



Dar es Salaam International Academy

SCHOOL • HOME • COMMUNITY

DIA Child Protection Policy

July 2017

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DIA recognizes the primary role of a school to care for a rounded development of students. DIA cares for the health and safety of all our students in a holistic sense through a nurturing environment i.e. their educational, emotional, mental and physical aspects. This policy is created using the UN Convention of the Rights of a Child, Tanzanian law, and the culture of our school community and their families as a framework.

DIA is in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC) which states in Article 3.1 that;

“In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.”

Therefore the best interests of a child are a primary concern is the guiding principle of this policy.

There are three parts to this policy;

- Background Information
- Prevention
- Support and Procedures for Suspected Abuse

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Background Information

Tanzanian law

According to The Law of the Child Act 2009, a child is a person below the age of eighteen years. However, Tanzanian law is contradictory, and although the Tanzania’s Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act 1998 states that citizens may not consent to sexual intercourse until they are eighteen, the Law of Marriage Act 1971 permits girls to marry when they are fifteen, and in some cases fourteen. Males must be eighteen to marry.

The Law of the Child Act makes it an offense to physically punish a child beyond which is ‘justifiable’ or ‘unreasonable’, and taking into consideration the age, and physical and mental condition of the child. According to the act, degrading treatment, which humiliates or lowers a child’s dignity, is also an offense. However, there is no further guidance as to what should be considered ‘reasonable’ or ‘justifiable’.

UN Rights of a Child

Similarly, the UN defines a child as anyone below the age of eighteen, and states that children have a right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. The UN does not state what forms of punishment parents should use.

Corporal Punishment in the Home

Corporal punishment in the home is legal in Tanzania, and in many other countries where members of the DIA community come from, including the US, the UK, South Africa, India, China, and Japan. Corporal punishment in the home is outlawed in 33 countries worldwide, including Denmark, Germany, Kenya, the Netherlands and Sweden.

The UN strongly advises against all forms of corporal punishment, as it often leads to punishment which is degrading for the child. Research from various countries shows that corporal punishment can be harmful in the long-term.

Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden in DIA. DIA accepts that all parents/guardians in Tanzania have the right to discipline their children within the boundaries of the law, however, the DIA campus should be a corporal punishment free zone.

Corporal Punishment versus Physical Abuse

As boundaries between corporal punishment and physical abuse are vague, and terms such as 'justifiable' and 'reasonable' may mean different things to different people, DIA will follow a definition from UNICEF which states that "Corporal punishment is the use of physical force causing pain, but not wounds, as a means of discipline". When marks, wounds or bruises are present, this is considered physical abuse.

Child abuse in the International Community

Child abuse occurs in all countries and cultures, among wealthy, middle-income and poor communities. Research shows that most abuse is committed against children by family members, or other people known to the child. The international community is particularly at risk, as families are often isolated, with extended family members living abroad. Relocation can make it difficult for children to establish safe and dependable relationships. Students may be confused by conflicting values among different communities, and be unsure of what appropriate behavior is. Students in international communities can be exposed to more freedom than students in other communities, with access to drivers and maids/nannies. Due to the combination of isolation and a lack of knowledge of helpful resources in the community, children in international school communities are at risk of abuse.

Types of Child Abuse

Abuse comes in many forms. The abuse may be school originated or home originated. Abuse includes neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The following definitions are those used by the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse of a child is defined as the intentional use of physical force against a child that results in

or has a high likelihood of resulting in harm for the child's health, survival, development or dignity. This includes hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning and suffocating. Much physical violence against children in the home is inflicted with the object of punishing.

Sexual Abuse:

Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to:

- the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
- the exploitative use of children in pornographic performance and materials".
- Child sexual abuse also consists of non-physical contact and non-penetrative activities (including online activity), such as:
 - involving children in watching sexual activities
 - encouraging children to behave in sexually explicit ways
 - exposing them to inappropriate sexual material

Emotional abuse:

This is the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with her or his personal potentials and in the context of the society in which the child dwells. There may also be acts towards the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. These acts must be reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Acts include;

rejecting or ignoring a child completely, conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, using degrading language or behaviours towards them, responding to their attempts to interact with emotional detachment, making fun of them, threatening them or encouraging them to develop behaviours that are self-destructive, preventing the child from interacting socially with other children or adults, experiences of bullying, including online bullying, a child seeing or hearing the ill treatment or serious bullying (including online bullying) of another, causing a child to feel frequently frightened or in danger, the exploitation or corruption of children.

