



## Peace First, Inc. Safeguarding Policy

Last Revised: April 2021

Approved by Peace First Board: June 30, 2021

DSO name updated August 19, 2021

### Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect everyone associated or affiliated with Peace First Inc., especially our young people who receive services from Peace First, Inc. ("Peace First") or are otherwise involved with Peace First.
- to provide parents and guardians, staff and volunteers, and other persons within the Peace First community with a clear understanding of the principles that guide our approach to child protection and nurturing young people's wellbeing, safety and security; and
- to help young people who use our services (most of whom are between 13 and 25 years of age) understand Peace First's response to concerns and disclosures that are raised as we balance our core values of protecting and nurturing young people with promoting their autonomy and giving them a voice, as well as other steps we take as an organization to ensure their safety at all times.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Peace First including the officers of Peace First, members of the Board of Directors and all committees thereof, any members of any advisory boards, paid staff, volunteers, contract workers, interns, and work-study students as well as any person representing Peace First at its request.

### Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up based on the principles recognized in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which provides a comprehensive framework for the protection, provision, and participation of all children without discrimination to ensure their survival and development to the maximum extent possible. We have also considered local legal frameworks in the countries in which we operate, including the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (USA), the Children Act 1989 (England), the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (UK), the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

### Included in this Safeguarding Policy:

- **Definitions** to help educate and enable staff to recognize and prevent various types of harm, discrimination, bullying and abuse
- **Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer** describes how the Officer takes overall ownership of this policy, training and the tracking of outcomes
- **Raising Concerns and Reporting Incidents** ensures individuals know how to report concerns or incidents (about young people and/or against staff or volunteers) to the appropriate parties at Peace First, such as the Designated Safeguarding Officer, and/or Deputy Safeguarding Officer
- **Safer recruitment** details recruitment policies for vetting staff, volunteers and consultants
- **Onboarding, Training, Supervision and Support for Staff** provides an overview of how staff are onboarded, including



background checks, and supported in a way that helps prevent safeguarding concerns

- **Code of Conduct and General Behavior** details expectations for behavior and professionalism for staff and others associated with Peace First
- **Online Community Norms, Safety Guidelines and Event Participant Expectations** detail explicit expectations for maintaining a safe environment online as well as expectations for in-person events and activities

## Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside our organizational policies and procedures, including the following:

- **Data Privacy Policy** details how Personal Data of young people using our website (digital platform) and participating in Peace First sponsored competitions, challenges, initiatives and programs, is collected, used and stored.
- **Training and Support for Volunteers** is explained extensively in the Handbook for volunteer mentors.
- **Program Quality Standards** are outlined in the Peacemaker Manual for young people and the Facilitator Manual for adult guides

## Grounding Principles

Peace First works with young people who range in age from 13-25. Peace First recognizes that because we serve young people there are inherent power dynamics that can make young people who are not considered minors vulnerable and that we have a duty of care towards all our program beneficiaries. We therefore extend safeguarding practices to all young people that we serve, up to and including age 25, whenever appropriate. Unless otherwise stated, policy guidelines extend to this full age range. However, in some cases, extra precaution is taken for young people under the age of 18 - in these cases, we will note the distinction.

We believe that:

- no one, especially young people, should experience abuse, discrimination or bullying of any kind; and
- we have a responsibility to promote the safety and welfare of all young people and to implement our work in a way that protects them.

