

Supplementary materials (Files S1–S4)

File S1: Safeguarding Charter

*Names of members of the safeguarding team and the project have been redacted in order to preserve confidentiality.

Safeguarding Charter – Youth Accountability and Deaf Inclusion in South Africa

Youth Accountability and Deaf Inclusion in South Africa (YADIS) project is being carried out through a partnership between the University of Leeds, the University of Pretoria, Hope and Homes for Children, One Child One Family HHCSA, the Bishop Simeon Trust, DeafKidz International and Thrive with funding received from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK).

The project involves both Deaf and hearing youth (ages 12 – 18) in an arts-based leadership programme. The youth will have the opportunity to develop both their filmmaking and leadership skills with the aim of fostering integration between Deaf and hearing children and supporting an outcome for all the youth to become autonomous citizens.

This document is aimed at describing the Safeguarding aims and principles which should be used to guide all the partners and staff participating the project. The fundamental principle is that all the children and young people participating in this project have the right to feel safe at all times and that the adults guiding the project take the collective responsibility to protect this right. Children's rights are upheld by the UN Convention of the Rights of a Child (South Africa is a signatory to this treaty) and the South African Constitution. A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years.

The project will involve both hearing and Deaf youth and it aims to create an inclusive environment where these two groups can flourish alongside one another.

1. Safeguarding Scope

Safeguarding encompasses anything that impacts the wellbeing of the children in our care and include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Physical abuse – where a child is hurt deliberately resulting in injuries like cuts, bruises, broken bones and burns (for example) – caused by hitting, shaking, kicking, burning poisoning etc.
- Sexual abuse – where a child is forced or encouraged to take part in sexual activities – this can be contact (even if a child is wearing clothes) or non-contact (for example, encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts).

- Emotional abuse – persistent action by adults which is harmful to a child’s emotional health and development – includes humiliating, mocking, blaming and constant criticism/putting down and rejection.
- Neglect – when a child’s basic physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs are not met – this applies only where there are sufficient material resources and these are deliberately denied to the child.
- Online abuse - any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones and it can happen anywhere online, including: social media; text messages and messaging apps; emails; online chat; online gaming and live-streaming sites.
- Bullying – this is intentional and repetitive hurting of one person by another – this can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace involving an imbalance of power.
- Exploitation – this is when an abuser takes advantage of a child for their own gain – this can happen in different ways and includes things such as child sex trafficking, recruiting children into the armed forces, trafficking children to work in factories, mines, homes etc.
- Social Stigma and discrimination – this is when a society or group of people have negative and usually unfair beliefs about others – this often results in isolation, exclusion, bullying and missed opportunities.
- Any other aspect that may hinder a child’s ability to thrive (experiencing a sense of belonging, modifications and adaptations allowing for equal access to services and resources, feeling empowered to share ideas, experiencing a positive sense of self, being accepted and feeling safe).

We note that the young people involved in the project are of a vulnerable population and have a statistically higher likelihood of experiencing any (or more than one) of the above human rights violations.

2. Deaf children and Safeguarding

Disabled children are of a minority group who have significant additional Safeguarding barriers (1). Although the research specifically about abuse among deaf children is limited, existing evidence suggests that the abuse rates among deaf children is up to 4 times that of the general population (Lomas & Johnson, 2012). Sullivan’s research in the United States revealed that deaf youth were 2-3 times more likely to be abused than typical hearing children and a risk factor identified, was that of being housed in a residential school, suggesting that half of deaf children in residential schools had experienced abuse (Sullivan et al., 1987). Similarly, research in Norway concluded that 1 in 3 deaf children were sexually abused and again a 50% of abuse was connected to the risk factor of being in a residential school (Kvam, 2004).

Most deaf children are born to hearing parents and in South Africa the majority of deaf children will not have access to amplification devices, they will rely on sign language for communication. There are few avenues for a family in SA to learn sign language and it is therefore often that case that children only begin to learn to communicate effectively once they are enrolled in a school for the deaf at around age 5. From ages 0 – 5 deaf children in South Africa have very limited access to language and once they do acquire

language there are already significant communication gaps that have opened up. This impacts many areas of their life: the ability to be understood, the confidence to communicate, the opportunity to create strong relationships with adults they trust, world knowledge.

