



Western Cape  
Government

BETTER TOGETHER.



# AFTER SCHOOL GAME CHANGER

Practitioner Code of Conduct Handbook, 2016/17

# Foreword

This After School Game Changer Practitioner Code of Conduct is the first in a series that aims to both professionalise and improve the quality of the After School sector in the Western Cape.

Expanding After School activities to include an increasing number of learners is one of the priorities of the Western Cape Government. Our aim is to have safe and more caring places with opportunities for learners to learn and grow outside of the classroom. Our vision is for these learners to become responsible empowered young adults who can enter the working world with confidence.

We are concerned about learners dropping out of school, youth unemployment and the high level of violence in our society. As the Western Cape Government (WCG) we are committed to creating opportunities for our youth. We believe this requires norms and standards, committed and skilled practitioners, and committed learners.

We are also committed to addressing any violence that may happen in After School spaces. This guide gives some alternative ways to resolving violence and it is hoped that After School Practitioners will study these, practise these, and model them for learners in the After School space to resolve issues peacefully. Violence will not be tolerated, be it perpetrated by learners or by After School Practitioners.

As the WCG we are committed to partnering with all other organisations in the After School space and especially to growing the professionalism and passion of After School Practitioners. Together it is hoped we can achieve these outcomes:

- A caring home away from home in the after school hours
- Improved educational outcomes
- Reduced school dropout
- A reduction in risk taking behaviour
- Opportunities for connection

We hope this handbook is a tool to support people and organisations to achieve these outcomes. We welcome any feedback that you may have. We look forward to connecting in the After School spaces.



The After School Game Changer Practitioner Code of Conduct Handbook, 2016/2017 was commissioned by the Western Cape Government in partnership with the Learning Trust. This guide is based on extensive stakeholder consultation and engagement.

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# About this handbook

Learners who are active after school are the ones that succeed. This handbook is about how to have safe and professional After School Programmes for learners. It is for the leaders who oversee these programmes. It is also for practitioners who work directly with learners. It gives clear guidance on what the law says about After School Programmes and, in particular, how to protect learners who are part of these programmes. This handbook is divided into five main sections and a set of appendices:

## Your After School Programme is Important

This section explains why After School Programmes are so important for the learners that participate and the practitioners that run them. [See page 2.](#)

## Manage your After School Programme

This section gives information for organisations working in the After School space on policies that should be in place, on working with schools and other stakeholders and service providers in the After School space, and on recruiting and orientating After School Practitioners. [See page 5.](#)

## Protect Learners from Abuse

This section covers different kinds of abuse and what to do if you suspect a learner is being abused. [See page 15.](#)

## A Code of Conduct for Practitioners

This section gives a sample Code of Conduct for practitioners working in the After School space. [See page 18.](#) It also gives practical case studies on how to go about living the Code of Conduct.

## A Code of Conduct for Learners

This section gives a sample Code of Conduct for learners participating in the After School space. [See page 33.](#) It also gives practical strategies for After School Practitioners on how to work with the Code of Conduct in the After School space.

## Appendices

Summaries of relevant legislation can be found in the Appendices on [page 34.](#) There are also a series of sample policies which organisations can use in the Appendices. [See page 36.](#)

# Your After School Programme is Important

This section introduces the vision and mission of the After School sector in the Western Cape. It describes some of the key benefits for learners who participate in them and also for After School Practitioners who run the Programmes.

After School Programmes shape the future of our children and our communities.

As an After School Practitioner, or as someone managing an After School Programme, you know that you do very important work. Many of the learners that you work with are vulnerable, and as After School Practitioners you play a huge role in supporting them through such times and positively shaping our future generation. This guide can help you be even more professional and skilled at working with learners. It can also remind you of the laws and procedures which protect learners.



# VISION

The vision of the After School sector is to make sure that Western Cape learners participate regularly in After School activities so that they develop positively and so that school outcomes are improved.

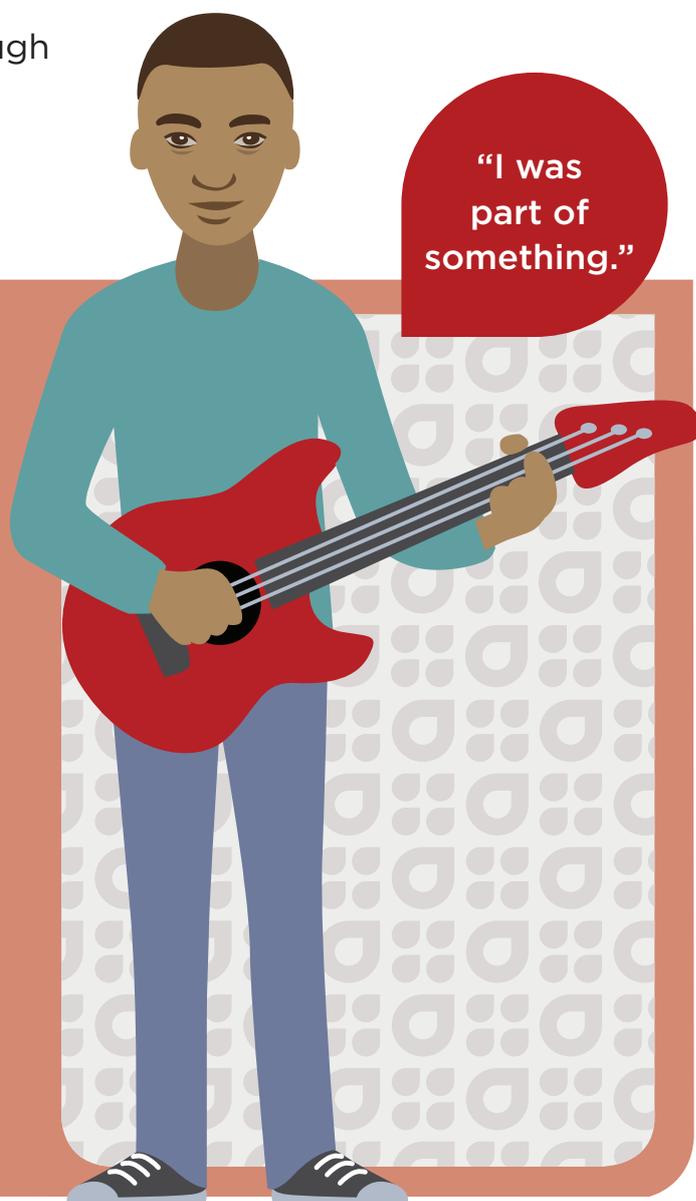
# MISSION

In order to meet this vision, the mission of the After School sector is to broaden the range of activities while deepening the quality of deliverables. This will be done through three critical levers:

- Improve the enabling environment in the After School space
- Ensure quality programming through professional programme delivery
- Collaborate within the sector

## A youth tells how an After School Programme kept him in school.

**Ricardo**, a youth, remembers how being in an After School Programme allowed him to be part of something and feel good about himself. I used to bunk school a lot but I always hung around when school was closing so I could talk to the girls. That's when I used to hear the band practising. I love music and I was surprised at how good they were. One day I just decided to ask them if I could join. I said I could learn to play the guitar! Well I did and I practised every day. I became the most active member of the band and I stopped bunking school. Also there were plenty of girls in the band! I played at all the school events and sometimes we also played at weddings and parties. I was part of something! When I was playing I felt good about myself. The band gave me a way to give to people. I got a good matric and now I am at college.



## An After School Practitioner says programmes give kids a chance they wouldn't have had.

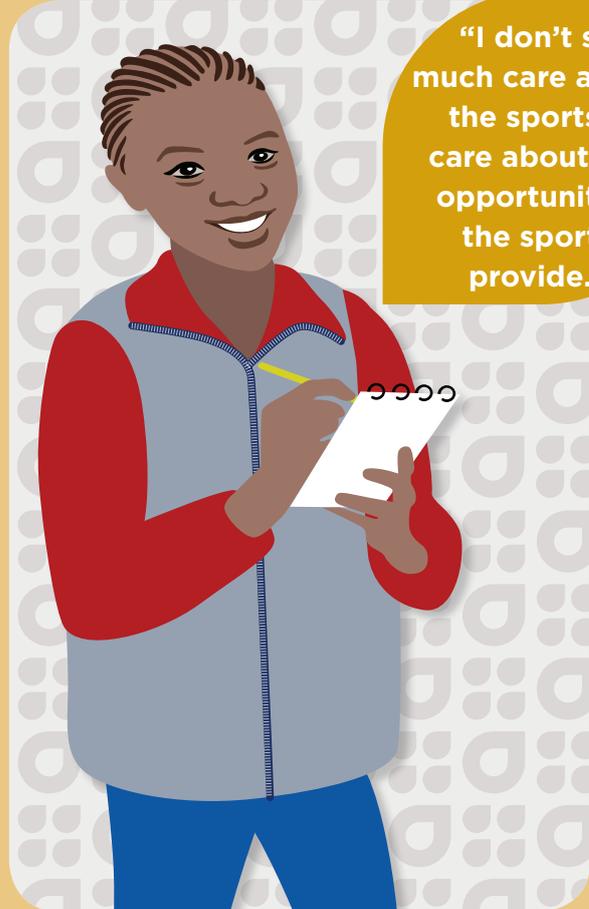
**Kashiefa**, an After School Practitioner, says she works in the After School space to see kids not being defined by where they come from. I do it so I can see the youth I work with grow and not be defined by the odds they face on a daily basis. Many of them don't have support from their parents. But they don't let that stop them. I can relate to that too. Being an After School Practitioner has helped me a lot. I have got confidence I never thought I had within myself. It has led to other opportunities. This programme is like a stepping stone for them as it was for me. So now I am a role model for them. I can encourage them not to give up. Everywhere I go I am myself. I don't need to impress people. I represent myself and I represent the organisation.

"This programme is like a stepping stone for them as it was for me."



## A Programme Coordinator says programmes prepare kids for life after school.

"I don't so much care about the sports, I care about the opportunities the sports provide."



**Nobonke**, a leader who supervises After School Programmes explains how After School Programmes prepare learners for life after school. I run an organisation that offers various sports programmes for kids. But you know what, I don't really care about sports at all. So, if I don't care about the sports, what do I care about? I care that kids learn to work with others and to be in a team. I care that kids learn respect, for themselves, but also for other athletes and coaches. I care that kids learn to make and get to their goals. I care that they learn to deal with disappointment, when they don't get the placing they'd hoped for. I care that the kids get the chance to make life-long friendships. I care because these kids get to be out on the field or in the gym instead of in front of a screen. I could go on but in short, I don't care about the sports, I care about the opportunities that sports provides. These are things that will serve these kids throughout their lives.

# Manage your After School Programme

This section is for the leaders of After School organisations. It includes a section on the policies that should be in place, with a brief description of key content for each policy. There is also a section on working with other service providers and stakeholders in the After School space. This includes how to develop a referral system. Lastly there is a section on recruitment and orientation of After School Practitioners.



## Put policies and procedures in place

All organisations in the After School space should develop a set of policies and procedures that clarify the actions and behaviours that are acceptable or recommended, and those that are not. Some examples of policies to put in place are listed below and, in some cases, full samples are provided in the Appendices starting on page 36.

### **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

An anti-bullying policy should make it clear that bullying is not allowed. It should describe the kinds of behaviour that could be called bullying and say what the consequences are for bullying in the After School space. See page 36 for an example.

### **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

A child protection policy is clear about how the organisation intends to go about protecting the learners participating in their programmes. In particular, it should enable After School Practitioners to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

The policy should say what child abuse is and what the different forms of abuse are. The policy should spell out a clear procedure for After School Practitioners if they suspect or know that a child is being abused. A child protection policy also puts in place recruitment procedures to ensure that no person already suspected or convicted of abuse is employed by the organisation.