We recognize that:

- the welfare of the young person is paramount;
- all young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, religion or belief, national origin, immigration status, body size, sex/sex characteristics, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues; and
- working in partnership with young people, the organizations that support them and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and safety

We seek to keep children and young people safe by engaging in the following ways:

- Listening to them, trusting them, and valuing each young person as a unique individual with special gifts to the world
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer.
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies and procedures globally



- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary background and reference checks are conducted
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely
- Creating and maintaining a safe online environment and ensuring we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any unsafe or suspicious activity that does arise
- Creating tools and resources for how to stay safe when crossing lines of difference
- Ensuring that we have effective communication means in place to facilitate timely reporting of and responses to concerns and incidents, including any allegations against staff and volunteers, in all cases without any fear of retaliation

## **Designated Safeguarding Officer**

Dalia Ezzat

Email: [dezzat@peacefirst.org](mailto:dezzat@peacefirst.org)

## **Deputy Safeguarding Officer**

Jenny Love

Email: [jlove@peacefirst.org](mailto:jlove@peacefirst.org)

## **Policy Review**

This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed annually, unless there are significant changes in legislation or organizational practices before this time that necessitate updates, or issues arise which require further updates or changes to policies and procedures.



## Definitions of Safeguarding Concerns

**Young Person:** For the purposes of this policy, we define “young person” as any individual up to (and including) the age of 25. This is due to the nature of our work, which is designed to support young people ages 13-25.

**Child:** A child is any individual under the age of 18 years, or other persons who are under the care of a guardian or other administrator. While we recognize this includes youth, we include this definition as it relates to standard definitions within the international community, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**Child Abuse:** Child abuse is defined as an act (or failure to act) by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that endangers a child’s physical or emotional health, development or dignity. The following types of abuse are described, however children often experience more than one type simultaneously:

- **Physical abuse** – the use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behavior includes shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling or poisoning;
- **Emotional abuse** – a continuing pattern of inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts toward a child or failure over time to provide a child with adequate nurturing and emotional availability. Emotionally abusive behavior includes threats, rejection, isolation, belittling, and name calling.
- **Sexual abuse** – the use of power or authority to involve a child in sexual activity by an adult or significantly older child or adolescent. Sexually abusive behaviors can include touching genitals or breasts, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, sexting and exposing the child to sex or pornography.
- **Neglect** – the failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are generally accepted as being important or essential for the child’s physical and emotional development and well-being.

**Child Exploitation:** Child exploitation is the use of a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others that is unacceptable because it deprives them of their childhood, education, development or dignity. It includes unacceptable child labor, child prostitution or trafficking, and child pornography.

**Child Labor:** Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, interferes with their schooling, or that is harmful to physical and mental development.

**Child Pornography:** In accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ‘child pornography’ means ‘any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes.’

**Grooming:** Behavior that makes it easier for an offender to procure a child for sexual activity. This can occur in person or through electronic equipment. For example, an offender might build a relationship of trust with the child, and then seek to sexualise that relationship by encouraging romantic feelings or exposing the child to sexual concepts through pornography or bribe or otherwise offer gifts or other remuneration in exchange for sexual favors.

## Safer recruitment

Peace First endeavors to ensure safer recruitment practices through a comprehensive recruitment and hiring process. As outlined in our Standard Hiring Process overview, all potential hires undergo several rounds of interviews and multiple reference checks prior to being offered employment. All offers are contingent on passing our vetting protocol, outlined below.

All staff and consultants who work with young people undergo a vetting process, which includes the following:

- They must complete and sign a self-disclosure of criminal records form



- 2 or more personal or professional references to attest to the applicant’s suitability to work or volunteer with children and young people. References must not be related to the candidates. Referees are asked about the candidates’ suitability to work with children and young people, and about the candidate’s knowledge and understanding of child protection and safeguarding. Hiring managers should ensure that the information provided by the reference is consistent with information provided by the candidate in their application process and follow up on any discrepancies, concerns or vague statements.
- A Global Watchlist Records Search

Where feasible, Peace First also conducts a criminal records check.

