



established 2018

Little U Child Safeguarding Policy

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Office Address : 22 Sin Ming Lane #06-76 Midview City Singapore 573969



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Little U Child Safeguarding Policy

Guiding Statement

We at Little U aim to quell abuse, neglect, and exploitation to create a safe and welcoming environment. We are dedicated to ensuring the well-being of all children participating in our programs, activities, and events, to enable each child to reach their full potential in a secure and affirming environment. Little U takes the responsibility for safeguarding children in its care to the highest standards, and we promote a culture of respect and accountability across our organisation. We will collaborate with stakeholders, including children, their families, and external partners, to create and guarantee a safe and nurturing space for our children and their wellbeing. For our children to grow and thrive, we take responsibility to ensure they know their rights to keep themselves safe.

Scope

Our Policy extends to all teachers, staff, volunteers, and any individual associated with Little U who has contact with the children during the course of their work or role.

Legal Framework

Little U abides by Singapore's statutes on the Children and Young Persons Act. We recognize the principles of the United Nations Rights of the Child.

This Policy is informed by the following:

- [Singapore Children And Young Persons Act \(CYPA\)](#)
- [Management of Child Abuse in Singapore - CFPS](#)
- [UN Convention On The Rights Of The Child](#)
- [The International Child Safeguarding Standards](#)
- [Writing Safeguarding Policies and Procedures by NSPCC Learning](#)

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Key Terms

Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as a person who is below the age of 18.

Adult

The definition of adult at Little U is any person 18 and above who is connected to the microschool consultancy through

- performing work including staff, freelancers, volunteers and
- community ties including caregivers and parents.

Parent (Guardian)

Parents have custody of the children and the authority to make decisions concerning the child's protection, education, care, discipline, etc.

Child Protection Officer

The person in charge of the Little U Child Safeguarding Policy, its dissemination, training and reporting. Currently the Child Protection Officer of Little U is Dawn Fung. You may contact her directly at the Little U Whatsapp +65-85506536.

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Defining Types of Abuse

Bear In Mind - Child abuse encompasses various forms of harm or maltreatment inflicted upon a child, but its fundamental meaning includes:

Physical abuse

Actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult, or child. It may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning, and burning. Physical damage may also be caused when a parent, guardian, or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

Sexual abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. This may include but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities, and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect and negligent treatment

Allowing for context, resources, and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refer to a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral, and mental development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm and provide for nutrition, shelter, and safe living/working conditions.

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Child Safety and Protection

The actions performed to stop and respond to child abuse are referred to as child protection. The precautionary measures put in place to reduce the possibility of child abuse are referred to as safeguarding.

Little U pledges to see to it that all parties involved in the microschooL consultancy uphold child protection and safeguarding procedures. All children must be protected against purposeful or inadvertent activities that put them in danger of harm or cause it, which requires both group and individual responsibility as well as the need for preventative measures.

Principles of Child Protection and Safeguarding

- All adults associated with Little U have a responsibility to provide children with support and the necessary tools to make well-informed decisions.
- All children have equal rights to be protected from abuse or harm.
- All adults must demonstrate respectful and appropriate behaviour towards children.
- Little U has a duty of care to children enrolled in the program and services of the microschooL consultancy.
- All actions on child protection are taken in the best interests of keeping the child away from harm, which is paramount.

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Little U Child Safeguarding Policy

Our Commitment

Little U is committed to creating and maintaining a child-respectful organisation that places the safety and welfare of children at the forefront of all activities, including :

- Respecting and promoting the rights and dignity of children as outlined in UNCRC.
- Adopting robust procedures to prevent harm to children and to respond effectively to any child protection concerns.
- Providing appropriate child protection training and support to all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.
- Collaborating with relevant authorities and agencies to ensure child protection principles are upheld.

ADULTS WILL...

(referring to adults performing work duties at Little U)

1. Prioritise the safety and well-being of children.
2. Familiarise themselves with the organisation's Child Safeguarding Policy.
3. Attend child protection training sessions provided by the organisation.
4. Report any suspicions or concerns regarding child abuse, neglect, or exploitation to the core team at Little U and the relevant authority in Singapore.
5. Cooperate fully in any investigations related to child protection concerns, providing accurate information and support as needed.
6. Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children, avoiding any behaviour or language that could be misconstrued as inappropriate.
7. Respect the privacy and confidentiality of children and their families, sharing information only on a need-to-know basis.

ADULTS WILL NOT...