This booklet contains everything that should be in a child protection policy. There is therefore no additional child protection policy in the Appendices.

### **DISCLOSURE POLICY**

A disclosure policy should set out the way instances or suspected instances of child abuse, neglect and sexual offences should be reported. In particular it should have clear guidelines on who should be informed and in what order, as well as how to handle disclosure with the learner concerned. The disclosure policy should be in line with the Western Cape Government's "Abuse No More Protocol". See page 16 for key points that should be included in a disclosure policy.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA POLICY**

A confidentiality and data policy describes how confidentiality will be maintained amongst learners, After School Practitioners and other staff within the organisation. It will be clear about when and how confidentiality may be breached due to child protection concerns. In addition, the policy will stipulate how personal information and photographs will be obtained, handled, used and stored by the organisation.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

A social media policy should be very clear that After School Practitioners and programme staff are prohibited from posting photographs of learners on social media. Likewise, no confidential information or anything bringing the After School programme, or any of its participants, into disrepute should be posted on social media. See page 42 for a sample social media policy.

## BASIC SAFETY POLICY

A basic safety policy should say how awareness and culture around safety will be achieved. It should cover issues of physical safety, safety of infrastructure, as well as access to premises where after school activities are taking place. It should also cover movement of learners to and from the programme. Finally, the policy should detail what to do if there has been a safety breach, and also who is in charge of what if there is a safety emergency. See page 38 for a sample safety policy.



“Photographs of learners should not be posted on social media.”

**PLEASE REPORT ANY SAFETY RELATED ISSUES TO:**

Safe School Hotline  
0800 454647





## Work closely with schools

Learners are at the centre of any After School Programme. Therefore it is important for all programmes to have a relationship with the schools learners go to.

Further, After School Programmes are often hosted by a school and it is particularly important to build good relationships with all stakeholders in the school. A stakeholder is anyone who is interested in, or who may be affected by, the programme. Be aware that every school is different. You need to find out if the school has particular protocols and how strictly they adhere to them. Every school submits a School Improvement Plan (SIP) annually. Ensuring the After School Programme is prioritised in this can assist with unlocking resources (teachers, facilities and even food) for the programme.

### **BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRINCIPAL**

Of special emphasis is the relationship with the principal. The school principal can be the first place to start building a referral system (see page 9). He or she can also help you get access to other stakeholders at the school.

### **BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS AT THE SCHOOL**

Other stakeholders at the school include the School Management Team (SMT), the School Governing Body (SGB), the teachers, the parents, the cleaning staff, caretakers and groundstaff, and of course the learners themselves. A good way to get buy in is to ask for a time slot at a meeting where all stakeholders will be present. Use your time to introduce yourself and the programme as well as the benefits for the learners. Be clear about what the school can expect from your programme. This all sounds easy but it is not. It takes a long time

to build the trusting relationships needed for After School Programmes to flourish. Regular communication helps. Make sure that it is clear who the programme should talk to in the school system and also how information is shared with the school.

### **KEEP YOUR RELATIONSHIPS GOING**

Once you have built a relationship, take care to keep it going. Try to meet at least once a term with the principal and once a year with the SGB and all the stakeholders. Get your programme listed as an item on the agenda of SGB and other meetings. Keep them updated on any changes in the programme and feedback on any issues you might be having. Invite everyone to any events you may have.





## Work with other service providers and stakeholders

In addition to stakeholders at the school, there is a range of other stakeholders who need to be included in the thinking and planning of your programme. This is particularly important for programmes which are not hosted by a school.

### PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

The more parents or caregivers are involved with your programme, the more likely you are to meet your objectives with the learners. Consider inviting parents to volunteer to help on the programme. It may be an idea to get parents to sign a parental code of conduct.

Good communication with parents is important. Think through what way of communicating will be best. You could hold parent meetings. In some communities, SMS works well. For others, paper notes are the way to go. Be sure to hold an event at least once a year where parents can see how their learners have benefited from the programme. This could be a celebration event, a competition, a show or a party.

### SIMILAR ORGANISATIONS OFFERING AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

Collaborating with similar organisations can maximise resources for the learners and the After School Practitioners you have on your programme. They may also be able to help with a referral system.

### BUSINESSES

Local businesses may be willing to donate money to your programme or perhaps sponsor prizes around competitions.

## COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND CHURCHES

Community organisations and churches can be a good place to get publicity for your programme and possibly recruit new learners or new After School Practitioners. You could consider asking religious leaders to talk about your programme in their sermons.

### LOCAL MEDIA

You could develop your own print or online newsletter which goes to all stakeholders of the programme. Also try to build a relationship with someone from the local paper or community radio station. Send regular updates about events you may be having or special achievements of learners. This kind of publicity for your organisation builds credibility, gets more learners to participate, and makes those already involved feel good.





## Develop and maintain your referral system

If you have a programme with After School Practitioners and learners you must have some kind of referral system in place. A referral system means that when there are things that can't be dealt with within the programme, there are trained people you can refer learners and After School Practitioners to.

Working with learners is by its nature sensitive work. Sometimes After School Practitioners may become traumatised in the course of this work. As an organisation you cannot have a traumatised person continuing to work with learners. It is essential that there is some place where they can be debriefed and counselled. In addition, After School Practitioners may come across learners who need to be referred for a variety of reasons, including cases of abuse.

## WHO SHOULD BE ON YOUR REFERRAL LIST

- **Social worker:** A social worker is a professional trained to debrief and counsel individuals, families and groups. In terms of the law, learners who have been abused must be referred to a social worker. Social workers also assist with compiling reports for the court.
- **Counsellor:** A counsellor has training in how to debrief and counsel individuals after they have suffered a trauma or setback in their lives.
- **FCS Police Units:** These are special units which deal with police issues related to family violence, child protection and sexual offences. If you are not in an area with a Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) Unit, then you report directly to the police.

