



European Federation of
Psychologists' Associations AISBL

©Shutterstock/ Andrey_Popov

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: CHILD PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

CHILD PROTECTION AND
VULNERABLE ADULTS

May 2026

Board of Directors

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults

Owner	EFPA Head Office
Date of approval	18 November 2021
Interim review and minor revision	06 May 2026
Version	2.0
Review date	April 2028
Acknowledgements	EFPA gratefully acknowledges the contribution of documents developed by our Full Member the British Psychological Society https://www.bps.org.uk , and the NSPCC https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-childprotection/writing-a-safeguarding-policy-statement in the preparation of this policy.

1. The purpose and scope of this policy statement

The Purpose of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations AISBL (EFPA) is to:

- Develop psychology (develop psychology education, science, and professional practice; promote the dissemination of psychological knowledge, to develop a clear image of psychology and make it accessible, useful and respected)
- Contribute to society (contribute psychological theory and practice to quality of life including health and wellbeing of people living in Europe and to a democratic and prosperous society; represent psychology at the European level, and contribute psychological science to European policy development)
- Serve psychologists (support the development of its Full Members and their activities at the national level; enhance the standing of the profession and its legal status at the European level, building a European professional identity based on common values and goals, equality, diversity, inclusion, multi and interculturalism, mutual respect and collaboration, mobility, and service to society)

EFPA is committed to ensuring that all persons who work or come into contact with EFPA are safe and do not suffer harm as a result of the activities of EFPA.

This policy applies to anyone while working on behalf of EFPA, including EFPA Executive Director and the Board of Directors, permanent and temporary staff, freelance contractors, consultants, interns,

volunteers, students, and representatives and delegates of EFPA Full Members and Associate Members while engaged on EFPA business. Everyone working or volunteering for EFPA has a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this safeguarding policy and the procedures that go with it. They must maintain a proper focus on safety and welfare in all aspects of their work.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with EFPA's work from harm. This includes the children of adults who come into contact with our work.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children, vulnerable adults and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to protection from harm.

For this policy:

- Children means persons under the age of 18.
- A vulnerable adult means a person over the age of 18 who may need services due to mental health or other disability, age or illness; and who may be unable to care for themselves, to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This includes persons in acute psychosocial crisis.
- Abuse is defined as any behaviour which can cause harm, endanger lives, or violate rights. It may be physical, sexual, psychological, financial/material, or neglect. Abuse may occur in person or through digital means.

We believe that:

- Children and vulnerable adults should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults to keep them safe and to carry out our activities in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- all children and vulnerable adults regardless of age, disability, gender identity or expression, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children and vulnerable adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children and their parents, vulnerable adults, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children and vulnerable adults' welfare.

2. Legal framework

This policy has been developed so that EFPA has an overarching policy at the European level which applies to all activities undertaken under its auspices. Safeguarding though is subject to national legislation, regulation, implementation practices and national professional guidance within those frameworks. These will differ, especially in European countries outside the EU. These national requirements are the practical procedures that should be followed in the event of a safeguarding issue arising.

3. Obligations

We will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- a. valuing, listening to and respecting them
- b. appointing EFPA's Executive Director and a named Director as nominated safeguarding policy leads for children and vulnerable adults
- c. adopting protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for volunteers
- d. have appropriate policies and procedures in place in relation to its activities, including online and digital activities, to keep all safe
- e. providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- f. recruiting and selecting staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- g. requesting our Full Members and other parties that nominate volunteers to ensure they have safeguarding procedures as part of the nomination process
- h. recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- i. publicise on our website how to identify and refer/report safeguarding concerns
- j. using the safeguarding procedures at the national levels to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, parents, vulnerable adults, families and carers appropriately
- k. using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- l. creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise, including in digital communications
- m. ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- n. ensuring that we provide a safe physical and digital environment for all by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- o. building a safeguarding culture where everyone treats each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

4. Actions on safeguarding concerns

Anyone covered by this policy who has any safeguarding concerns should report these immediately to the Safeguarding Lead.

If, for any reason, it is not possible to report immediately to the Safeguarding Lead, a report should be made without delay to the EFPA Office Manager or another Director who is not associated with the concerns. The Safeguarding Lead will then take forward the concerns through the appropriate channels depending on the nature of the concern raised.

For the avoidance of doubt, no one engaged with work for EFPA should investigate concerns about individual children or vulnerable adults where there are concerns that they are or may be being

abused or at risk. It is EFPA's responsibility (delegated to the Safeguarding Lead) to ensure that safeguarding concerns and allegations are referred to the appropriate national authority via appropriate national liaisons. Such agencies will be responsible for investigation. This does not however exonerate the individual from reporting their concern without delay. If anyone concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of being abused or neglected, they should not ignore their suspicions and should not assume that someone else will take action to protect that person.

Anyone engaged with work for EFPA who has concerns about the behaviour of a colleague must always raise this with their immediate EFPA contact (such as Project coordinator, Board liaison), or the Safeguarding Lead or the EFPA Executive Director without delay.

p. **Availability and supporting documents**

This policy statement is publicly available on EFPA shared folder Info Hub. It should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents, available at [EFPA guidelines, policies, codes and standards](#)

5. EFPA Safeguarding Lead

Contact details

Nominated Safeguarding Leads

Name	Role	Contact
Isane Aparicio Busto	EFPA Executive Director	isane.aparicio@efpa.eu
Lotte De Schrijver	EFPA Director	Lotte.DeSchrijver@efpa.eu

On behalf of EFPA,

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice on a regular basis.

Name: Sofia Marques Ramalho Ramos Duarte

EFPA President



Date: 06/05/2026

EFPA aisbl
Rue Marché aux Herbes 105/39
B- 1000 Bruxelles
Belgique

EFPA ivzw
Grasmarkt 105/39
B- 1000 Brussel
België

<https://www.efpa.eu/>