Specific factors that make Deaf children more vulnerable are:

- Inability to tell others
- Inability to identify situations which may be unsafe
- Unaware of what behaviors are appropriate / inappropriate and what constitutes maltreatment
- Lack of understanding of personal and sexual development and information inaccessibility
- Less aware of rights
- Dependence on others to meet their needs
- Higher likelihood of being socially isolated and lonely
- Lack of understanding of social norms
- More likely to be separated from parents / primary carers in residential care
- Their credibility is questioned
- They are not a valued member of society
- Parents / Carers / Teachers being unaware that they are at higher risk of maltreatment
- Seen as being 'different'
- Impact of abuse is minimized
- Expressions of distress are attributed to the child's disability, not the abuse

It may take a long time for any child to disclose abuse, and this often happens as a process and not an isolated event. One of the factors that encourages disclosure is having strong relationships with trusted adults where a child feels comfortable and secure to disclose.

There are immense barriers that Deaf children face in the reporting of abuse and seeking help. Deaf children are not likely to report abuse to a hearing person and if they do the hearing adult may not have sufficient vocabulary and fluency in sign language to understand the disclosure. DSD, SAPS and child protection agencies are not adequately set up to support a Deaf child – vital information may be missed and miscommunication are likely to occur. It is likely that none of the professionals that the child comes into contact with will be Deaf themselves, hearing professionals will lack Deaf awareness and training and this will significantly impact an effective investigation.

3. Legal Framework for child protection

The South African Constitution, The UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (of which SA is a signatory), The Children's Act and The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act all provide the legal framework for child protection.

Section 110 of the Children's Act (No 38 of 2005) states that:

(1) Any correctional official, dentist, homeopath, immigration, official, labour inspector, legal practitioner, medical practitioner, midwife, minister of religion, nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, psychologist, religious leader, social service professional, social worker, speech therapist, teacher, traditional health practitioner, traditional leader or member of staff or volunteer worker at a partial care facility, drop-in centre or child and youth care centre who on reasonable grounds concludes that a child has been abused in a manner causing physical injury, sexually abused or deliberately neglected, must report that conclusion in the prescribed form to a designated child protection organisation, the provincial department of social development or a police official.

(2) Any person who on reasonable grounds believes that a child is in need of care and protection may report that belief to the provincial department of social development, a designated child protection organisation or a police official.

(3) A person referred to in subsection (1) or (2)-

(a) must substantiate that conclusion or belief to the provincial department of social development, a designated child protection organisation or police official; and

(b) who makes a report in good faith is not liable to civil action on the basis of the report.

Section 54 of the Sexual Offences Act states that all citizens of SA are compelled to report the sexual exploitation of children to the police.

4. What to do if a child discloses abuse

It can be quite difficult to know how to approach and response to a child, if they are trying to tell us about abuse as it is not easy for a child to make a disclosure. A positive approach is to go at the child's pace which may be initially listening or watching what they are telling us.

Be gentle and patient and follow these guidelines:

- Establish the Deaf child's preferred communication method so that appropriate communication support or a qualified sign language interpreter can be utilised to meet their needs. Do not be tempted to use a family member or friend to 'translate' simply because they 'can sign'.
- Ensure that the conversation is private – if a Deaf child is signing or if you are using an interpreter, be aware that sign language is easily viewed by others
- Do not interrupt
- Give your full attention to the child
- Ensure regular breaks, as the deaf child's visual attention span may be very short.

- Only ask questions for clarification if necessary
- Use relaxed body language and supportive facial expressions
- Ensure that the child knows that you are taking them seriously
- Reassure – they have done nothing wrong and they are brave!
- Tell them what will happen next
- Discuss with safety officer or other adults – do not take decisions on your own
- Follow the action pathway in the section below
- Make a written record as soon as you can

Things NOT to do if a child discloses abuse to you:

- Act shocked or upset
- Panic
- Question the child unnecessarily
- Make nasty comments about the person they are reporting
- Say that the conversation is a 'secret'
- Contact the family/caregiver
- Confront the alleged perpetrator
- Examine the child or ask them to remove clothing
- Keep the information to yourself

5. Pathway of reporting if there is a disclosure of abuse

Important contacts:

