



1. HopeBox Child Protection Policy

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1.1 Introduction

When one orders a nutritious lunch from HopeBox, all proceeds go to providing paid-work, accommodation and the tools to enable women who have escaped domestic violence to be financially independent for the future. HopeBox recently merged with Back to School (BTS), or *Đi Học* in the Vietnamese language. BTS is a community initiative founded in 2013 by a group of development workers. The goal of our initiative was to facilitate access to education and personal development opportunities for Vietnamese children who were survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) or hail from very low-income backgrounds. Gender-based violence is an epidemic in Vietnam. The HopeBox Child Protection Policy has been created to raise awareness around child protection issues, educating HopeBox employees, and promoting the best practice for women and children in any HopeBox affiliated events.

Vietnamese police recorded 1,547 child abuse cases in 2018 but that number is suspected to be significantly higher. Due to a culture of indifference and a strong stigma in Vietnam in regards to child abuse, when combined with a poor legal framework, a lot of child abuse will go unreported. In order to protect children, a strong legal framework needs to be enforced and the law needs to be less ambiguous. As such, a Child Protection Policy is a vital way to set a standard for HopeBox and all its stakeholders.

1.2 HopeBox Principles and Values of Belief

HopeBox seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. These activities may be held in Hanoi or other surrounding regions in Vietnam. By implementing the practices listed below, our main goal is to protect the children of HopeBox from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior whilst also protecting our HopeBox employees, HopeBox women, other children and volunteers from fictitious accusations.

1.3 Policy Scope & Statement of Intent

The HopeBox Child Protection Policy is a policy and statement of intent. It applies to all HopeBox employees and our operations, the operations of our partner organisations that we may be affiliated with and also the actions of our volunteers. The policy is written with the acknowledgement that every HopeBox employee and volunteer has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.

1.4 Voices of the children

We are committed to listening to children and obtaining regular feedback from their experiences or interactions with HopeBox, our procedures and any employees or persons.

1.5 Definitions

Below is a list of definitions in which HopeBox will hereon refer to:

Child: For purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

Employee: The term “employee” includes both paid and unpaid persons who work with children or may come into contact with a child throughout any activity that HopeBox organises or is affiliated with.

Physical abuse: Any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.

Emotional abuse: Emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing from any employee or persons who come in contact whilst at HopeBox, a HopeBox event or any HopeBox affiliated event.

Sexual abuse: Any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography or anything that relates to grooming for sexual exploitation.

Neglect: Depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate and healthy food, water, accommodation, and medical care should it be required.

Child labour: Any exploitation of a child through any form of work that deprives children of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and is mentally, physically, socially or morally harmful.

Customer: Any person who purchases from HopeBox Cafe and could be in the presence of children.

Human trafficking: Any child who may be recruited or exposed to of trafficking whether it be transported, transferred, harboured or received for the purpose of exploitation. A child may not be forced to work.

1.6 Vietnamese Law, International Policy and Local Organisations

HopeBox will abide by all laws and policies implemented by the Government of Vietnam and international laws. Furthermore, we intend to work with the leading organisations combating child abuse in Vietnam. They have an extensive network with law enforcers, lawyers and media agencies for advocacy and legal prosecution. The following is specific to the HopeBox Child Protection Policy:

Government of Vietnam: According to the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) under the International Labour Organization (ILO), *“child labour is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.”*

UNICEF: In Vietnam, UNICEF strengthens the national child protection system which is not currently heavily enforced.

UN Convention: Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides for the protection of children in and out of the home.

Non profit organisations operating in Vietnam

Blue Dragon Foundation: A non profit which helps street kids, children with disabilities, children from rural families living in extreme poverty, and victims of human trafficking and slavery. They provide vital services needed for recovery and growth. Blue Dragon has an extensive networks of law enforcers, lawyers and media agencies for advocacy and legal prosecution.

Hagar International: A non profit which helps exploited, abused, and trafficked women and children. They also provide significant counselling to help heal the trauma of human trafficking, slavery, and abuse that women and children have experienced.

Save the Children: Since 2013, Save the Children has worked with local communities and organizations in Vietnam to design Sponsorship programs for children.

Childfund: An independent and non-religious international development organisation that works to reduce poverty for children in developing communities.

Center for Women and Development: The Centre for Women and Development (CWD) is an institution directly subordinated to the Vietnam Women's Union (VWU).

Humanitarian Services of Vietnam: Humanitarian Services for Children of Vietnam is a safe house for girls under the age of 18. It is dedicated to investing in and providing opportunity and knowledge to the children and their families.

2.0 Policy Procedures

2.1 Below are a list of steps and in-house regulations that HopeBox will take to minimise the chance of child abuse in any form or shape. All persons who desire to work with the children participating in HopeBox events, programs affiliated activities will be screened. This screening includes but is not limited to the following:

Written Application: All persons seeking to work with children must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by HopeBox. The application will request basic information from the applicant and a photocopy of their passport. The application will inquire into previous experience with children, previous HopeBox affiliation if any, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions in Vietnam or their home country. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file at HopeBox database and available upon request from law enforcement.