(referring to adults performing work duties at Little U)

1. Spend time alone with the child outside of regular professional responsibilities or during non-Little U activities on weekends or evenings without notifying a leadership team member or obtaining parental consent.
2. Engage in physical violence, assault, or physical or emotional abuse towards children.
3. Engage in any form of relationship or behaviour towards a child that can be construed as exploitative.

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4. Employ language, make suggestions, or offer abusive advice.
5. Exhibit behaviour or use of language that is sexually inappropriate or provocative with students.
6. Support or engage in behaviour by children that is abusive or places their safety at risk.
7. Act in ways that demean, humiliate, degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate emotional abuse.
8. Act in ways that persistently fails to meet the child's needs and leads to the child's serious impairment in development.
9. Fail to cooperate in investigations related to child protection concerns.
10. Neglect or refusal to attend child protection training sessions provided by the organisation.
11. Prioritise their personal or professional interests over the safety and well-being of children in their care.

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Little U Child Safeguarding Policy

Procedures

1) Disclosure

At Little U, our interactions with children are based on respect, so we take every disclosure by children seriously.

- Children are encouraged to whistleblow or contact the Child Protection Officer.
- Every child and adult has access to the Child Safeguarding Policy and the Child Protection Officer.
- Every adult trained in the child protection courses by, or recommended by Little U, will respond accordingly, as per our section on “Adult Responses to Abuse”.

About Disclosure

Disclosure is the process by which children and young people start to share their experiences of abuse with others. This can take place over a long period of time – it is a journey, not one act or action. Children may disclose directly or indirectly and sometimes they may start sharing details of abuse before they are ready to put their thoughts and feelings in order. Not all disclosures will lead to a formal report of abuse or a case being made or a case being taken to court, but all disclosures should be taken seriously. It takes extraordinary courage for a child to go through the journey of disclosing abuse. Children may disclose abuse in a variety of ways, including:

- directly – making specific verbal statements about what’s happened to them
- indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
- behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this may or may not be deliberate)
- non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.

Children may not always be aware that they are disclosing abuse through their actions and behaviour. Sometimes children and young people make partial disclosures of abuse. This means they give some details about what they’ve experienced, but not the whole picture. They may withhold some information because they:

- are afraid they will get in trouble with or upset their family
- want to deflect blame in case of family difficulties as a result of the disclosure

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- feel ashamed and/or guilty
- need to protect themselves from having to relive traumatic events.
- feel they don't have anyone to turn to for support.
- may have sought help in the past and had a negative experience, which makes them unlikely to do so again.

They may also:

- feel that they will not be taken seriously
- feel too embarrassed to talk to an adult about a private or personal problem
- worry about confidentiality
- lack trust in the people around them (including parents) and in the services provided to help them
- fear the consequences of asking for help
- worry they will be causing trouble and making the situation worse
- find formal procedures overwhelming

Not all children and young people realise they have experienced abuse, for example if they have been [groomed](#).

Adults need to be able to notice the signs that a child or young person might be distressed and ask them appropriate questions about what might have caused this. Child protection training can help increase adults' confidence in recognising the indicators of abuse and understanding the different ways a child might try to share what they have experienced. You should never wait until a child or young person tells you directly that they are being abused before taking action. Instead, ask the child if everything is OK or discuss your concerns with the Little U's Child Protection Officer.

Not taking appropriate action quickly can also affect the child's mental health. They may feel despairing and hopeless and wonder why no-one is helping them. This may discourage them from seeking help in the future and make them distrust adults. It's important to create an environment where children and young people are comfortable about speaking out if anything is worrying them.

They need to:

- be able to recognise abuse and know it is wrong

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- know who they can talk to about it.

The people they choose to disclose to need to listen, understand and respond appropriately so the child gets the help, support and protection they need. At Little U, children should :

- name their body parts and know which parts should be private
- know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch
- understand they have the right to say "no"
- think about who they trust and who they can ask for help.

2) Adult Responses to Abuse

At Little U, our Child Protection Officer (and trained adults) will :

- **Give full attention to the child.** We will keep our body language open and encouraging. We will be understanding and reassure the child that their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown such courage today' help.
- **Take time to slow down.** We will not interrupt the child. We recognise and respond to their body language. It may take several conversations for them to share what's happened to them.
- **We will show evidence of our understanding.** We are interested in what the child is telling us. We use their language to show it's their experience. If a child tells us he is experiencing abuse, we will reassure him that he has done the right thing in telling us. Abuse is never their fault.
- **Never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the child's disclosure.** This could make things a lot worse for the child. *This is in reference to the disclosure and early investigation.*
- **Be non-biased.** We will follow up on each case in a fair and transparent manner for all involved.