Neglect:

Neglect can be defined as the failure to provide for the development of the child in all spheres: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and causes or has a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.

Bullying:

Another common aspect that can lead to abuse is Bullying. DIA has zero tolerance for all forms of Bullying and adheres to a strict Behavior policy as well as Bullying Policy for reported bullying incidents. Any bullying that will pose a threat to a child's safeguarding and wellbeing will be addressed using the Child protection policy measures.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, online bullying via email or social media), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Prevention

At DIA, the main driving force behind Child Protection is the DIA Counselor, who is part of the the Student Services Department. The Counselor is supported by the members of the Executive Committee, who are deeply committed to Child Protection.

DIA is part of group of dedicated professionals who meet regularly to discuss ways to safeguard children. This group is called a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) and consists of people such as counselors, law enforcement officers, social welfare officers, psychologists and other medical professionals and school administrators.

DIA should be a safe environment for all students, where they can feel secure in a "listening" and non-judgmental setting.

In order to establish a safe and nurturing environment DIA will implement responsible action in the following areas.

Recruitment

- All applicants will be expected to follow the Recruitment Policy, which is reviewed on an annual basis
- All applicants will go through a two tier interview process, commencing with the respective Coordinator and if successful, the Head of School will interview the applicant
- Upon interviewing, a minimum of two references will be required for the applicant and these will be requested directly by DIA from the reference contact

DIA will not employ anyone in any capacity that has previous convictions of child abuse/sexual abuse. Other criminal convictions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on their relevance to the position sought.

All background screening undertaken by DIA will comply with relevant privacy laws.

DIA will not be responsible for the behavior of students or adults from other organizations and schools whilst attending events on the DIA campus. However, they will be expected to follow DIA's Security Policy (which includes the Lock Down Policy, Fire Policy, and Parking Policy).

All external coaches that are coaching/teaching DIA students e.g. during after school activities will be required to sign a Child Protection agreement and abide by DIA policy. Similarly, all parents/guardians attending school field trips (refer to Field trip policy) will also be required to sign the Child protection agreement.

Staff Code of Conduct

DIA aspires to create and maintain a nurturing environment for all children, which promotes respect, communication and intercultural awareness.

DIA's personal and nurturing environment is as a result of staff that cares, and who show other members of the school community respect through what they say and what they do.

All staff must be aware of different norms and expectations among students, depending on personality, background and culture. All staff must be aware that they themselves are responsible for how they are perceived through their behavior at all times throughout the school day.

DIA values the role of positive touch between teacher and student, in creating a caring, nurturing and personal environment. All teachers must show discretion as to what is appropriate positive touch, and what is not. Qualifying factors will depend on the student's personality, comfort level, background and culture. Any form of sexual contact is never appropriate.

While it is accepted that students in Kindergarten will seek more physical contact with teachers, such as sitting on a teacher's knee, in Grade 1, class teachers should encourage students to be more aware of physical boundaries between student and teacher, and by Grade 2, students should be comfortable sitting alone.

While changing for swimming, boys and girls should always be separated, regardless of age, and should not change in an open space. This applies to all children on DIA premises. Male teachers should never enter the female changing room while students are changing, and female teachers should never enter the male changing room while students are changing.

While one-on-one time is valuable for students who require support, teachers should make sure that other members of their team are aware of where the meeting is, and who it is with. In situations where it has not been possible to alert someone in advance, the classroom door should always be left open.

All staff are expected to report incidences of suspected abuse, or inappropriate behavior of other staff members. The best interests of the child must always be the primary consideration.