Bafana Mhlaphe –Safe park Co-ordinator

Rosinah Lubisi –Social Auxiliary Worker

Yvonne Manhovo – Contact who is responsible for gathering information on the incident and reporting to local authorities as well as ensuring that all interventions happen

Appointed Deaf safeguarding focal person – Contact who is responsible for gathering information on the incident and reporting to local authorities as well as ensuring that all interventions happen, this person needs to be engaged if the safeguarding incident involves a Deaf child

Mathabo Dolo – OCOF HHCSA Safeguarding Focal person who will manage the process and provide guidance to Yvonne Manhovo and the Appointed Deaf safeguarding focal person

Lourenza Foghill - Country Director of OCOF HHCSA

A Safeguarding concern arises about a young person
(concern identified by or brought to the attention of any of the project staff)

Daveyton Safe park
Safeguarding
procedures are to be
followed

A verbal report is immediately made to Bafana Mhlaphe (BM), Rosinah Lubisi (RL), Yvonne Manhovo (YM) and/or the Appointed Deaf safeguarding focal person (collectively The Safeguarding Contacts)
The Safeguarding Contact immediately makes a verbal report to Mathabo Dolo (MD) and Lourenza Foghill (LF)
The Safeguarding contact owns the process of gathering full details and completing the Reporting Template Form (Appendix 3), support may be received from YM - this is done on the same day of the incident being reported (any guidance required is received from MD)
If the young person requires medical or statutory care, SAWs working with the group should take immediate action

LF reports the incident to the Gauteng DSD

LF reports all actions and outcomes to the Project Management Team (

The Safeguarding Contact will follow up with all actions/interventions on the ground and remain in contact with MD and LF
Anything requiring escalation will be addressed with LF who will take the matter up with the Gauteng DSD
If no response is received from these agents, the provincial Director for Children, Families and Child Protection in Gauteng will be contacted.

LF will report back to the Project Management Team with relevant updates
The Safeguarding Contact and YM will also provide any necessary feedback to the person who received the disclosure.

6. Social Stigma and Discrimination

Most of the hearing youth participating in the project will not have yet met a Deaf person in their lives before – it is likely that social stigma against disabled people is pre-existing in many of the hearing youth. As part of the Safeguarding framework and in order for all the project participants to thrive, it is most important that both the hearing and Deaf youth gain understanding and acceptance of one another. The project will include specific interventions to break the stigma's and bring the two groups to common ground. Sensitization workshops and other ongoing activities will form part of the YADIS curriculum.

7. Safeguarding Pledge

I _____ (Name) pledge the following during my involvement in the YADIS project:

- ✓ I stand for the full flourishing of all children
- ✓ I will do everything in my power to protect children from harm
- ✓ I will put the safety and wellbeing of children ahead of anyone's embarrassment, inconvenience or offense
- ✓ I will follow all of the guidelines in this document, including the action pathway in the case of a child disclosing abuse to me
- ✓ I will treat any Safeguarding incident with confidentiality and, excluding those mentioned in the action pathway, will not discuss the incident with other members of the project team
- ✓ If I am not able to make contact with the relevant person depicted in the action pathway, I will seek an alternative person report to
- ✓ I commit to creating an environment where all of the children have equal opportunity to learn and engage with this project, including making modifications if required
- ✓ I will speak up if I witness or hear about any incidences of discrimination or bullying
- ✓ I will aim to resolve conflict with other staff members or adults amicably, modelling positive conflict management to the youth involved

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Role in the project: _____

8. Appendices

Contact details:

Contact details removed for publication

Template for reporting of abuse disclosure

Details of worker or volunteer reporting the incident or suspicion:	
Your Name:	
Your Address:	
Your Age:	
Your Email Address:	
Your Phone Number:	
Your Role in the YADIS Project:	
Child's Details:	
Child's Name:	
Child's Address:	
Child's Date of Birth:	
Who does the child live with? Please give names and nature of the relationship with the child e.g. uncle:	
Is the child male or female?	
Is the child deaf?	Yes/ No
Child's preferred mode of communication? (if known)	
Details of the Concern:	
Nature of the concern or allegation:	
Details of how you came to have the concern:	

Day, date, time and location of any incident(s):	
Observations made by you - please distinguish fact and hearsay:	
Details of any other children involved:	
Details of any witnesses:	
Action taken by you:	
What is the current situation and safety of the child?	
Your Signature:	
Date this form was completed	
Date form filed with Safeguarding officer and name of Safeguarding officer:	

