



## **Child Protection and Safety Policy January 2025**

The Field of Dreams Academy (FODA) has developed the following Child Protection and Safety Policy. This policy is an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. It is designed to be communicated through our public website as well as through other mediums such as newsletters, social media platforms, written or oral communication, and application packs for board of directors, staff members, coaching staff, academic fellows, volunteers and third-party contractors.

### **Our Child Protection and Safety Policy**

#### **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety:**

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence.

The Field of Dreams Academy is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Protection Program designed to keep children safe.

The Field of Dreams Academy has a zero tolerance for child abuse, and it is our commitment to act in every child's best interest and keeping them safe from harm. The Field of Dreams Academy regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

#### **Child Safe Principles**

The Field of Dreams Academy's commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.

1. All children have the right to be safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
3. The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.
4. Clear expectations for appropriate behavior with children are established in our Child Safety Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.





5. The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
6. Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within FODA and the community (ies) we serve.
7. Procedures are in place to screen all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers\*, third party contractors and external education providers who have direct contact with children.
8. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
9. Child protection training is mandatory for all staff members, academic fellows, coaching staff and direct contact volunteers.
10. Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members affiliated, associated, participating within FODA.
11. Children from underrepresented, culturally, or socially diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as LGBTQ and/or Transgender.
12. Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

*\* Direct Contact Volunteers are those volunteers that are involved in providing support, guidance, and supervision directly to students and could potentially have direct contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.*

## **Objectives**

This policy provides the framework for:

- ☐ the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection within the school.
- ☐ the creation of a positive and robust child protection culture
- ☐ the promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within the FODA
- ☐ complying with all laws, regulations, and standards relevant to child protection in the State of California and Georgia.



## **Child Protection Program**

The Field of Dreams Academy is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Protection Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated.

We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of our organization's academic and athletic enrichment programs, community outreach activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student-athletes, and all other youth in general who participate in our programs.

Our Child Protection Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes work systems, practices, policies, and procedures to protect children from abuse. It includes:

- ☐ clear information as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators
- ☐ clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse
- ☐ strategies to support, encourage and enable staff, volunteers (direct and indirect), coaching staff, third party contractors, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters.
- ☐ procedures for recruiting and screening board of directors, staff members, coaching staff and direct contact volunteer
- ☐ pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe.
- ☐ policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities
- ☐ a child protection training program
- ☐ information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children.
- ☐ guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality.
- ☐ policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Department of Family and Children Services)
- ☐ a system for continuous improvement and review



As a part of the Field of Dreams Academy's onboarding process, all staff members, coaching staff and direct contact volunteers are required to complete a comprehensive background check (criminal, and sex offender), and a selection of training modules on the content of our Child Protection Program.

All staff members, coaching staff, direct contact volunteers and board members are provided with additional, ongoing child protection training annually.

Staff, volunteers (direct and indirect), coaching staff, third party contractors are supported and supervised by the local law enforcement officers to ensure that they are compliant with the FODA's approach to child protection.

### **Responsibilities**

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. Every FODA representative, as well as direct and indirect volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:

#### **The Executive Director**

The Executive Director is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Protection and Safety Policy Program is implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the Field of Dreams Academy.

#### **Board of Directors**

Each board member is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow the FODAs Child Protection and Safety Policy and the Child Protection Program to be effectively implemented, and are responsible for holding the Executive Director accountable for effective implementation.

#### **Staff Members**

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse to the Executive Director, Board of Directors, Senior Staff Managers, or a local law enforcement officer.



### **Direct Contact Volunteers**

All Direct Contact Volunteers, as defined in this policy, are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse.

### **Indirect Contact Volunteers**

Indirect Contact Volunteers (or 'Indirect Volunteers') are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students.

All Indirect Volunteers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children who are participating in activities led, hosted, or associated with the Field of Dreams Academy.

All Indirect Volunteers are required by the Field of Dreams Academy to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct.

### **Third Party Contractors**

All Third-Party Contractors (service providers) engaged by the Field of Dreams Academy are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of every child.

Who's considered a Third-Party Contractors: maintenance and building personnel, consultants, tutors, sports coaches, and guest speakers? Additionally, other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than FODA, but have an agreement with FODA to use our facilities, sports fields, and office space.

The Field of Dreams Academy will only use Third Party Contractors that have undergone an extensive, due diligence process which includes provision of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct.



**Direct Contact Contractors are:**

- ☐ those who have direct contact\*\* with students during the normal course of their work
- ☐ those who may be in a position to establish a relationship of trust with a student notwithstanding that unsupervised access to students would be rare (for example full-time maintenance personnel)
- ☐ any contractors or consultants whom FODA deems legally required to screen
- ☐ physical contact
- ☐ face to face contact
- ☐ contact by post or other written communication
- ☐ contact by telephone or other oral communication
- ☐ contact by email or other electronic communication

**Indirect Contact Contractors are:**

Indirect Contact Contractors are those contractors who do not meet the definition of "Direct Contact Contractor". Refer to Third Party Contractors' Responsibilities for more information.

All service providers engaged by the Field of Dreams Academy are required to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program.

The Field of Dreams Academy will only use third party contractors that have undergone an extensive, due diligence process which includes provision of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct.



## Reporting Concerns

Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for every person in leadership, program delivery, and program support how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third party contractors, indirect contact volunteers, students, parents/guardians or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact our Executive Director, Board of Directors, or local law enforcement officers.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a “need to know basis” and all personal information will be dealt with in accordance with FODA's Privacy Policy.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called immediately 911.

## Related Policies and Procedures

- ☐ Risk Management Program
- ☐ Compliance Program
- ☐ Human Resources Program
- ☐ Student Duty of Care Program
- ☐ Occupational Health & Safety Program
- ☐ Child Protection Staff Training
- ☐ Recruitment & Selection Procedures ☐ Induction Procedures

## Policy & Program Review

The Field of Dreams Academy is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Protection Program. The Program is regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection related laws, regulations, and standards.

*\*This Policy will be reviewed in January 2026*