While staff members are responsible for contributing to a caring, comfortable school environment, they should remain mindful of their position as a teacher, and not as a friend of the students. Teachers should not befriend students on social networking sites with their personal account. All communication with students should be fully transparent. While emailing or speaking with students, teachers should never say anything that they wouldn't like another staff member to hear. Any communication with students by phone or Internet should be strictly regarding school matters only. When emails and telephone numbers are exchanged, teachers should provide school contacts, and not personal information. Teachers should be provided with school phones on field trips as to not have to use their personal phones for school matters.

As looking out for the best interests of each and every child under our care is such an important part of what we do, the following agreement has been created to ensure that teachers have read the Child Protection Policy, have understood it and are in agreement with DIA's policies and beliefs.

Please also refer to the Child Protection Agreement 2017/ 2018 (Appendix 1).

Safety Procedures in the school environment

In order to monitor who is on the school campus, all teachers, members of administration and support staff are required to wear identity badges. All support staff are required to be in uniform. All visitors, parents and drivers are also required to have an appropriate pass.

Passes must be displayed at all times.

Security guards man the gates at all times, and security cameras are placed all over the exterior of the school campus. No student can leave the campus without prior permission.

Training for Staff

DIA is committed to ongoing training of staff, and will ensure each year to organise training for teachers regarding child protection matters, including behaviour management, delivering of Personal Sexual Health Education, and an awareness of normal sexual development of children.

All teachers will be briefed on the Child Protection Policy on a regular basis, and will have access to a copy of it throughout the year.

In Addition to teachers, all support staff, administration staff and other staff involved with the students such as the canteen staff and security guards will also be required to attend a mandatory Child protection workshop at the start of the year in order to understand the expectations of the policy and thereafter sign their child protection agreement form.

Educating Students

All students at DIA (PYP, MYP & DP) will participate in PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education) classes throughout the year. One of the core themes in their PSHE curriculum is Child protection education whereby they explore a variety of topics related to safeguarding.

Throughout the school year teachers also educate the students on appropriate and expected behaviour in school. Their classroom agreements as well as school rules require that they maintain acceptable personal boundaries and practice keeping their hands to themselves.

DIA recognizes that students come from a range of countries, backgrounds and cultures, and some students may not be aware of the reasonably conservative attitude towards public displays of affection in our school community, compared to other schools they may have attended. Appropriate behavior within the DIA context will be taught and encouraged throughout the school year. DIA will continue to strive for a mindful mindset through their overall conduct as well as through their teaching.

All students will also have age appropriate information about the DIA Child Protection Policy shared with them.

The focus of child protection lessons is for all students to be able to:

1. IDENTIFY unsafe and difficult situations at their age appropriate level;
2. ACT in an unsafe and difficult situation;
3. ACCESS trusted persons in an unsafe and difficult situation;
4. REPORT an unsafe and difficult situation;
5. AVOID unsafe and difficult situation.

Educating Parents/Guardians

It is mandatory that all parents/guardians should be aware of DIA's Child Protection Policy. This means how DIA determines child abuse, and of the teacher's' responsibilities and obligations. The policy will be given to all parents/guardians at the beginning of each academic year, where they will need to sign the back page to confirm that they have read and understood it. As well as having this copy, the policy will also be available throughout the year on the school website.

DIA will work alongside parents/guardians to ensure the social, physical and emotional well-being of all students. In such cases where students are seeing a psychologist or receiving any kind of external support, teachers will support/integrate the aims and goals of the external support sessions as appropriate. The Head of School, PYP Coordinator, MYP Coordinator, DP Coordinator, School counsellor or other appropriate members of staff should be available to communicate with parents/guardians or external supporters such as psychologist when it will be for the benefit of the child.

DIA will hold a mandatory workshops for parents/guardians at the start of each year to relay the Child protection policy and educate them on the ways in which they can contribute to safeguarding the DIA and outside community.

Support and Procedures for Suspected Abuse

Possible indicators of abuse

It is important to note that while the list of possible indicators in Appendix 3 are possible signs of abuse, existence of such factors does not guarantee that it is evidence of abuse. If teachers notice any of the signs mentioned in the list they should investigate the matter further, obtain adequate information and consider context.

When a teacher suspects abuse the following procedure applies. In addition, if a student reports any of the indicators, or any other issue the teacher feels is of significance, then that teacher must follow the guidelines set out in this policy.