- For individuals based in the USA, our background check service covers SSN Trace, Sex Offender Search, Global Watchlist Search, National Search, and Country Searches. For candidates in the United Kingdom, Peace First conducts a criminal records check using the appropriate service for the candidate’s location. For England and Wales, we conduct a check through the Disclosure and Barring Service, for Northern Ireland, through Access NI, and for Scotland, Disclosure Scotland.
- For all other countries, Peace First will assess the feasibility of conducting a criminal records check based on the infrastructure or services in place within that country and locality and the circumstances of the individual candidate. Feasibility is determined based on a number of factors, including: availability of required documentation, whether the requirements placed on either Peace First or the applicant to obtain such a check would be unreasonably onerous, such as requiring travel over multiple days, whether there is a reasonable expectation of accuracy and thoroughness, and, whether the process would place the applicant at risk or require them to participate in corrupt or illegitimate processes.

## Onboarding, Training, Supervision and Support for Staff

Staff have a responsibility to ensure the safety of young people with whom they work. Peace First therefore promotes good practice throughout onboarding, training, and supervision of staff to minimise and manage potential risk.

All staff must be aware of the safeguarding procedures outlined in these procedures. Supervisors hold responsibility over ensuring the staff they manage are aware of, and understand the procedures and have adequate information and training relevant to the level and nature of their involvement with young people.

Therefore:

- All staff, consultants, and adult volunteers working with young people must pass our vetting process
- All staff are supervised and supported in their work, including through regular supervisory meetings
- All staff receive training in safeguarding at a level appropriate to their work and adequate training and support to carry out the responsibilities of their position, this includes periodic refresher training for all staff
- All staff are able to raise concerns through the Peace First Safeguarding procedures in a manner that is confidential and free of retaliation
- Staff should read the Peace First Safeguarding policy in full and speak with their supervisor or Designated Safeguarding Officer around any issues requiring clarification

## Code of Conduct and General Behavior

### Peace First responsibilities

Peace First will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this safeguarding policy



- Design and undertake all its programs and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with Peace First. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programs is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization and that otherwise complies with all other policies and procedures and applicable law
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

## Staff responsibilities

### Youth Safeguarding

Peace First serves young people ages 13 to 25. Because of inherently unequal power dynamics, Peace First staff must extend the same safeguarding best practices to all young people benefiting from our programs.

Peace First staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity or sexually suggestive behavior or harassment with anyone in the Peace First youth community
- Sexually abuse or exploit children or young people or any other member of the Peace First youth community
- Subject a child or young person to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children or young people including child labor or trafficking

### Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

Peace First staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity or otherwise use sex to exploit any member of the Peace First youth community. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with program participants/beneficiaries of assistance

Additionally, Peace First staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment, including implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a Peace First staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

## Safety Guidelines

Staff should be intentional about creating healthy boundaries in their working relationships with the young people they are assigned to work with or otherwise come in contact with. Staff should be aware that when mentoring or supporting young people, it is important to maintain healthy professional and personal boundaries. We acknowledge that as young people, Fellows-in-Residence in particular may recruit individuals that they know personally, and that personal relationships may naturally develop with peers that participate in our programs. Fellows are instructed to make their supervisor aware of these relationships for support with navigating these boundaries. Supervisors have the responsibility to support their direct reports in maintaining safe boundaries, and should work with their direct reports to develop a plan in the case of a pre-existing close personal relationship or a close personal relationship developing, such as arranging for the primary program support to be provided by another member of staff. While we expect positive professional relationships will develop, staff should bear the following in mind:

- Your role is not to become a primary source of emotional support to young people, instead you should focus on supporting young people with their peacemaking work.



- Without formal training, it is not safe or appropriate to attempt to provide crisis support to a young person. Instead, redirect the young person to think about support resources that are available to them.
- Staff should maintain clear boundaries with young people - they are not available to provide on-call support in crisis situations and should therefore not offer to provide that support. It is important to be upfront about this and not promise support that we cannot provide.
- The Peace First digital platform has been designed to keep young people safe, in part through the provision that all communication on the platform happens through public channels without private messaging. All communication with young people should be done through official channels (staff should therefore not use personal emails or personal phone numbers in communication with young people).
- Staff are encouraged to be transparent with their supervisor about any concerns around boundaries that may arise so that they can receive support to navigate the situation.

