### Child Safeguarding Awareness Training

Theatre for a Change UK will ensure that all its staff and volunteers receive ongoing Safeguarding awareness training, recognizing that a proper awareness and understanding of child abuse and Safeguarding is crucial for prevention and reporting of incidents.

## 5. Code of Practice and Behaviour

All paid staff and Volunteers must demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to uphold the rights of the children and vulnerable adults in their care and to protect themselves from false allegations.

The following code of practice is vital to creating a positive and proactive culture within Theatre for a Change.



## Code of Practice for all staff and volunteers at Theatre for a Change

### DO

1. Always put the welfare of each child or vulnerable adult first before achieving goals
2. Treat all young people and vulnerable adults with respect
3. Integrate these values into the delivery of training and educational programmes
4. Work in an open environment where no sense of secrecy can be fostered
5. Respect the physical boundaries of all participants
6. If the need arises for physical contact of a personal nature in an emergency, always inform the person what you are proposing to do and ask their permission to do it. Record all such actions and do not undertake any that you are not qualified to do unless in an absolute emergency.
7. Report all concerns to the Executive Director – take action!
8. Involve young people and vulnerable adults in decisions that affect them
9. Encourage young people and vulnerable adults to involve family members in work that they are doing with Theatre for a Change, so that the activities of the company may be well known and understood.
10. Actively promote equality of opportunity and respect for diversity in all areas of your work.

### DON'T

1. Use language or actions that could humiliate a child or vulnerable adult
2. Take young people or vulnerable adults to your home, or give them a lift in your car individually without informing another member of staff
3. Make sexually suggestive comments to anyone
4. Do things of a personal nature that young people and vulnerable adults can do for themselves, i.e. getting dressed
5. Engage in rough or sexual games
6. Allow any discriminatory, sexualized or foul language

## 6. Safeguarding in an International Context

Theatre for a Change UK recognizes that as an International Non-Governmental Organisation it operates in a wide variety of cultural as well as geographical settings which have great variations in understanding what constitutes abuse and Safeguarding. The Trustees, staff, partner and funding organisations will all be involved in a dialogue about how this Safeguarding policy can be adapted and applied to the different circumstances we operate in while at the same time being assertive about the rights of the child and vulnerable adults as a standard to work to.

The guidelines in this document will be applied carefully and precisely in ways that:

- Assert the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as the foundation of Theatre for a Change's work
- Are based on carefully conducted research into what constitutes abuse in each cultural context within which Theatre for a Change UK operates
- Distinguish between conditions related to poverty and those that are the direct result of abusive relationships
- Invite dialogue rather than confrontation where there is difference between culturally acceptable behaviour and this Safeguarding policy
- Works in partnership with local agencies such as WAJU (Women and Juvenile Unit) in Ghana which are established to protect the rights of children and young people and which are established by the Executive Director to be working with the same guiding principles and practices.

## 7. Communications Systems

### *Internal communication*

This document will be openly available to all staff and participants and its principles will be constantly refreshed as the foundation of the work for Theatre for a Change. Wherever possible, information will be made available for children, vulnerable adults and guardians about where to access local support and information relating to Safeguarding, and their views sought about the effectiveness of Theatre for a Change's Safeguarding policy.



### *External communication*

Theatre for a Change will promote depictions of children and vulnerable adults that emphasise their ability to take positive action to change their lives and the lives of those around them.

Permission of children, vulnerable adults as well as their parent/guardian should be obtained before pictures are taken and images used for publicity, fundraising or awareness-raising purposes. Wherever possible the child/vulnerable adult/parent/guardian NGO should sign a Media Consent form, which should subsequently be filed in a secure location.

Children and vulnerable adults should be encouraged to give their own accounts as much as possible, rather than letting others speak on their behalf.

Portrayals of children and vulnerable adults should take into account how they say they wish to be depicted.

Groups identified by Theatre for a Change as being particularly vulnerable, such as children affected by sexual exploitation, should always have their names changed in external communications and any photos taken should not make the child / vulnerable adult identifiable. There may be cases when it is not appropriate to approach certain children for photos at all and careful prior consideration must be given.

No personal information (such as location, real name) which could put a child/vulnerable adult at risk, should be posted on a Theatre for a Change website or published in public-facing literature.

Images should always be accompanied by appropriate captions.

Any third parties requesting the use of Theatre for a Change pictures or case studies should be required to sign up to Theatre for a Change's stipulated regulations for the proper use of the materials. Third parties such as photographers and journalists should sign a 'Statement of Commitment for Third Parties' and receive an induction into Theatre for a Change's Code of Practice and Behaviour before visiting any project location.

Social media – including Facebook, Twitter or blogs – as well as video footage generated by Theatre for a Change should be subject to the same guidelines as outlined above.

## 8. Education and Training

Theatre for a Change UK recognizes that effective Safeguarding needs to be integrated into every aspect of our work. As a result, we will seek opportunities to develop and maintain the necessary skills and awareness among our staff, volunteers and trainees to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in proactive and responsible ways.

The following procedures will be followed in order to establish a learning culture within the organisation with regard to Safeguarding:

- All new members of staff will receive induction, which will include familiarization with the existing Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- The policy and procedures will be reviewed whenever the need arises, but certainly on an annual basis, by all involved in the work of the organisation. This is in order to ensure that the policy and procedures are appropriate and relevant to the cultural context that Theatre for a Change UK is operating within, and are being successfully implemented.
- The rights of children and vulnerable adults are integrated into the training and education work of Theatre for a Change.

## 9. Access to Advice and Support

Children and vulnerable adults working with Theatre for a Change UK must be given access to the advice and support that they need.

Theatre for a Change UK will endeavour to:

- Make contact with relevant and appropriate support agencies to help deliver a joined-up service for young people and vulnerable adults
- Provide the best available contacts for children and vulnerable adults to go to for help and advice in dealing with situations of abuse, whether emotional, physical or sexual
- Provide supervision and support for members of staff involved directly or indirectly in incidents or allegations



## 10. Implementation and Monitoring

The monitoring of this implementation is integrated into the monitoring, evaluation and appraisal of the work of all members of staff and trainees. All personnel will receive a copy of this document, be expected to know the policy and the procedures for reporting incidents of abuse, and will be involved in reviewing these policies and practices on an annual basis.

## 11. Working with Partner Organisations

Where Theatre for a Change UK is working in partnership with other organisations, agreement must be reached with regard to the responsibilities procedures and practices contained in this document. This must be reflected in an agreement by both parties to commit to common safeguarding practices and whilst working in partnership.

Failure to reach agreement, or a situation arising that causes concern with regard to the partner organisation's practice, will lead to cessation of that partnership.

Where Theatre for a Change UK is building the capacity of partner NGOs to develop and deliver programmes of Interactive Theatre, the development of Safeguarding policies will be targeted as an integral part of strategic planning.

It is hoped that the dialogue that ensues as a result is a creative and progressive one that enables the rights of children and vulnerable adults to be established clearly and supported in the work of partner organisations.

## 12. Agreement to Comply with this Policy

In order to work with Theatre for a Change, you must have read and agree to comply with this policy. Please write your name, sign, date and return this to your line manager.

I have read this policy, and agree to abide by its principles and procedures.

Name.....

Signed.....Date.....