## ABUSE NO MORE PROTOCOL

The *Abuse No More Protocol* put out by The Western Cape Education Department in 2014 clearly sets out the responsibilities of all role players in the case of child abuse as well as the appropriate disclosure process in the cases of:

- › learner on learner disclosure
- › WCED employee on learner disclosure
- › parent, family member or community member offence on learner disclosure

**The protocol gives details of what to do in every case but in essence makes two points very clearly:**

- › It is only necessary to get the information needed for reporting. The learner victim should not be cross examined.
- › The principal, a social worker and the police should be notified in the case of abuse. Ideally the social worker would manage disclosure to police and parents. Parents would be notified if one of them is not the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

## USE THE REFERRAL SYSTEM OF THE SCHOOL

The best option would be to use the referral system of the school which is hosting your programme. The school is obliged to follow the *Abuse No More Protocol of the Western Cape Education Department, 2014* described in the box.

## USE THE REFERRAL SYSTEM OF A SISTER ORGANISATION

Find out if there are organisations working in the area which offer similar services. Perhaps you can use their referral system.

## DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Locate your nearest Department of Social Development office and start to develop a relationship with them.

## DEVELOP YOUR OWN REFERRAL SYSTEM THROUGH PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

You may need to identify trained social workers and counsellors in your area who could offer their services privately. Social workers tend to be more responsive to reporting abuse if an organisation is involved, rather than just an individual person or family.

## DON'T GIVE UP

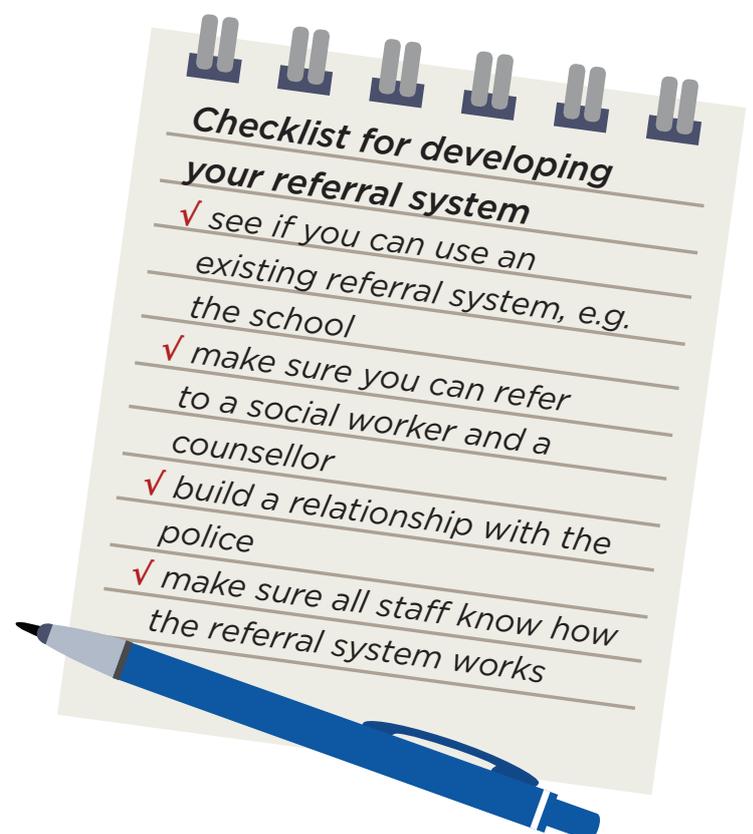
You must have a referral system. It may be hard to find the right people and organisations to refer learners and practitioners to. Don't give up. It doesn't have to be perfect, it just has to work. There may be other resources in your area that you haven't considered.

## DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A LIST OF LOCAL EMERGENCY SERVICES

In addition to a referral list, you should have a list of local emergency services readily available (preferably posted prominently on a noticeboard or wall) in the case of emergencies. Include police, ambulance, fire station and clinic. See the sample safety policy on page 38 for more.

## COMMUNICATE AND TRAIN ALL STAFF ON HOW THE REFERRAL SYSTEM WORKS

Once you have a referral system in place, make sure that everyone working on the programme knows about it and how to use it.





## Carefully recruit and orientate After School Practitioners

Particular care needs to be taken in selecting After School Practitioners because they will be in a relationship with learners as well as role models for learners. In addition, they will need to be orientated and trained for their work with learners specifically, in following the correct protocols in the case of accident or abuse.

For the right candidates, becoming an After School Practitioner can be a great opportunity to develop their own potential and get some real working experience. For some young people, it can be a fruitful “gap year” experience. Working as an After School Practitioner can be a stepping stone to other work and personal growth.

### RECRUITMENT PROCESS

You need to consider how suitable candidates will come to know about applying to work as an After School Practitioner on your programme. Consider distributing flyers or giving talks at places where young people go. This could be at schools, churches or non-governmental organisations. Another way might be to approach known figures within the community or to ask existing staff for recommendations.

#### *Criteria used for recruitment*

You need to make a list of the basic criteria you are looking for in the After School Practitioners working for you, for example:

- **Education:** Does the candidate need a Matric?
- **Age:** Must the candidate be a youth?
- **Skills:** Must the candidate be able to speak the language used by the learners or be a professional sportsperson?

- **Geographic location:** Is there a specified proximity required for the candidate to work on the programme?
- **Interests:** Does the candidate have an interest in working with children?
- **Motivation:** Do they care and want to give back? Are they passionate about the sport, art or academic subject they will be teaching?

#### *Submission of application documents*

Applicants should submit curriculum vitae (CV) and copies of their identity documents. The following documents should also be part of the application:

- **Declaration of criminal convictions:** All applicants should be asked to sign a declaration of any criminal convictions they may have, as well as any past allegation with regard to mistreatment and abuse of children (whether substantiated or not).
- **Police clearance:** A police clearance certificate must be obtained for every staff member and volunteer in an After School Programme. Should their name appear in Part B of the National Child Protection Register or should they have a previous conviction for murder, attempted murder, rape, selling drugs, indecent assault or assault with the intent to do grievous bodily harm, especially with regard to a child, they should not be recruited.

The Head of Department (HOD) in a government programme, or the Director of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) should make the decision regarding the recruitment of practitioners who may have been convicted of other offences.

Note that there are two registers. There is the National Child Protection Register which contains lists of anyone convicted of a sexual offence involving a minor child or a mentally disabled person from 1998. This is kept by the Department of Justice. There is also a possible inactive register at the Department of Social Development.

- **References:** Get reliable references for all applicants, including a reference for their character. In particular, ask about past work with young people. Should there be any concern from referees about potentially abusive behaviour, they should not be recruited.
- **Qualifications:** These may be of particular interest for After School Programmes or programmes that focus on building mastery.
- **Sign the Code of Conduct:** All practitioners must sign the Code of Conduct and a statement indicating that they have read the Child Protection Policy, that they have fully understood it, and that they agree to work within its guidelines. A sample Code of Conduct can be found on page 18. This book in its entirety contains within it everything that should be in a child protection policy.

## Interview

It is important to have an interview to get to know potential practitioners. Three key questions can help to find the right candidate:

- **Why are you applying for this job?**  
Should there be any concern raised during the interview process as to the motives of the applicant, particularly with regard to their working with learners, they should not be recruited.
- **What is your dream?**  
Research has shown that people with a dream are aspirational and so are more likely to keep up with a job once they have one.
- **What are your strengths and weaknesses?**  
Research has shown that people who have an awareness of their strengths and particularly their weakness, are more self-aware and this makes them better able to work with learners.

It can be helpful to try and assess the extent to which a candidate believes they can take responsibility for their own life, i.e. their locus of control. See the box on this page for more on this. Another aspect to consider in an interview process could be asking potential candidates to design and talk the panel through a session they might run as part of the After School Programme.

## ROTTER SCORE

The Rotter Score is a measure of a person's *locus of control*. A person with an internal locus of control believes he or she creates their own opportunities and makes their own way in life. On the other hand, a person with an external locus of control believes that fate determines their success or failure and that he or she can do little to change their own destiny. Research shows that a person who displays a strong internal locus of control makes a better After School Practitioner than one who displays an external locus of control.

If you are a person with an internal locus of control you are likely to believe that your success depends on ability rather than luck. You will also take responsibility for making decisions and move on.

## CONTRACTS

You need to be very clear with the candidate at every stage of the process exactly how After School Practitioners are regarded on the programme. For example, are they seen as volunteers or employees? Do they get a stipend or an allowance or a salary? Will they be paid for medical leave? Will the organisation be willing to lend them money? Some of these questions may be answered by considering the category of service your organisation is engaging After School Practitioners in, for example:

- Volunteer
- Intern
- Employee
- Independent contractor

### *Volunteer*

A volunteer is someone who works unpaid for the main purpose of benefitting someone else. Stipends may be provided to compensate for items purchased or for travel expenses. As soon as a stipend is paid however it can be legally difficult to differentiate between a volunteer and an employee.

### *Intern*

An internship is a formal work experience arrangement that is part of an education or training course where a student needs to gain experience in a particular occupation or industry. An internship is always a short term arrangement. The work performed is not measured by productive activities. The intern rather than the organisation is the chief beneficiary of the arrangement.

### *Employee*

An employee is someone who works for you with or without pay for more than 24 hours a month for longer than three months. A full time employee works 40-45 hours a week and a part-time employee works anything less than this. Part-time employees should get proportionate paid annual leave, medical leave and so on.

### *Independent contractor*

An independent contractor is someone who is not part of the organisation. You tell them what your needs are. The independent contractor then decides how, for how long, when and which tools the job will take. The rate for the job is negotiated among equals.



## TRAINING

While successful candidates may have signed the Code of Conduct, it is important to spend some time training them around the details of what is in it. A sample Code of Conduct and details of what specific items mean can be found on pages 18 to 32.

Be aware that After School Practitioners should have regular on-going training, both in their programme responsibilities as well as in the specific ways to work with learners. In particular, they should know how to protect children, how to manage disclosure, and what protocols to follow in the case of abuse. Please see the next section on abuse for more on this.

## DISMISSAL

In the case where an After School Practitioner has abused a learner, it is important that other learners are protected from him or her and that they do not get another opportunity to work with learners.

There are two processes to follow. The one is an internal process of dismissal and the other is an external process through the criminal justice system.

**Internal process:** Often perpetrators of abuse will offer to resign or resign before they can be brought to book. This can be easier for everyone involved but it should not be allowed to happen. It must be that this person has a dismissal on record and is so prevented from doing further work with learners.

**External process:** In the case that an After School Practitioner has been reported to be abusing a learner, it is important that the organisation follows the process of reporting the abuse to social workers and the police. These situations can be damaging to the organisation and the learner and so organisations often let perpetrators go without going through all the procedures. Parents are also reluctant to put their learner through a prosecution. This means the person does not get on the data base of offenders and can easily be employed again in

a similar situation working with learners and possibly abusing more learners. The person must be prosecuted.

The court system is very weak. You therefore need to do what is in your control to stop this person working further with learners.



# Protect Learners from Abuse

This section is for anyone working with learners which includes leaders of organisations running After School Programmes as well as After School Practitioners. It covers the different kinds of abuse and what to do if you suspect a learner is being abused.



## The responsibility to report

Anyone who works in a trust relationship with a child has a duty to report abuse or a sexual offence or suspicions of both. This includes After School Practitioners. They therefore should receive some training in this arena. If a child is abused there is a specific way disclosure should happen and a clear line of reporting and accountability.

The information in this book is based on the *Abuse No More Protocol of the Western Cape Education Department, 2014*. Every organisation working in the After School space should have a copy to refer to in the case of learner abuse.

## Different kinds of abuse

Learner abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. Learner abuse commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability. The abuser may be a family member, someone the learner encounters in residential care or in the community, including After School programmes. Any individual may abuse or neglect a learner directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person from harming the learners.

The different kinds of abuse are discussed briefly.

### EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is about ongoing and severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection of a child.

Emotional abuse includes saying things to a child that make them feel inadequate, that blames them for things or that are sarcastic or threatening. It includes any actions (gestures, words and behaviours) that deliberately cause children to feel afraid, anxious, in danger, corrupted, exploited, annoyed or discouraged. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved and inadequate. Emotional abuse can be hard to spot.

All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This category is used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

### PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is about an actual or a likely physical injury to a child. It also includes not preventing physical injury or suffering of a child. Physical abuse includes hitting, beating with a stick or other implement, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning or suffocating. Physical signs would be bruises, burns, bite marks, cuts, head injury, whiplash, internal injuries and broken bones.

### SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is about encouraging, forcing or enticing a child to take part in or watch sexual activities. It includes any action with sexual intent towards children such as touching a child's breasts or genitals, asking a child to touch the genitals of others, encouraging the child to watch or take part in pornography, or having sex with the child whether or not they appear to be consenting.

## NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs or failure to protect a child from danger. It is any action that deliberately neglects the right to live, the right to learn, the right to participate and the right to speak. Neglect is likely to result in serious impairment to the child's health and development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.



### What to do if you suspect a child is being abused

You may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. You may see it happening, you may suspect it happening, it may be reported to you by someone else or directly by the learner affected. Disclosure is about how you come to know about the abuse of a learner. It is very important that this is handled carefully. After School Practitioners must know that they should listen and not question the learner.

- Remain calm and in control of your feelings.
- Tell them that you believe them.
- Listen carefully to what they are saying.
- Don't ask lots of questions - listen to what they want to tell you.
- Tell them it is not their fault and you are pleased that they told you as you can support them.
- Take steps to distance the alleged perpetrator from the child.

The After School Practitioner should go to their senior in the organisation or directly to the school principal. The senior staff member or school principal must notify a social worker. The

social worker must call the FCS (a special SAPS unit that specialises in family and child crimes). If there is no social worker, then reporting must be directly to the FCS or the police. The social worker should also work with the parents or caregivers of the child.



### Information to be recorded

A record should always be made at the time of the disclosure. In recording you should only write down the facts. Do not include your own opinions. Once again, only gather the information needed for recording purposes. Do not overly question the learner. Information should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth
- The child's home address and telephone number
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concern or someone else's
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- A description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc; also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- Details of witnesses to the incidents
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what happened and how any bruising/ injuries occurred
- Have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

# After School Practitioner Code of Conduct

This section covers the After School Practitioner Code of Conduct. A code of conduct is a guide to acceptable behaviour within a certain setting. It sets out the ways After School Practitioners are expected to behave in the After School space. After School Practitioners can use the Code of Conduct to check if certain behaviours are acceptable or not.

Sometimes it can be difficult to know what the right thing to do is. As well as a sample Code of Conduct, this section also provides case studies which show how some of the terms in the Code of Conduct might be handled in real life situations.

## Let After School Practitioners know what they can expect from the organisation

As an organisation offering After School Programmes, it's important to let After School Practitioners know what they can expect from you. This should include:

- What they will be paid and by when
- What their working hours are
- What the rules are around being absent
- What opportunities are available through the organisation
- What their legal duties are to protect learners
- What mentorship and supervision will be available
- Where and how they can refer learners who need it
- What is expected in terms of behaviour, i.e. the Code of Conduct

## Facilitate a Code of Conduct session with After School Practitioners

To make it a safe space for learners and practitioners to learn and grow, a Code of Conduct is needed. A Code of Conduct sets out the way After School Practitioners should behave in the working space. In particular, it sets out what they must do in terms of the law to protect learners. If After School Practitioners are included in creating the Code of Conduct for the organisation, they will take ownership of it and are more likely to use it to guide their behaviour.

- Invite After School Practitioners to suggest rules for the way to behave at work
- Write these down on a piece of cardboard or paper
- If the group struggles to come up with rules, you can support them by asking about things which might affect them and the learners in their care. For example,

***“What rules do we need about being a role model for learners?”***

***“How can we make sure we always build the confidence of learners in our care?”***

***“What else do we need to have in place for learners to be safe and learn together?”***

# Sample Code of Conduct

As an After School Practitioner,

I understand that working with learners after school is professional work bound by a Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct makes clear what kind of behaviours are expected of me and I can use it to check if I am unsure about how to handle something. I understand that I am bound by South African law to protect the learners I work with from harm. I commit to:



## Work in a professional way

I commit to accountability and responsibility. Specifically I commit to:

- Deliver programmes as expected and do the best that I can. This means being committed to ongoing learning, especially training and preparing for my role.
- Come to work as scheduled and communicate any absence in the way explained in the policies. This means arriving on time, every time.
- Be responsible for my own wellness. This means being free from the influence of alcohol or drugs and not being in possession of alcohol or drugs.
- Look after the premises where the programme is held and look after the property of the programme.
- Be respectful and professional with everyone including learners, staff and parents. This includes dressing appropriately for the work I do with learners.
- Set boundaries with learners. This means being clear about the things I can do for learners and the things I can't do. I will not lend money to or borrow money from learners. I will not have any kind of relationship with learners outside of the programme. I will not have, or even hint at, a sexual or romantic relationship with a learner.



## Protect learners

I commit to protect the learners I work with and uphold the South African Children's Act. Specifically, I commit to:

- Get permission to take and use photographs of learners. This includes permission for photographs on social media or the internet.
- Respect learners' privacy and keep what they tell me as confidential. This means not giving out, telling, or posting any information I might get about learners. The only exception to this is if I suspect a learner is being abused.
- Report abuse of learners. This means that when I see or suspect that a learner has been abused I immediately tell a more senior person, the principal, a social worker or the police, as set out in the organisation's child protection policy. It also means I will manage disclosure with care, sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Always be in a group of three people or more. I understand that I should not be alone with a learner. This means that even if I am talking to an individual learner, we should still be able to be seen by others.
- Only have appropriate physical contact with learners. This means I will not touch a learner or get a learner to touch me.