### **Maintaining Boundaries on Social Media**

We recognize that social media platforms can play an important role in young people's peacemaking work and can be a useful tool for communicating and building community. At the same time, it is important to maintain boundaries on social media as we work to safeguard young people and support our team's well-being and boundaries.

In the event that you are using a social media platform, such as Facebook, to engage in official, sanctioned and pre-approved Peace First activities, this should be done using an official Peace First account. Please keep the following in mind:

- If you are creating a group space (such as a Facebook group) through a social media channel, you should ensure that more than one Peace First team member is included.
- You may wish to create a work account to manage groups or other activities on facebook. You should keep your supervisor informed about social media accounts and activities - and your login information for Peace First affiliated accounts should be made available to your supervisor.
- While connecting with young people on professional accounts, all other safeguarding guidelines apply -- these accounts should not be used to cross boundaries with young people.

Peace First staff members should not connect directly on private accounts with young people under the age of 18 on social media platforms

- Do not accept friend requests from young people under age 18 or engage in private messaging with young people under the age of 18.

In some cases, a team member may wish to connect on Social Media with a young person 18 years or older. Social media can be a place where social changemakers turn to promote their social change work, network, and connect with other like-minded individuals, especially their peers, such as our Fellows-in-Residence. Fellows and other Staff should keep the following guidance in mind:

- Consider having separate personal and professional online identities/ accounts and whether that would help you maintain boundaries between your professional and personal life or between you and the young people you are working with.
- When weighing whether or not to connect with young people ages 18-25 on social media, consider how you use your social media accounts: what personal information, opinions and behaviors do you exhibit on such accounts? Are you comfortable with that information being shared with our program beneficiaries? Is it appropriate? If you do connect with program beneficiaries, it is good practice to keep in mind your work with young people to make sure you do not compromise you or your profession.



- You should not feel pressured to connect with young people or anyone that you meet through work on social media accounts -- consider your own personal boundaries and whether you want to be contacted by the individual outside of a work context. Check your privacy settings to reflect your level of comfort with people finding you on social media -- you may wish to keep accounts private so that folks cannot follow you without your permission. If you choose *not* to accept a friend or follow request from a young person, you may wish to communicate with them to let them know that under our safeguarding policy, you are discouraged from connecting on social media -- when doing so, it is best to use professional lines of communication (email, etc.) to help reinforce this boundary. You may wish to connect with individuals on some platforms and not others -- for example, LinkedIn is often used for professional purposes, so it may be a more appropriate place to connect. In the event that a young person or adult persists in trying to connect or communicate with you through social channels without your consent, you should connect with your supervisor for support navigating the situation.
- When considering whether connecting with a specific young person is appropriate, keep in mind that some individuals ages 18-25 may be particularly vulnerable -- if a young person is classed as a vulnerable adult, it is safer not to connect with them on social media, as with individuals under age 18. Likewise, if you are concerned that you or the particular young person may be more likely to cross boundaries if connected on social media, do not connect with that young person.
- Your supervisor can help you navigate these decisions and come up with a plan that works best for your well-being, while safeguarding young people.



## Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer & Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Name	Title	Contact Information
Dalia Ezzat	Director of Communications	Email: dezzat@peacefirst.org Based in Canada
Jenny Love	Sr. Manager, Strategic Operations	Email: jlove@peacefirst.org Based in UK

The Designated Safeguarding Officer's responsibilities include:

- Ensure ongoing review and development of Peace First's approach to Safeguarding
- Oversee annual review of Safeguarding practices and recommend changes to the Board
- Provide advice and support to staff regarding Safeguarding concerns
- Serve as primary point of contact for the reporting of safeguarding concerns and incidents, manage referrals/cases reported and lead response to safeguarding concerns and incidents
- Oversee implementation of Safeguarding policy, including ensuring adequate training is in place for staff
- To be available to advise staff who encounter concerns or instances of disclosure or abuse

In addition, Peace First has appointed a Deputy Safeguarding Officer to support the Designated Safeguarding Officer in carrying out this work. The Deputy Safeguarding Officer's responsibilities currently include:

- Administration of the policy and related documents
- Designing and implementing systems to support our safeguarding work
- Training of team members
- Serve as an alternative point of contact for the reporting of safeguarding concerns and incidents, manage referrals/cases reported when Designated Safeguarding Officer is unavailable



## Raising Concerns and Incidents

Peace First will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff, consultants and volunteers.