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3) Consent

At Little U, our Child Protection Officer will :

- **Seek consent for information sharing from the child.** Children should be given the opportunity to decide whether they agree to their personal information being shared. If a child doesn't have the capacity to make their own decisions, we will ask the parent (unless doing so is harmful).
- **Fully inform the child on the significance of consent.** What information will be shared and why, who will see the information and what it will be used for, understands the consequences of the information not being shared, and ensure the child knows he can withdraw consent at any time.
- **Get the consent in writing to avoid future disputes.** If the consent is verbal, we will follow up with a written record.
- **Call the police and/or relevant agencies if the child is in immediate danger.**

At Little U, we want to make it as easy as you can for children to find and take up the offer of help. We will do these in whatever ways possible :

- Help children understand that seeking help is a sign of strength.
- Encourage parents to support their children in seeking help.
- Be positive about children, their capacity for change and their resilience.
- Listen to the people we help – improve our programs and services with children's feedback.
- See the whole person – we engage with young people both in terms of their strengths and their weaknesses.
- Build trust – treat young people with respect.
- Help young people to help each other – equip young people with the skills and tools to support their friends/peers and family members.
- Consider the role of new technologies – these should be complementary to other ways of supporting young people. E.g. using our Little U Discord

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4) Reporting

All records are private and confidential. They are shared only with the Little U Directors who keep the records, and the Child Protection Officer.

For all reports, Little U's Child Protection Officer will note :

- the date and time of the incident/disclosure
- the date and time of the report
- the name and role of the person to whom the concern was originally reported and their contact details
- the name and role of the person making the report (if this is different to the above) and their contact details
- the names of all parties who were involved in the incident, including any witnesses
- the name, age and any other relevant information about the child who is the subject of the concern (including information about their parents or carers and any siblings)
- what was said or done and by whom
- any action taken to look into the matter
- any further action taken (such as a referral being made)
- the reasons why the organisation decided not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency (if relevant)

For any adult associated with Little U who has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child behaved in a way that indicated they are unsuitable to work with young people, Little U will keep a permanent record. This is in case of future requests for a character or employment reference, or if future allegations pop up. The record will include :

- what the allegations were
- how the allegations were followed up
- how things were resolved
- any action taken
- decisions reached about the person's suitability to work with children

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Helplines

At Little U, we are concerned for the families in our care. We acknowledge that Little U will not have all the skills and resources available to offer help to vulnerable families and children. Families who are experiencing difficulties are advised to seek help early by approaching the nearest family service centre or social service office.

Child Protective Service Helpline: 1800-777 0000

(Monday to Friday, 8.30am-5.30pm and Saturday, 8.30am-1pm)

Child Protective Service

SLF Podium

#01-01 to #01-09

512A Thomson Road

Singapore 298137

Child Protection Specialist Centres

HEART@Fei Yue

6819 9170

<http://www.fycs.org/index.cfm?GPID=260>

heartadmin@fycs.org

Big Love Child Protection Specialist Centre

6445 0400

<http://www.biglove.org.sg/>

contact@biglove.org.sg

SAFE SPACE

6266 0171

<http://www.pave.org.sg>

adminpcsc@pave.org.sg

Monday – Friday 9.00am – 1.00pm; 2.00pm – 6.00pm

or the Police Divisional HQ or the nearest Neighbourhood Police Post.

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Recommended Reading (for all)

Introduction to Child Protection Policies

1. [What Is a Child Safeguarding Policy? | Save the Children](#)
2. [What Child Protection Policies Are by the EU](#)
3. [The Importance of a Child Protection Policy by EZRAH](#)
4. [Child Protection Policy By Children International](#)
5. [Writing Safeguarding Policies and Procedures by NSPCC Learning](#)
6. [Responding to children and young people's disclosures of abuse by Australian Institute of Family Studies](#)

International Rights

7. [Child Protection by UNICEF](#)
8. [A Summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by UNICEF](#)

Local References

9. [Research and Resources by Children's Society](#)
10. [Singapore American School's Child Safeguarding Handbook](#)

About this Document

This document was first co-created by 14-year-old Cara Lee with Little U founder and director Dawn Fung at the Little U Teen Groups in September 2023. A draft of this document was also shown privately to individuals in the Little U community and some of our partners for feedback. Little U's Child Safeguarding Policy will undergo annual evaluation and will be updated as necessary to remain relevant and efficient, in line with the latest practices and regulations of Singapore for child safety in educational contexts.

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