When dealing with bullying, please refer to the Behaviour Policy.

If a student wishes to confide in a teacher, the teacher has the responsibility to follow the disclosure guidelines as required by the school mentioned below in the policy. (Refer appendix 2 for additional disclosure guidelines).

PYP

The teacher should first formally inform class teacher by email and CC Coordinator as well as School Counsellor by email.

The class teacher will then report the matter formally to the Coordinator.

The Coordinator and the class teacher will discuss the matter, and if of a serious nature, report it to the Head of School. If this is done in a face to face meeting it must be documented in a follow up email after.

A meeting will be held between the class teacher, PYP Coordinator, School Counsellor, Head of School and the teacher who was involved in reporting the matter initially, to clarify details and to discuss concerns.

A meeting will be held between the students' parents/guardians and the Head of School. Other members of staff may be asked to join where appropriate.

Secondary

The teacher should first formally inform the Grade Leader, MYP Coordinator and School Counsellor. This should be documented via a follow up email.

If deemed serious, the MYP Coordinator will inform the Head of School.

A meeting will be held between the Grade Leader, MYP/ DP Coordinator, School Counsellor, Head of School and the teacher who was involved in reporting the matter initially to clarify details and to discuss concerns and to establish a plan of action.

In some cases parents/guardians will be expected to sign a waiver that if continuous abuse is detected then DIA will inform the necessary authorities. The school may also reach out to other Child Protection Advocates to seek advice.

Student Disclosure procedures:

When a student initially approaches you with a problem;

- Two teachers should be present for all meetings with students when a student is discussing an issue mentioned above (e.g. any form of abuse, depressive thoughts, serious anxiety issues, existence of an eating disorder, drug use, self harm). As a student might begin to talk to you when you are alone, as soon as you become aware of the sensitive nature of the conversation, inform the student that you are pleased that they have made the important step to confide in someone. Then explain to the student that, according to policy and in order to help them as effectively as possible, it is important that there is another teacher present in the meeting, and in any future meetings. The student should choose the other teacher.
- A balance must be established between confidentiality and secrecy. When a student first approaches you, do not make a promise that you cannot keep, for example to keep information a secret. It is not a teacher's role to keep secrets. Explain that you may need to pass on a brief outline of the issue to the Student Support Coordinator. The student's issue will be kept confidential as long as you and the Department Coordinators do not feel that his/her safety is threatened.
- Respect the student's wishes not to tell their parents/guardians, if his/her health/well being is not in immediate and critical danger. If the student's trust is broken, s/he may be discouraged from confiding in someone again.

•Following the first meeting, record the main points. In order to maintain confidentiality do not use the student's real name. Keep these records in a safe place, and inform the Department Coordinators of how to access them. The purpose of these records is to protect yourself should there be a problem at a later stage, and you are required to say when you were approached, what was discussed, and what advice you gave.

•Contact the PYP Coordinator (if in PYP), MYP Coordinator (if in PYP) and DP Coordinator (if in DP) and report the main points of the meeting to him/her. The respective department Coordinators should be informed so that you have support and so that it can be ensured that the student is not confiding in different teachers and receiving conflicting advice/support.

•Be an open ear for the student. Avoid telling them what to do. Let them know that they are not alone, and that someone cares. Students come from many different backgrounds, with associated cultural, religious and social values. Teachers must accept that the student's values may differ to their own perceived notion of what is the 'correct' thing to do, regardless of that said teacher's own cultural, religious or social ethics.

•Wherever possible, encourage the student to discuss their problem with their parents/guardians or another family member, as although a teacher can provide a listening ear, it is unlikely that s/he can take much action to improve the situation.

•Wherever possible, meetings will be held with parents/guardians to discuss the concerning issue. However, if this is not deemed in the student's' best interests, other family members may be contacted, or the student may be referred confidentially to a psychologist.

When meeting with family members, those present, including teachers, the student, and the relevant family members, will have been agreed on by the Head of School, the Student Support Coordinator, the Department Coordinator, as appropriate, and the relevant student.