Reports can reach the organization through various routes. This may be in a structured format such as a letter, e-mail, text or message on social media. It may also be in the form of informal discussion or rumor. If a staff member hears something, whether in an informal discussion or chat or otherwise, that they think is a safeguarding concern, they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The majority of Peace First's engagement with young people is through our digital platform, where our community norms prevent sharing of personal details. In the event that staff find themselves in a situation where a young person discloses information about a safeguarding concern through online communication, Peace First may not have enough information to report the concern to the relevant authorities. However, staff members should still report the information to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, who can ensure the staff member has the support they need and decide if any next steps will be taken.

All staff attending events where young people will be present must be aware of the information outlined in this Safeguarding Policy, and should have the contact information of the Designated Safeguarding Officer with them at all times.

### Responding to Disclosures

If a safeguarding concern is disclosed directly to a member of staff, the person receiving the report should:

- Listen, react calmly with empathy
- Reassure the young person they did the right thing in telling
- Make it clear that the young person is not to blame.
- Take what is being said seriously.
- Be clear that they cannot keep secrets and that they have to pass on the information if they think they are being harmed or may be harmed in some way
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what is being shared
- Record the information in writing without delay, without spinning it—just stick to the facts and do not be judgmental

The staff member should avoid the following behaviors:

- Do not investigate or ask leading questions
- Do not ask about explicit details - staff should leave it up to the relevant authorities to investigate or make further enquiries
- Do not promise to keep a secret
- Do not delay in informing the Designated Safeguarding Officer

### Documentation & Reporting to Designated Safeguarding Officer

The person receiving the report or hearing the disclosure should then document the following to pass on to the Designated Safeguarding Officer:

- Name of person making report
- Name(s) of alleged survivor(s) of safeguarding incident(s) if different than person making report
- Name(s) of alleged perpetrator(s)
- Description of incident(s)
- Date(s), time(s), and location(s) of incident(s)



This documentation should happen as quickly as possible. The staff member should not speculate and should only record the facts as they were shared with them. Any opinions must be recorded as such. Staff members should be aware that records of this nature may be accessed by third parties such as child protective services, police and legal services.

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it as soon as possible (and within 24 hours) to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) or the Designated Safeguarding Officer is unavailable they may report to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer. If the staff member needs support in this process, they may speak to their supervisor or another member of senior staff, but as much as possible, should avoid breaching confidentiality and only share details on an as-needed basis.

### **Process and Referral**

Concerns and incidents will be logged in the Safeguarding Register, whether or not further action will be taken. It is important that concerns raised are recorded with accuracy and in detail. Clear and explicit agreement about who will be taken what action should also be recorded in writing. Records will be kept securely in a place to which access is restricted in order to ensure confidentiality. Confidentiality should be maintained at all times, and information shared on a need-to-know basis only. Decide which information needs to be shared with which stakeholder – information needs may be different.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer has the responsibility for determining whether the concern should and can be referred to the relevant authorities (for example, the local Child Protective Services/Young People’s Services Department and or/ Police). This will vary depending on the young person’s age and local context where the young person is based -- for example, if the young person is a legal adult who does not meet legal definitions of a vulnerable adult, we may not be able to make a referral. Where a referral is appropriate, it should be made without delay and within 24 hours. The Designated Safeguarding Officer also has the responsibility to decide whether to inform the parent/guardian of the young person about the referral.