Personal Interview: Upon completion of the application, a face-to-face interview will be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position. This may be conducted via skype due to geographical limitations.

Reference Checks: Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two of the applicants' references will be checked and their identity confirmed. These references will ideally be sourced from organisations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. The

application form will be maintained in confidence on file at HopeBox and available upon request from law enforcement.

Police Check/Criminal Record: A police check will be required from the home country of the employee and if a legal resident of Vietnam, from the Vietnamese Police. The cost of the police check will not be reimbursed by HopeBox.

Statutory Declaration: If a Police Check is not available due to extending circumstances, a statutory declaration will be required.

Behavioural interview questions:

1. *What do you like most about working with children?*
2. *What do you like least about working with children?*
3. *What age groups do you prefer to work with?*
4. *How do you handle misbehaviour with children?*
5. *Do you have any physical/mental issues that may impact your ability to do the role?*
6. *What would you do if children were fighting and got physical?*
7. *How would you define cultural competence?*

2.2 Employee contracts in regards to HopeBox Child Protection Policy

All employees who work with HopeBox will be required to read and sign our *Code of Conduct* as well as our *HopeBox Child Protection Policy*. In HopeBox employee contracts we reserve the right for instant dismissal for a breach of the documents listed above. Should the breach be of a heinous nature, legal and police action will be administered.

2.3 Child Protection Training for HopeBox Employees

HopeBox is fully committed to the care, safety and protection of children and the policy and procedures it intends to implement with the HopeBox Child Protection Policy. Employees will receive their own physical copy (signed) of the HopeBox Child Protection Policy as well as a digital copy. This approach to child protection strengthens the focus on the prevention of child abuse.

Training will be mandatory for employees who will work in direct contact with the Back to School (BTS) program and involve an educational session on cultural competence. An educational package will also be provided to all HopeBox employees which will have important numbers such as the The National Child Protection Hotline and how to distinguish signs of abuse. In addition, HopeBox is in the process of developing partnerships with larger organisations such as Blue Dragon and Hagar International. Both organisations can assist with legal counselling or legal training for HopeBox employees.

Any changes to the HopeBox Child Protection Policy will be communicated to its employees via a hard copy signed (two copies) and an additional digital copy.

2.4 HopeBox Code of Conduct in relation to HopeBox Child Protection Policy

1. HopeBox is fully committed to protect children, no matter what gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, family or social background, from harm. HopeBox has zero tolerance for child abuse.
2. HopeBox has a legal and moral responsibility to protect all participants. This includes reporting information about suspected child abuse.
3. Child protection is a shared responsibility between all HopeBox employees. Further, all employees must be vigilant and be aware of any indications of abuse or non-accidental injury. All employees shall report any suspicions immediately, no matter how trivial it may seem or who the alleged perpetrator / victim is.
4. It is essential for HopeBox employees to adopt and adhere to work practices that not only ensure the safety of children, but also minimise the possibility of allegations of child abuse and neglect being made against them. Where allegations against an employee is made, HopeBox has a responsibility to investigate these immediately.
5. You are to maintain confidentiality of work-related projects and personnel. The women and children who are part of HopeBox are victims of domestic violence and have escaped from extreme situations. Failure to adhere to this will result in immediate dismissal.
6. You are to treat your HopeBox colleagues with respect and like any other individual you come across in a professional setting. Should we receive any report of a woman or child being treated with inferiority, there will be an investigation and if confirmed, your contract will be cancelled immediately. HopeBox will not tolerate racism or prejudice of any kind. Everyone at HopeBox is equal.
7. No photos will be taken without consent. Under no circumstances are you to take a photo with a HopeBox employee without their permission. No HopeBox employees will be posted online without approval from the Managing Director and/or Owner of HopeBox.
8. No photos of children are to be taken of or with children without the direct consent from their legal guardian.

9. Under no circumstances are photographs of children to be published to HopeBox employees or customers' social media without consent from their legal guardian. Obtained formal consent must be received.

10. No use of language or behaviour towards children that is generally considered is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually or provocative.
11. You are not to engage a child in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts

12. Wherever possible, to ensure that another adult is present when working with children or in contact with children.

13. You are not to invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.

14. You are not to rest or sleep close to unsupervised children, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible (noting that this does not apply to an individual's own children)

15. Not to use all computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or other technology appropriately, and never exploit or harass children, or access or disseminate child exploitative material through any medium, including social media.

16. You are not to use physical punishment or humiliating punishment on children.

17. You are not to hire children for domestic or other labour: which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage; which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities; or which places them at significant risk of injury.