Communication Tips when with a Deaf person

Do

- ✓ Ask for their preferred communication method - Check you are communicating appropriately
- ✓ Speak clearly - use gestures, writing or drawing if you get stuck
- ✓ Be brief and concise
- ✓ Express emotions in your face that reflect the tone of your voice
- ✓ Persevere - be ready to take your time, and be patient
- ✓ Maintain eye contact
- ✓ Place yourself at an easy distance with good lighting on your face
- ✓ Keep background noise to a minimum
- ✓ Tap the deaf person gently on their shoulder to get their attention, or wave if they are facing you

Don't

- ✗ Give up or say "Oh never mind" "It doesn't matter"
- ✗ Talk too fast or be in a hurry
- ✗ Change the subject without warning
- ✗ Shout
- ✗ Cover your mouth, look down/away or move around while talking
- ✗ Lean in too close or place yourself too far away
- ✗ Be embarrassed or use closed body language
- ✗ Exaggerate your lip pattern - it makes it more difficult to read your lips
- ✗ Startle a deaf person by approaching them from behind - they probably didn't realise you were there!

Some References





1. Westcott H. The abuse of disabled children: A review of the literature. Child: care, health and development. Child Care Health Dev. 1991;17(4):243-58.
2. Lomas GI, Johnson HA. Overlooked and Unheard: Abuse of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Their Experience With CPS and Foster Care. Fam J. 2012;20(4):376-83.
3. Sullivan P, Vernon M, Scanlan J. Sexual abuse of deaf youth. Am Annu Deaf. 1987;132(4):256-62.
4. Kvam M. Sexual abuse of deaf children. A retrospective analysis of the prevalence and characteristics of childhood sexual abuse among deaf adults in Norway. Child Abuse Negl. 2004;28(3):241-51.
5. Ridgeway S. Abuse and deaf children: Some factors to consider. Child Abus Rev. 1993;2(3):166-73.

File S2: Concourse Statements






Table S1. Concourse statements

Statement	Contradictory/ confirmatory statements
1. I am happy with myself.	2, 3 and 4
2. Sometimes I think I am no good at all.	1, 3 and 4
3. I do not have anything to be proud of.	1, 2, and 4
4. I am not good at communicating.	1, 2 and 3
5. I can solve my problems.	7 and 8
6. I am creative	
7. Sometimes I get so upset I can not solve problems.	5 and 8
8. I solve problems one step at a time.	5 and 7
9. I set goals and achieve them.	10
10. I start things but I do not finish them.	9
11. It is hard to work in a group.	
12. I like to be a leader.	
13. When I'm a leader, I listen to people's ideas.	
14. I like to have help from people who are wise.	15
15. People do not understand what I'm going through so they can not help me.	14
16. I feel good about being a member of my community.	17, 20 and 21
17. I can make a difference in my community.	16, 20 and 21
18. People can learn from my experiences.	26
19. I am a peace maker.	
20. I like working with my community	
21. My community listens when I have something to say.	
22. My community is not treated fairly.	23
23. Social problems affect our lives in my community.	22
24. Some people need more help than others.	25
25. It is important for everybody to be treated the same.	24
26. I can learn from people who are different from me.	18
27. It is important for me to know my rights.	
28. I can not change government rules.	30
29. My community makes me who I am.	
30. I feel that I can make changes to help my country.	28

File S3: Q-sort statement page and Completed Q-grid

					
					
 I like to be a leader. 	 My community listens when I have something to say. 	 I am creative. 			
 I feel good about being a member of my community. 	 I am happy with myself. 	 It is important for everybody to be treated the same. 			
 I do not have anything to be proud of. 	 When I am a leader, I listen to people's ideas. 	 I like to have help from people who are wise. 			
 It is hard to work in a group. 	 My community makes me who I am. 	 Sometimes I think I am no good at all. 			
 I am not good at communicating. 	People do not understand what I'm going through so they can not help me. 	 I am a peace maker. 			
 I solve problems one step at a time. 	 People can learn from my experiences. 	 I can not change government rules. 			
 I can make a difference in my community. 	 I can solve my problems. 	 Sometimes I get so upset I can not solve problems. 			
 My community is not treated fairly. 	 I feel that I can make changes that help my country. 	 I like working with my community. 			
 Social problems affect our lives in my community. 	 I set goals and achieve them. 	 I can learn from people who are different from me. 			
 I start things but I do not finish them. 	Some people need more help than others. 	 It is important for me to know my rights. 			

Q-Sort statement page

This is true for me ✓	This is a little bit true for me ✓	I don't really mind or I'm not sure	This is not really true for me ✗	This is not true for me ✗
				
I feel good about being a member of my community. 6	I like to be a leader. 12	When I am a leader, I listen to people's ideas. 13	Sometimes I think I am no good at all. 2	I do not have anything to be proud of. 3
I set goals and achieve them. 9	I solve problems one step at a time. 8	People do not understand what I'm going through so they can not help me. 15	My community makes me who I am. 29	I feel that I can make changes that help my country. 20
I am happy with myself. 1	My community is not treated fairly. 22	I can make a difference in my community. 17	I start things but I do not finish them. 10	My community listens when I have something to say. 21
	I can solve my problems. 5	I like to have help from people who are wise. 14	Social problems affect our lives in my community. 23	
	I am a peace maker. 19	I like working with my community. 20	I am not good at communicating. 4	
	I can learn from people who are different from me. 26	People can learn from my experiences. 18	Sometimes I get so upset I can not solve problems. 7	
	Some people need more help than others. 24	I can not change government rules. 28	It is hard to work in a group. 11	
		I am creative. 6		
		It is important for me to know my rights. 27		
		It is important for everybody to be treated the same. 25		

Completed Q-grid

File S4: Pre-YADIS-LDP Factor 1 Array

Pre-YADIS-LDP Factor 1 Array

	Statement	Z-score	Q Sort Value	Raw Sort					
				P14	P4	P20	P26	P23	P6
1	I am happy with myself.	2.252	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2	Sometimes I think I am no good at all.	-0.678	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	0	0
3	I do not have anything to be proud of.	-2.097	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-1	-2
4	I am not good at communicating.	-0.794	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	1
5	I can solve my problems.	0.76	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
6	I am creative	0.727	1	0	0	2	1	0	1
7	Sometimes I get so upset I can not solve problems.	-0.781	-1	-1	-1	0	0	-2	0
8	I solve problems one step at a time.	0.908	1	2	1	1	0	0	0
9	I set goals and achieve them.	1.592	2	1	2	2	2	1	-1
10	I start things but I do not finish them.	-1.318	-2	0	-1	-2	-2	-1	-1
11	It is hard to work in a group.	-0.603	-1	0	-1	-1	0	-1	0
12	I like to be a leader.	0.98	2	2	1	0	1	0	1
13	When I'm a leader, I listen to people's ideas.	0.818	1	1	0	1	1	1	0
14	I like to have help from people who are wise.	0.191	0	1	0	0	-1	1	0
15	People do not understand what I'm going through so they ca not help me.	0.217	0	0	0	-1	1	2	-1
16	I feel good about being a member of my community.	0.978	1	0	2	1	0	2	0
17	I can make a difference in my community.	0.392	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
18	People can learn from my experiences.	0.276	0	1	0	0	1	-1	0
19	I am a peace maker.	-0.313	0	-1	1	-1	0	-1	1
20	I like working with my community	-0.928	-1	-2	0	0	-1	-1	-1
21	My community listens when I have something to say.	-2.258	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2
22	My community is not treated fairly.	0.405	1	0	1	-1	2	0	0
23	Social problems affect our lives in my community.	-0.371	-1	-1	-1	0	0	0	1
24	Some people need more help than others.	0.174	0	0	1	0	-1	1	0
25	It is important for everybody to be treated the same.	0.451	1	1	0	0	1	-1	2
26	I can learn from people who are different from me.	0.394	0	0	1	1	-1	1	0
27	It is important for me to know my rights.	0.323	0	1	0	1	-1	1	-1
28	I can not change government rules.	-0.167	0	-1	0	-1	1	0	1
29	My community makes me who I am.	-1.161	-1	-1	-1	0	-1	-2	-2
30	I feel that I can make changes to help my country.	-0.368	0	0	-2	0	0	1	-1