Peace First has no powers to investigate child abuse and Peace First Staff are not mandated reporters. It is not the responsibility of Peace First to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. However, where appropriate, Peace First will report information to the appropriate authorities so that the appropriate authorities can investigate and take any necessary action to protect the child or young person.

### **Managing Allegations Against Peace First Staff**

Any allegation of abuse, inappropriate behavior, or potential violation of the Safeguarding Policy, should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, or alternatively to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer. The same rigor should be applied to allegations against Peace First Staff members. This may include allegations that the staff members:

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may harm a child or young person
- discriminated against any young person or abused such person in any manner
- possibly committed a criminal offense against a child or young person
- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child or young person.

The individual to whom the allegation or concern is first reported should follow the same procedures outlined above. They should not investigate, ask leading questions or make assumptions, but should record and report the information exactly as they received it.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will work with members of the Operational Leadership Team and Peace First’s legal representative to determine the appropriate action depending on the seriousness of the concern or allegation. This may include disciplinary action or suspension pending a full investigation.



In the event of a serious allegation against a member of staff who works with young people, which indicates a crime may have occurred, Peace First will inform the relevant local authority in the relevant jurisdiction (where the person against whom the accusation has been made is located) within 24 hours and inform Peace First's legal representative. Where appropriate and in coordination with the aggrieved young person, Peace First will also contact local authorities where the young person is located to ensure the young person can receive any relevant services.

## Adult Mentorship Safeguarding Overview

In our efforts to connect young people with resources and individuals who can use their expertise to support young people's projects, we sometimes connect young people with adult volunteers. Due to our relationship of trust with young people, we have safeguards in place when connecting them to adults for mentorship or conversations about subject expertise, in accordance with the type of interaction. There are currently two primary engagement opportunities between young people and adult volunteers, with different safeguards in place:

### Virtual 1-1 Mentorship

- These volunteer mentors may be connected with young people for one-on-one conversations via phone, video call, or e-mail, to provide expertise to support a young person's project, especially subject matter expertise that supplements what the Peace First team provides. Mentor conversations should stay on topic: the young person's project and the adult's expertise in that area, rather than on broader mentorship or emotional support.
- These connections generally come through Peace First's networks and can only be made as part of our structured mentorship program, consisting of the following safeguards:
  - *Vetting:* Mentors must be vetted according to our Safer Recruitment guidelines. If criminal background checks are not feasible in the country where the mentor resides, they must provide 2 references and participate in an interview prior to being accepted as a mentor, which will include questions to test their safeguarding instincts. In the case of the adult being a staff member of a Peace First partner, which has its own safeguarding policy in place, the background check or references can be waived.
  - *Onboarding & Training:* Mentors participate in an onboarding process, which includes safeguarding training relevant to the way they will interact with young people. They will be provided with a handbook covering our policies and how to respond to safeguarding issues that may arise.
  - *Ongoing Supervision:* Mentors and young people will be asked to copy an appropriate member of staff in their email correspondence and mentors will be responsible for recording brief notes on what occurred on the call. They will have clear instructions for how to record and report safeguarding concerns and will have a designated point person to whom they can discuss any issues, regarding safeguarding or more broadly.
  - *Transparency:* Young people will be informed about the safeguards and guidelines for conversations with these mentors.

### Group Engagements

- At times, Peace First will provide space for young people and adult supporters to connect in a facilitated conversation, where Peace First team members are present. This includes inviting adults with general and specific expertise to participate in Virtual or in-person Brain Trusts, where a group of people provide feedback and support young people to think through key issues within their project, or to join Peace First Pitch events, where young people present their projects and are publically celebrated.
- Because these engagements happen in more controlled environments, these adults do not need to be formally vetted to volunteer their time. The following safeguards are in place:



- *Code of Conduct:* Everyone who will join the call receives a Peace First Video Call Code of Conduct prior to participating, which outlines our guidelines for creating a safer environment. Participants agree to the Code of Conduct by joining the call.
- *Communication:* Call participants are restricted from private messaging one another and should not be provided with each other's contact information. Participants are discouraged from connecting with one another privately.
- *Transparency:* Peace First team members who are organizing and facilitating the call are responsible for ensuring young people understand that adults joining the call may have expertise to offer, but are not trained Peace First mentors, and have not been formally vetted. Young people should be made aware that we do not advise reaching out to these adults outside of this conversation.

