



Child Safety Policy

Savong School & Savong Organisation, Cambodia

Introduction. Savong's School and Savong Organization Cambodia (SOC) are committed to creating a safe, supportive environment for children and to give these children education they would not otherwise receive – in order that they reach greater potential in life. We also recognise that children have the right to live in health, without violence and without fear.

For that reason, Child Safety is extremely important at Savong School and the SOC. These organizations work in an under-privileged community environment, and with a wide variety of volunteers from a variety of cultures, so it is important that a clear child safety policy is laid down in order that everyone understands what is, and what is not, acceptable practice. This policy sets out the principles and rules for ensuring safety for all children who attend Savong School and who live at the SOC.

Staff will be familiar with these policies, and all visitors should be given a copy of these policies to ensure that everyone understands their responsibilities.



Health and Accident Prevention. Savong School and SOC is committed to the promotion of a healthy and safe environment for children. Children mix with others, and learn through their natural spirit of adventure and play – so in these circumstances there will always be risks of illness (for example through common contagious diseases) and injury – for example through falling off a bicycle. Even so, where illness is readily preventable the policy is clear: take whatever steps are possible to prevent the illness, and in the case of a child falling sick or needing treatment because of injury – take whatever steps are necessary to bring the child back to full health.

Many health and safety issues are associated with poverty or lack of resources, and visitors and supporters are encouraged to contribute time, skills or financial resources to improving the standards of health and safety.

- Prevention and treatment of sickness.
- Children and staff will be educated about best practices in hygiene and food preparation. Instructions (for example “Wash your Hands”) shall be posted in clear Khmer and Pictograms.
- Water at the school and SOC will be tested regularly – at least twice a year.

Children resident at the SOC will receive a medical check twice a year. A health record shall be kept up to date for each child. The health check shall include:

- Eye and ear examination
- Dental examination
- Blood pressure and blood tests.
- An overall review of skin health and search for symptoms.
- Where vaccinations for preventable disease are possible and available, these shall be administered at the school and the SOC.

At the school parents have the responsibility to keep sick children home from school during times of sickness.

A special account shall be set aside so that there are always available resources for medical or ambulance bills.

- *All sickness, illness or medical conditions shall be treated without delay.*

Prevention and treatment of accidents.

All injuries will be treated immediately.

First Aid Kits will be kept at the School and SOC, and these will be easily accessible.

Contact names of the local doctor, hospital and ambulance service will be posted at the school and SOC.

The parent or parents of the child will be notified, and if necessary, given transport to see their child (for example if the child is in hospital.)

All accidents shall be recorded in an Accident & Injury Book – for regular review – with recommendations. The approach involves identifying risks then taking steps to eliminate or minimize these risks. Safety meetings shall be held with staff every 6 months.

Floods and storms. In the case of severe storms or flooding, there shall be a clear evacuation plan. This includes:

- An agreed meeting place for the SOC children.
- Transport to a safer place.
- Accommodation
- Checking the safety of water supplies after these climate events.

Safety from violence. All children have the right to physical and emotional safety. This includes the assurance that they will be safe in their home environment, their school environment and in their day to day life.

Violent approaches to child discipline, (smacking or using a stick) were traditional in Cambodia, but today are frowned upon—but not uncommon. Therefore:

- The school students shall have easy access to trustworthy adults – school staff - to assist them in cases where there are cases of physical or emotional violence - including domestic violence. This access to trustworthy assistance shall be made explicit.
- The SOC will have a full time, 24 hour manager on site and in cases where there are cases of physical or emotional violence including domestic violence.
- No physical violence, (hitting, physical disciplining, smacking, fighting) will be tolerated at the school or SOC. This includes physical violence from carers, visitors, staff, parents or fellow-students.
- Children will be treated respectfully and encouraged to report any violence if this occurs, and provided with protection if this is necessary.
- Police will be involved if there is any issue of violence that cannot be immediately resolved.
- The management and staff of the SOC and the school shall have clear steps to take in the case of a violent situation—including numbers for the local police (and the phones to make these calls).
- Emotional safety is also recognized – and this includes situations such as bullying or persistent belittling of individuals by others. Neither of these behaviours will be tolerated. School or SOC management will discipline those who offend.
- Education will be provided to staff and students regarding conflict resolution and discipline - to encourage non-violent approaches.

You can do something: Visitors who witness any violence or bullying are encouraged to report this to Savong or through the www.savong.com website CHILD SAFETY page.

Safety from Fear. All children at the school and SOC shall be protected as far as possible from situations that may put them in harm's way. They have a right to live an environment that is nurturing and where they are treated with respect by other children and by adults just as we expect them to treat all others with respect.

School and SOC management and supervisors have a duty of care to oversee the general running of the school and SOC and to keep an eye on the safety of all children. They shall have the authority to ask students, staff, volunteers and visitors to comply with their requests.

Volunteers and visitors are here as guests of the School and SOC and must respect the need to create a stable, nurturing environment. For that reason please respect the privacy of each child.

- Visits may only be made through prior appointment. Don't just turn up.
- Volunteers should be in contact with our organization first and be able to produce a Police Clearance form (readily obtained in most countries for people dealing with children).
- When you arrive you will be asked for a copy of this form and of your passport.
- Visitors and volunteers will be asked to read and sign a copy of the Child Safety Policy to acknowledge they have read this document.
- Visitors and volunteers may of course interact with the children – but not in the child's personal space – for example their bedroom at the SOC – or when alone. Other adults and groups of children should be present. This guiding principle applies to interaction in their physical environment, but also via the phone and by internet.
- Personal one-to-one contact via phone, email or social network websites such as Facebook is therefore prohibited unless – following discussion – it is explicitly authorised. The purpose of these rules is to protect children from the potential of predators.



In addition to these specific guidelines, visitors should be respectful in the way they publish online in blogs or social network sites any photos, stories or identifying material that might compromise the child. For example very young children in Cambodia may run around naked, but please do not post photos – especially where a child may be identified.

We encourage and enable visitors to accompany children from the school or SOC on day trips or extended field trips. This must be done by prior arrangement only, local adults must be present and on no account may a visitor travel alone with a child.

- Any suspected or actual sexual abuse or predatory behaviour by any individual, local or foreign, toward any child in the care of the school or SOC shall become, *immediately*, a police matter. The police are only 2 minutes away.

Summary comments. This policy attempts to balance the need for safety against the basic right for children to enjoy a life full of play and adventure; a social life where they are free to meet other children, and have the pleasure of interacting and learning from adults including volunteers. The key is to show respect, and to encourage in the children that same respect for all those around them. If there are items that are unclear, or you feel should be modified or added, please let us know. This policy was developed with the assistance of supporters internationally.

SvaySavong@gmail.com

Duncan@Kudos-Dynamics.com