18. You must comply with all relevant/appropriate local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour.

19. You must immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relates to child exploitation and abuse, including those under traditional law, which occurred before or occurs during my association with HopeBox.
20. You must be aware of behaviour and avoid actions or behaviours that could be perceived by others as child exploitation and abuse.
21. Ensure that you care to ensure local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming a child.
22. Ensure photographs, films, videos, DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Ensure that children are adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
23. Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts.
24. Ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.
25. HopeBox employees must not show favouritism towards any child.
26. Unlawful or unethical behaviour, either for personal gain or to obtain business, is unacceptable. Dishonest activity includes, but is not limited to, theft, engaging in bribery, improper transactions and improper use of HopeBox information or your position.
27. During the course of your work you may learn confidential and/or personal information about HopeBox, its customers, its suppliers and your fellow HopeBox employees. You must not disclose, permit to be disclosed or discuss any such information while you are employed by, or after you leave, HopeBox unless you have explicit permission to do so.

2.5 Disclosure, Reporting and Response to Allegations of Child Abuse: We believe that the safety of children is paramount at all times and aims to protect a child's right to be safe from abuse of any kind. All HopeBox employees and other people associated with Hopebox must

report any concerns for a child's safety, allegations of child abuse, or allegations of this policy being breached.

Who to report to: Any abuse that is noticed is to be immediately reported to the Owner and Founder of HopeBox, the Managing Director and at least one member of the Board of Directors. All employees will have these contact details and they are readily available.

When to report: Reporting of abuse will be immediate if any of the following occurs.

- a.) Disclosure of abuse from a child or mother/legal guardian
- b.) Another employee, child or mother/person who has witnessed the abuse.
- c.) Anyone who is action in a concerning way towards a child.

Disclosure of harm

A disclosure of harm occurs when someone, including a child, confides in you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. Phrases that may start the conversation:

1. *"I think I just saw..."*
2. *"Somebody told me that..."*
3. *"Just think you should be aware that..."*
4. *"I'm not sure what I want you to do, but..."*

Procedures for receiving a disclosure of harm

When receiving a disclosure of harm:

- Remain calm and find a private place to talk.
- Don't promise that you'll keep the harm a secret; tell them they have done the right thing in telling you but that you'll need to tell someone who can help keep them safe.
- Only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter; probing questions could cause distress, confusion and interfere and obstruct with any later enquiries.
- Do not attempt to conduct your own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved.

Procedure for abuse at HopeBox: Should abuse have occurred at HopeBox HopeBox event or by a HopeBox employee, the following procedure will be immediately implemented:

- a) The abuse will be reported immediately to the Owner of HopeBox, the Managing Director and the Board of Directors.

- b) The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
- c) The HopeBox employee and or customer alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation. He or she should be instructed to have no contact with the victim or with witnesses. Should the abuse be of a heinous nature, law enforcement will be called immediately and their home-embassy notified.
- d) HopeBox will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
- e) Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children. Their home-country embassy will be contacted and the local police enforcement if not already notified.
- f) HopeBox will contact organisations such as Hagar International & Blue Dragon to assist with trauma counselling for the child in question.

2.6 HopeBox Child Protection Risk Assessment

In order to identify potential risks, the below have been listed as to mitigate any serious threats to security and well-being of children. HopeBox is fully committed to a careful, sensitive approach to child safety.

RISK	EXISTING STRATEGY	LIKELIHOOD	CONSEQUENCE	CURRENT RISK RATING	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
Ad-hoc contractors /suppliers who come to HopeBox Cafe or affiliated event.	Maintain a log-book of visitors who are working. Monitor children if they are present.	Medium	Major	High	All HopeBox employees
Unknown people and environments	Monitor children if they are present.	High	Major	High	All HopeBox employees

	<p>Child safety code of conduct</p> <p>Train HopeBox employees to detect inappropriate behaviour</p>				
Recruitment of an inappropriate person	<p>Police check/Criminal records</p> <p>Two references</p> <p>Behavioural based questions</p>	Low	Major	Low	HopeBox Managing Director & HopeBox Founder/Owner

Inappropriate behaviour that is not reported and addressed	<p>Monitor children if they are present.</p> <p>Child safety code of conduct</p> <p>Train HopeBox employees to detect inappropriate behaviour</p> <p>HopeBox Child Protection Policy</p>	High	Severe	Medium	All HopeBox employees
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Re-traumatization when abused children work with law enforcement officers	Monitor children if they are present. Take preventive measures by engaging with partners and providing trauma sensitivity training for them through workshops or technical meetings.	Very High	Major	High	HopeBox Managing Director & HopeBox Founder/Owner
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2.7 HopeBox Child Protection Policy

HopeBox will review their Child Protection Policy every six months. Feedback will be obtained from the mothers of children who are a part of our Back to School (BTS) initiative. Any changes to the policy will be emailed to all HopeBox employees and a signed hard copy will be supplied to both the employee and management. Next reviewment date: 15.06.2020.

I am aware of the responsibilities in relation to the HopeBox Child Protection Policy:

Signed:

Date: ____/____/____

Step 3: Founder of HopeBox

Sign, date and file this procedure Date: ____/____/____

Name of person completing procedure:

Signature:
