

IISD-ELA Safeguarding and Protection of Children Procedure: Reporting a Child in Need of Protection

Purpose

These procedures extend from the IISD Experimental Lakes Area (IISD-ELA) Safeguarding and Protection of Children Policy and provide guidance for reporting a child in need of protection, whether the concern arises from misconduct by an IISD-ELA representative or from the child's personal life. The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that all current IISD-ELA representatives and prospective IISD-ELA representatives (as defined in the policy as board of directors, employees, volunteers, associates, and consultants) know the steps for reporting suspected child abuse and boundary violations.

These procedures are also designed to help IISD-ELA representatives meet their legal obligations, recognizing that there may be legal requirements to report suspected child abuse, including neglect of children, depending on the region where IISD-ELA operates.

Scope

These procedures apply to all IISD-ELA representatives who work with children (people under the age of 18).

These procedures apply to child abuse and boundary violations. Both types of misconduct require immediate attention to ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals involved.

- Child abuse includes any act that endangers a child's physical or emotional well-being, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, and neglect.
- Boundary violations refer to behaviours or actions that cross professional or ethical lines, potentially putting individuals at risk or creating uncomfortable or unsafe situations.

In the event of any doubt or uncertainty, it is an IISD-ELA representative's duty to contact their supervisor or IISD's senior safeguarding officer. The safety and protection of children must take precedence over all other matters.

Procedures

Reporting: General guidelines

If an IISD-ELA representative believes that a child may not be safe, they are required to report it. This also applies if information is obtained through a professional, confidential relationship. The representative does not have to prove or be sure that abuse is occurring. The obligation to report also applies to allegations of past abuse. Even if the IISD-ELA representative thinks

someone else is reporting the situation, they must still report it. Reporting does not require staff consensus or the approval of a supervisor.

IISD's Director, People and Culture, is the organization's designated senior safeguarding officer. People can make confidential complaints by email or by phone to the senior safeguarding officer, without any fear of reprisals.

If a Child or Youth Discloses Abuse

- Allow the child to speak freely without interruption and accept what you are told.
- Offer reassurance and understanding; do not make any judgment or show emotion.
- Explain that you can get help and must report the information to authorities.
- Ensure the child is safe from harm. The child should not be allowed to return to any environment where there is a risk of harm. If there is immediate risk, call the appropriate child welfare agency or police.
- Write down what you have been told, using the child's words when possible. Sign and date your notes. (You may use the form for reporting a child in need of protection, found in the Appendix, to complete your report.)
- Immediately report to your supervisor:
 - The supervisor is to immediately report to the senior safeguarding officer.
 - The supervisor and/or senior safeguarding officer will work with the reporting staff to initiate a report to the appropriate child welfare agency or police. (The form for reporting a child in need of protection, found in the Appendix, may be used for this purpose.)
- If the concern relates to an IISD-ELA representative, the procedure for concerns about IISD-ELA representatives (below) will be enacted.

If You Are Worried About the Welfare of a Child or Their Safety

- Ensure the child is safe from harm. If there is immediate risk, call the appropriate child welfare agency or police.
- Make notes of your concerns and what you saw, heard, or witnessed. Sign and date them. (You may use the form for reporting a child in need of protection, found in the Appendix, to complete your report.)
- Immediately report to your supervisor:
 - The supervisor is to immediately report to the senior safeguarding officer.
 - The supervisor and/or senior safeguarding officer will work with the reporting staff to initiate a report to the appropriate child welfare agency or police. (The form for reporting a child in need of protection, found in the Appendix, may be used for this purpose.)

- IISD Human Resources will undertake an investigation in consultation with the appropriate child welfare agency.
- Alternatively, the complaint may be filed anonymously, by accessing the ethics hotline, EthicsPoint, hosted by a third-party hotline provider, NAVEX Global.
 1. Select the **“Make a Report”** link on the [EthicsPoint web page](#). The web page is hosted on a third-party server and therefore is completely confidential.
 2. Dial the toll-free hotline number within the United States and Canada:
1 (844) 955-1643
 3. Use the [NavEx mobile app](#)

The form for reporting a child in need of protection, found in the Appendix, may be used for this purpose, and can be uploaded to the EthicsPoint portal.

If You Are Concerned About an IISD-ELA Representative’s Conduct (Child Abuse or a Boundary Violation)

- Make notes of your concerns; if the concerns have been reported to you by another adult, make notes of the allegation using the complainant's words. Sign and date your notes. Note: You may use the form for reporting a child in need of protection, found in the Appendix, to complete your report.
- Immediately inform your supervisor:
 - The supervisor is to immediately report to the senior safety officer and IISD Human Resources.
 - The supervisor and/or senior safety officer will work with the reporting staff to initiate a report to the appropriate child welfare agency or police. Note: The form for reporting a child in need of protection, found in the Appendix, may be used for this purpose.

Investigations

When a complaint or concern involves an IISD-ELA representative, IISD Human Resources will undertake an investigation in consultation with the appropriate child welfare agency. In the event that the accused is not an IISD-ELA representative—e.g., a member of a partner organization—the appropriate child welfare agency will be consulted, and the respective supervisor or human resources leader may be notified. The investigation will be conducted with strict confidentiality.

During the investigation, the accused may be temporarily removed from their duties to ensure the safety and well-being of the child and the integrity of the investigation.

The outcome is reported to the senior safeguarding officer.

In determining the appropriate remedy, the decision is made in consultation with the senior safeguarding officer to ensure it aligns with the organization's safeguarding policies and legal obligations.

The child welfare response will vary and can include community supports, protective services, supports in the home, or removal of the child(ren).

Confidentiality

All information gathered with respect to an investigation will be maintained with the utmost confidentiality. Notes and reports are stored in IISD's online, secure database (NAVEX); documents are only placed on an employee's file where an allegation results in discipline.

All IISD representatives must respect the confidentiality of all reported incidents.

No Retaliation

Anyone has a right to raise concerns or report allegations in confidence without fear of repercussions or other adverse effects.

No retaliatory action can be taken against a person who, in good faith, reports information about suspected child abuse. The reporting party will not be dismissed, suspended, demoted, disciplined, harassed, or disadvantaged.

The identity of those who raise concerns is protected and kept confidential, except as required in the course of judicial proceedings or with written consent.

Related Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

- IISD-ELA Safeguarding and Protection of Children Policy
- IISD-ELA Safeguarding and Protection of Children Procedure: Background Checks

Policy Review and Revision

Review cycle: This policy will be reviewed regularly, and at least once every 5 years by the policy owner to ensure its relevance and accuracy.

Revision history:

Date	Version	Description of Changes	Approved By
June 16, 2026	1.0	Initial procedure release, in the IISD-ELA template	IISD-ELA Board through a Board Resolution