- Be proactive in setting clear expectations and rules for learners' behaviours. I will also take time to solve anti-social behaviour.
- Use consequences for rules that are broken or disruptive behaviour. This means I will not hit a learner or use violence of any kind with learners. This means even when learners are using violence with each other, or against me, I will not use violence against them.
- Take care of my own needs. This means I will not offer learners food, money, or special opportunities in exchange for them doing things for me personally.



## Be a role model

I commit to be a role model for learners so they learn from how I behave. Specifically, I commit to:

- Model a healthy lifestyle for body and mind. This means I will not swear, smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs in front of learners.
- Actively include all learners and take a stand on discrimination of any kind. This means I will notice and stop anyone who shows disrespect including on the basis of race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, family income, faith, culture, nationality, language, or ability.
- Be fair. This means I will not give special treatment to some learners or show that they are my favourites.
- Encourage diverse views. This means I will not push my own political ideas or religious beliefs.



## Build the confidence of learners

I commit to build the confidence of the learners I work with. Specifically, I commit to:

- See and talk to each learner as a wonderful unique individual. This means I will assume there is huge potential and the will to do good in every learner.
- Give positive feedback and encouragement. This means I will look for opportunities to praise each learner. It means I will not directly compare one learner with another. The only personal comments I make to a learner will be positive ones.
- Create an empowering environment. This means I will get learners where possible to share in making decisions. I will encourage learners to think for themselves.
- Accept learners' need to develop at their own pace. This means not pushing learners against their will or into excessive competition.

Name of After School Practitioner.....

Signature.....

Place.....

Date.....

# Work in a Professional Way

The first part of the Code of Conduct emphasises the need for you to work in a professional way. As an After School Practitioner you represent the organisation to hosting schools, to parents, and to other stakeholders. It is important that you take pride in the work you do. This section looks in more detail at three different aspects of being a professional, i.e. ongoing learning, dressing appropriately and being able to set clear boundaries.



## Commit to ongoing learning

As an After School Practitioner you (and everything about you) are what will make the difference for the learners you work with. The best thing you can do for them is to be on your own ongoing learning journey and to be the best possible person you can be. Your values, your attitude to life and learning, the way you balance your sport and academic life, the way you talk to people, all will set the example for the learners you work with.

You already have expertise in the particular field of the programme you are offering. Make sure

you are working with a quality age appropriate programme and that you are always prepared for the particular session you are running. Always be on the lookout for opportunities to become more knowledgeable in your field. Take advantage of any training or reading that you can.

### An After School Practitioner is committed to her own ongoing learning.

**Skye can help her learners better because she is learning herself.** Skye teaches maths to primary school students after school. She is planning to do matric maths herself this year and studies hard every evening. Because she is learning and working through difficult concepts, she is better able to help her learners. She knows how hard it can be to try out something new.

Before every session with her learners Skye spends time preparing. She looks at what concepts and examples are needed for the programme on that day. She works through the examples herself. Sometimes she Googles something online to understand it better.

“When I’m learning, I help them learn.”



While she is waiting for her learners to work through a particular exercise, Skye looks at each one in turn. She sees that Taurique is struggling with the exercise. She goes to stand by Taurique and points out where he has gone wrong. At the end of the class she says to Taurique: “Well done for keeping on trying through a difficult exercise!” For her next session she will bring some extra examples for Taurique to work through.



## Be professional and dress appropriately

As an After School Practitioner, what you say and do, and what you wear reflects on the organisation and sends a message to learners and parents. The best thing will be to wear branded clothing that is part of the programme. If your programme does not use this then you need to be very aware of what messages you are sending with the clothes you wear.

- Clothes should not be sexually provocative.
- Clothes should not have offensive printing or pictures.

- Clothes should not show a political affiliation.
- Clothes should work for the weather and allow you to move freely.

Different kinds of After School activities need different kinds of clothes. You will need to dress appropriately for the particular activity you are working with. For example, as a net ball coach, you would not wear high heels to your coaching practice!

An After School Practitioner chooses to dress in a professional way.

“What I wear sends a message to learners.”



**Robyn gives up wearing her tank tops to work.** Robyn is a 19-year old After School Practitioner who loves her clothes and getting dressed up. She wears tank tops which leave her stomach bare and very short skirts that barely cover her bum. One of the tank tops reads: “Kiss me baby”.

The Programme Coordinator talks to Robyn one day after the learners have gone home. She says that one of the parents came to the programme and thought there was no After School Practitioner even there! Robyn is nearly the same age as the learners and the parent could not believe she was a practitioner because her clothes were not professional.

The Coordinator asks Robyn to keep her amazing outfits for when she is not working on the programme. There is nothing wrong with her outfits when she is not working as an After School Practitioner. While she is working on the programme she represents the organisation. She is also expected to be a professional and to dress in a way that looks like she is going to work. Her outfits work well for parties but not for working with learners. It's important they see her as a tutor with authority rather than a peer. Robyn takes it well and she and the Coordinator agree that Robyn's clothes should cover her stomach and go to the top of the knee.



## Set boundaries with learners

As an After School Practitioner, you need to keep your relationship with all learners strictly and only as their After School Practitioner. You cannot see a learner outside of the programme nor can you have contact with them outside of the programme. For example, you cannot ask a learner on your programme to be a Facebook friend.

You cannot have a sexual or romantic relationship with a learner. You can't respond to a learner making sexual advances to you. Keep sex and

sexuality out of any of the time you spend with learners.

- Don't make sexual jokes.
- Don't become over involved or spend too much time with one particular learner.
- Don't become sexually involved with any learner.
- Don't visit learners outside the programme environment.
- Don't invite learners to your home.

An After School Practitioner realises that he can't have a romantic relationship with a girl on his team.



"I'm here to coach, not to find myself a girlfriend."