## Online Community Norms, Safety Guidelines and Event Participation Expectations

The majority of Peace First's communication with young people happens online through our online platform Peacefirst.org. Membership is restricted to individuals ages 13 and up. All members of the online community -- youth and adults -- are responsible for adhering to community norms (see below) that help keep young people as well as adults safe. All communication happens through public channels or channels that can be monitored by Peace First staff.

Although safety is paramount, Peace First believes strongly in the power of young people to support one another as peers in their efforts to create change - and that building community with others working on similar issues can support a young person's wellbeing. If a young person (13-25) wants to connect with another young person (13-25) to collaborate more closely, Peace First can facilitate that connection with the consent of both parties -- but contact details should be shared with the young people directly and not on a public page of the platform, where the general public can see the information. In some cases, we may connect groups of young people together through group messaging or by providing young people with access to a private list - in these cases, young people must give express consent for their information to be shared more generally with other young people ages 13-25 who are also part of our programs. The information should not be shared with individuals other than young people participating in our programs and the data needs to be kept securely and in line with our data privacy policy.

Young people participating in Peacemaking Projects are also encouraged to do a risk assessment and consider ways to mitigate risk while engaging in the courageous work of peacemaking. The Reducing Risk planning tool supports young people to think about the risks associated with their project and choose wise risks rather than unwise ones. The tool also encourages them to seek the support of a mentor in assessing risk, and mitigating or eliminating identified risks.

### Community Norms for Online Peacemaking Community:

*Welcome to our community of peacemakers. As peacemakers and social agents of change we are all committed to the cause of peacemaking through compassion, courage, and collaboration. Here are some guidelines to keep our community safe, fun, and supportive for everyone.*

1. *Be respectful: No one likes to be treated unfairly or judged in a way that is disrespectful or emotionally harmful. Value others and respect and honor differences.*
2. *Help keep the site peaceful: If you think someone is being hurtful, disrespectful, unsafe or otherwise inappropriate please report it.*



3. *Share: You are more than welcome to share your knowledge, expertise and happenings but please don't solicit or spam others in the community.*
4. *Join the community and have fun: Take the challenge, share your projects, participate in discussions and have Fun!!!*
5. *Be safe: Keep your personal information safe. Don't post personal addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, last names, private information, or photos containing personal information.*
6. *Foster meaningful and genuine interactions: Reach out to other peacemakers, inspire and make the most of your interactions. If someone moves you, speak on it and appreciate it.*
7. *Stay on topic: Our community is designed to support young people with their peacemaking journeys. Content that is assessed as being spam or containing links to offer products or services and/or considered not relevant to the purpose of our community will be removed by our moderators.*

### **Safeguarding at in-person events**

Although the majority of our work with young people happens online, Peace First employs event specific safeguarding practices when we welcome young people to in-person events. These include:

- All staff and facilitators/consultants who will work with young people at the event must be vetted with the same procedures outlined in our safer recruitment guidelines..
- Peace First Staff and Facilitators/Consultants in attendance must all receive training in our safeguarding and reporting protocols, as well as a written Safeguarding Briefing that outlines safeguarding guidelines as well as procedures for reporting concerns and incidents.
- Chaperones will accompany young people under age 18. In the event that an individual is acting as a chaperone for young people other than their own family member (as in when one chaperone accompanies three young people to an Accelerator), the chaperone must pass be vetted according to our safer recruitment guidelines must receive training in our safeguarding and reporting protocols for the event.
- All adults and young people will sign participant agreements with code of conduct (see below).
- All attendees will sign Peace First Waiver of Liability and Photo Release Form, and provide emergency contact information.
- Young people are given the option of informing Peace First of medical info/accommodations around which they may require support.
- When accommodation is provided for event related travel, chaperones will work with young people and their parent/guardians to determine a rooming plan that young people and parents consent to, and which complies with Peace First's rooming guidelines. Chaperones will not share rooms with young people unless they are that young person's parent/guardian. Cots will be provided by hotel in event that 3 young people will share one room.