The following resources may be helpful for the student to look at. If it is difficult for him/her to get personal time at home to look at them, try to arrange a time when s/he could use a computer in school in privacy (e.g. using a lab computer when there are no activities or classes)

•www.childline.org.uk- has forums to read, games and activities to play, and offers a sense of not being alone. Students outside the UK cannot participate in the forums, or contact childline, but they might still benefit from reading the forums and other information. Other teenagers, and not experts answer questions on the forum, but the posts are moderated by childline before they are posted.

•www.kidshealth.org - has many questions with answers reviewed by a team of pediatricians and other medical experts. Questions are regarding a range of topics, but do include Emotions and Mental Health, Self Esteem, Parents and Family, Depression, and Alcohol and Drugs.

•If it is determined that the student would benefit from seeking counselling support in school then this can be recommended for the student. Depending on the severity of the case, external counselling support/psychological services can be arranged.

•If the child's safety is compromised and s/he is in danger, information must be reported. Explain to the child that you will have to talk to their parent(s)/guardian as you feel their safety is seriously at risk.

In both Departments, the Coordinators must inform the Executive Committee of any suspected any form of abuse, (emotional, sexual, physical, neglect), worrying depressive thoughts, serious anxiety issues, existence of an eating disorder, drug use or suspected cases of self harm, so that these suspicions can be documented in a confidential manner. The Child Protection log kept by the Executive Committee is kept so that patterns can be identified over time, regardless or personnel turn-over.

Procedure for Meeting with Parents/ Guardians

When a concern has arisen, and a meeting is to be held with parents/guardians, the following procedures should apply:

The parents/guardians will receive a request to attend the meeting due to concerns about their child. Both parents/guardians are expected to attend the meeting if applicable, as well as any significant caregiver.

The parents/guardians should be informed who will be attending the meeting on DIA's side, and be informed that they are free to bring any companion(s) they so wish.

The meeting must be conducted in a neutral, investigative, non-accusing manner. It is vital that the school gets the support of the family as much as possible, and that they feel that they are being supported rather than threatened.

The school will outline their concerns with the parents/guardians, and say what they have noticed.

The parents/guardians will have a chance to express their opinion and viewpoint.

The school should allow the parents/guardians to suggest a plan of action. The school should also contribute suggestions.

Depending on the situation, these may include parenting workshops, counseling support for parents/guardians or child, techniques and strategies to use at home.

All plans of action and meetings will be formally documented.

One or more follow up meetings will be held, to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Allegations Made Against Staff

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the allegation will be paid attention to and the matter will be investigated thoroughly. The nature of the investigation will depend on the nature of the allegation.

The following steps may be taken when investigating an allegation of abuse:

Third Party advice may be sought where necessary. DIA may chose to consult with the DSM MDT (Multi Disciplinary Team) DIA may appoint a Child Protection Panel which must include the HOS, a second member from EC and a member of staff appointed by the accused teacher, to investigate the matter

During the course of the investigation the staff member may be asked to take a leave of absence to avoid any conflicts of interest.

If the staff member is found guilty, his/her contract will be terminated immediately. S/he will not receive a reference, and the matter will be reported to the police if it was of a criminal nature.

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Department Coordinators, School counsellor and Head of School.



DIA Child Protection Agreement

I will:

- Treat all staff and students with respect, dignity and patience
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism
- Use positive, appropriate touch only
- Report any concerns regarding staff behavior or possible abuse to the Coordinator/ HOS or ED
- Show full cooperation with any investigations
- Follow the behavior policy when awarding consequences to students for unacceptable behavior
- Communicate with students in an open and transparent fashion
- Afford students privacy when changing for swimming and PE

I will not:

- Spend time alone with a student with the door closed without any other staff members being informed
- Set out to embarrass, ridicule or emotionally abuse any child
- Give secret gifts to any student
- Receive secret gifts from any student
- Display inappropriate behavior while working with students, such as smoking, drinking alcohol, using inappropriate language, watching inappropriate videos or looking at inappropriate websites while working with students
- Touch any child in an inappropriate area regardless of his/her age
- Speak to or touch any student in a sexual manner
- Use physical punishment of any form
- Share personal email and telephone details with students

I understand that failure to follow this code of conduct will result in disciplinary action, which may include having my contract terminated.

Staff Members Name & Signature

Dates



DIA Child Protection Agreement

Naahidi kuwa;

- Nitawaheshimu wafanyakazi na wanafunzi wote
- Nitatumia mbinu zenye kujenga kuliko kulaumu
- Nitatumia miguso adilifu na yenye kufaa kila mara
- Nitatoa taarifa zinazohusiana na matukio yasiyofaa kinidhamu kwa mratibu wa shule
- Nitatoa ushirikiano kuhusu masuala ya kiuchunguzi
- Nitafuata sera ya nidhamu wakati wa kutoa adhabu kwa wanafunzi
- Nitakuwa muwazi na mkweli wakati wa kuwasiliana na wanafunzi
- Nitazingatia usiri wa wanafunzi wakati wa kubadili ili kushiriki michezo

Naahidi kuwa :

- Sitakuwa peke yangu na mwanafunzi wakati mlango umefungwa bila wafanyakazi wenzangu kuwa na taarifa
- Sitambugudhi wala kumkera kihisia mwanafunzi yeyote
- Sitampatia mwanafunzi yeyote zawadi kwa siri
- Sitapokea zawadi yoyote kwa siri kutoka kwa mwanafunzi
- Sitaonyesha tabia yoyote isiyofaa nikiwa na wanafunzi mfano kuvuta sigara, kunywa pombe, lugha zisizofaa au kutazama picha mbaya katika mitandao
- Sitamgusa mwanafunzi sehemu nyeti pasipo kujali umri wake
- Sitaongea au kumgusa mwanafunzi kimapenzi
- Sitatumia adhabu zenye kudhuru mwili au kuathiri hisia
- Sitatoa mawasiliano binafsi kwa wanafunzi
- Natambua kwamba kutokufuata utaratibu huu wa kinidhamu, kutasababisha kupewa adhabu kali au hata kufukuzwa kazi

_____ Jina la mfanyakazi na Sahihi _____ Tarehe



Protocols for Handling Disclosure

IN ADDITION TO THE STEPS MENTIONED IN THE POLICY ABOUT DISCLOSURE BELOW ARE GUIDELINES IN CASE A CHILD TELLS YOU HE/SHE HAS BEEN ABUSED

- React calmly, do not panic.
- Assure them that they are not to blame for the abuse. Be aware that the child may have been threatened.
- Never push for information, repeatedly ask the same question, or ask leading questions. For example, say, “Then what happened”, don’t say “Did he touch your leg?”
- Do not fill in words, finish sentences, or make assumptions. Don’t seek help while the child is talking to you.

Things to say:

Repeat the last few words of the child in a questioning manner. “I believe you.”
“I am going to try to help you.” “I am glad you told me.”
“You are not to blame.”

Things NOT to say:

- “You should have told someone before.
- “I can’t believe it. I’m shocked.”
- “I won’t tell anyone else.
- “Why?”
- “How?”



Possible Indicators of Abuse:

POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE ARE:

- Unexplained bruises and welts on any part of the body.
- Bruises of different ages (various colours).
- Injuries reflecting shape of article used (electric cord, belt, buckle, ping pong paddle, hand). Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation.
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms, back or buttocks.
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron or cigarette.
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso.
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child.
- Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line.
- Unexplained laceration, abrasions, or fractures.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE:

- Sexual knowledge, behaviour or use of language not appropriate to age level.
- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns.
- Venereal disease in a child of any age.
- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital or anus areas.
- Difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Refusing to change into physical education (PE) clothes, fear of bathrooms.
- Child running away from home and not giving any specific complaints.
- Not wanting to be alone with an individual.
- Pregnancy, especially at a young age.
- Extremely protective parenting.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF NEGLECT:

- Parents are uninterested in child's academic performance/wellbeing.
- Parents do not respond to repeated communications from the school.
- Child does not want to go home or associates negative connotations to home life
- Both parents and guardian are absent from home frequently
- Parents/guardians cannot be reached in the case of an emergency.
- Child is unwashed or hungry or displays a concerning physical appearance