### **Event Participant and Adult Ally Agreements**

At overnight Peace First events, including Peace First Accelerators, all participants (or parents/guardians on behalf of minors) as well as the adults working the event are asked to sign agreements outlining appropriate conduct.

Youth participants and adult allies (staff, volunteers, consultants) agree to:

- Act in ways that encourage the well being, safety, and best interests of all participants.
- Participate fully and be inclusive of others.
- Bring a sense of joy, support, encouragement , and curiosity in my interactions with other participants.
- Accept the support and coaching of my facilitator, Peace First Youth Leaders and other volunteers/staff working with my team.
- Abstain from using or possessing alcohol or other drugs other than those prescribed to me.



- Respect other's physical boundaries and refrain from sexual, seductive or erotic behavior.
- Understand that any harassment regarding race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex/sex characteristics, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, immigration status, body size, economic status or disability will not be tolerated at the Accelerator and that I may be asked to leave if I engage in this behavior.



## APPENDIX A

### RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND INCIDENTS – STAFF GUIDE

This chart supports Peace First’s Safeguarding Policy and should be read alongside the full policy.

<i>If a safeguarding concern or allegation of abuse is disclosed to you...</i>	
Do:	Avoid:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Listen, react calmly with empathy</li> <li>● Reassure the young person they did the right thing in telling</li> <li>● Make it clear that the young person is not to blame.</li> <li>● Take what is being said seriously.</li> <li>● Be clear that they cannot keep secrets and that they have to pass on the information if they think they are being harmed in some way</li> <li>● Keep questions to an absolutely minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what is being shared</li> <li>● Record the information in writing without delay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Do not investigate or ask leading questions</li> <li>● Do not ask about explicit details - staff should leave it up to the relevant authorities to investigate or make further enquiries</li> <li>● Do not promise to keep a secret</li> <li>● Do not delay in informing the Designated Safeguarding Officer</li> </ul>
<p><i>If you suspect you have witnessed abuse and/or a breach of Peace First’s Safeguarding Policy, or if you hear an allegation of abuse, inappropriate behavior, or a potential safeguarding concern, you MUST record and report the concern.</i></p> <p><i>You should do so as independently and as soon as possible to ensure accuracy (and within 24 hours).</i></p>	
<p>Most concerns should be recorded and reported to the <b>Designated Safeguarding Officer</b>.</p> <p>To do so, use the <a href="#">Primary Form for Recording Safeguarding Concerns and Incidents</a>.</p>	<p>If you do not feel comfortable reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (for example if you feel the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) or the Designated Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, you may report to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.</p> <p>To report to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer, you should use the <a href="#">Alternative Form for Recording Safeguarding Concerns and Incidents</a>.</p>
<p>The information recorded in the Form for Recording Safeguarding Concerns and Incidents will be stored securely and confidentially. You should not share this information with additional parties besides the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy Safeguarding Officer)*. However, the information may be accessed by third parties such as child protective services, police, or legal services.</p>	
<p>The Designated Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy) will review the information and determine whether further action will be taken, including whether to report the information to the authorities, as appropriate.</p>	
<p><i>If you would like support following the incident/allegation, please inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer or your supervisor. Please remember that the details of the allegation should be treated as confidential and shared on an as-needed basis.</i></p>	



*\*NOTE: If you need support in this reporting process, you may speak with your supervisor or another member of the senior leadership team for support. However, as much as possible, you should avoid breaching confidentiality and only share details on an as-needed basis.*