**Vusi** explains to Kenny that he needs to resign his job if he wants to come on to a girl in the programme. Kenny and Vusi are soccer coaches watching a girls' soccer match. Kenny is very impressed with Michelle, the captain of the girl's team. He tells Vusi: "I'd love to show that Michelle a good time." Vusi responds with surprise: "Are you crazy? You're her coach. You can't have a relationship with a girl on the programme!" Kenny argues that he's in love with Michelle and he wants to tell her that she's beautiful.

Vusi gets very serious with Kenny because he knows this kind of behaviour is against the law and Kenny could lose his job. Vusi tells Kenny that Michelle is there to play soccer, not to have the coach come on to her. If he wants a relationship with Michelle he should resign his job as a coach: "Then, and only then, can you ask her out, tell her she's beautiful or whatever."

Kenny is thoughtful and after a while he tells Vusi about another girl who was watching the game last Thursday, a girl who is not in the programme and doesn't even play soccer. Vusi says being an After School Practitioner doesn't mean you can't date anyone, it just means you can't date or come on to anyone in the programme in which you are working. Kenny decides to ask the other girl out on a date.

# Protect Learners

The second part of the Code of Conduct (pages 23 to 29) is about your responsibility to protect learners. The law is very clear about the ways in which you need to safeguard them from harm. This section unpacks three proactive ways you can protect learners, i.e. keeping confidentiality, not posting photographs, and not being alone with a learner. It also gives four scenarios of how you can go about resolving violence from learners or other practitioners in a peaceful way. For more about protecting learners from abuse see pages 15 to 16.



## Keep confidentiality

As an After School Practitioner, you are in a trust relationship with the learners on your programme. For this reason you must respect learners' privacy and keep learners' confidentiality. This means not passing on any information from or about learners.

Sometimes young people tell After School Practitioners lots of private information about themselves. This could be stories about themselves or their families. After School Practitioners should

not pass on information about the learners they work with to anyone else.

The only time After School Practitioners may break the confidence of a learner is when it is in the best interest of a child. This means they may tell if they suspect or know a learner is being abused or is going to harm themselves or another learner.

### An After School Practitioner makes it clear that he cannot break the confidence of the learners he works with.

**Luke** politely says that he cannot share stories that a learner has told him in confidence. Luke is an After School Practitioner whose role sometimes involves visiting the local high school. One day at the high school Luke bumps into one of the English teachers who asks him about one of the learners he has worked with.

The English teacher says she noticed the learner speaking with Luke in the playground, and asks Luke if he can provide her with some background information about what's been happening with that learner. The learner has recently been getting into trouble with several teachers and she is keen to find out what is going on so he doesn't fail English.

While Luke understands that the English

"Telling the story can feel good, but it hurts children."



teacher has good motives, he is also aware that this would be a breach of confidentiality for the learner. Luke politely explains to the English teacher that he can't give information out about the learner, but he can confirm the learner is having a difficult time. The English teacher asks for more information and Luke says that he can't give her any more information now but he will ask the learner for permission to talk with her in more detail at another time.



## Get permission to take and use photographs of learners

As an After School Practitioner, unless you have permission, you may not take photographs of learners and you should not allow visitors, donors or partners to do so either. Photographs of learners may never be posted on Facebook, WhatsApp or any other online platform without permission from parents or caregivers.

To get permission, parents and learners should fill out a consent form at the beginning of the learners' participation on the programme. See appendix page 44 for an example. Even if photographs are used, learners should not be identified in the photographs. Also, the geographical location should not be provided.

You also need to be sensitive as to what photographs of learners you might post and why. You should not allow photographs that could undermine the respect or dignity of a learner to be printed or posted whether permission is granted or not.



“Photographs should show the learner in a positive way.”

### An After School Practitioner gets permission to use photographs of learners for publicity purposes.

#### **Lesedi** turns down a request to use photographs of her learners that are degrading.

Lesedi is an After School Practitioner who works with junior school learners in a very poor area. Before they start on the programme, parents sign a form consenting to their photographs being used for the programme's publicity purposes.

Lesedi is approached by a reporter on a local paper who wants to do a story about her programme. The reporter is particularly interested in profiling Merisha, a learner who doesn't have school shoes. Lesedi knows that the article might give her organisation publicity and maybe some more funding will come. On the other hand, she knows the family of Merisha. They are very proud and they work hard to keep their children in school and in school uniform. Showing a photograph of Merisha with her broken shoes will not be respectful to them.

Lesedi explains to the reporter that the photograph could be disrespectful to the learner, Merisha, as well as her family. She is concerned that Merisha will not be portrayed in a dignified way. She turns down the offer for the article in the local paper.



## Always be in a group of three people or more

As an After School Practitioner, you should never be alone with a learner. Always work in an open environment.

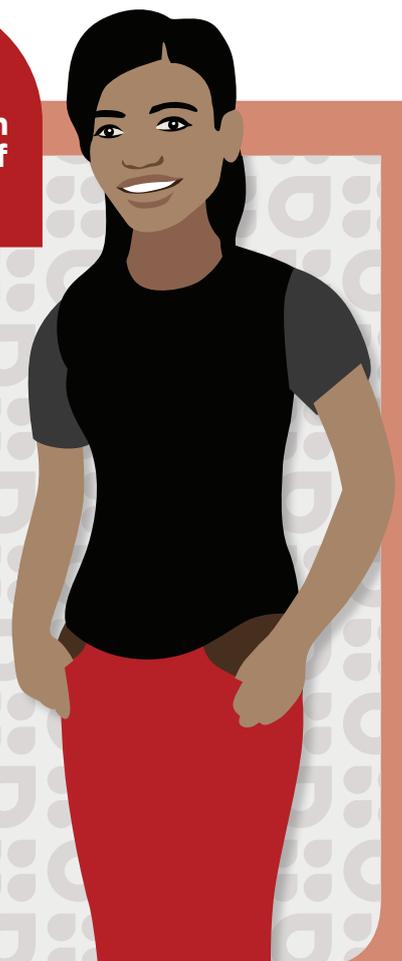
- Try to always have two adults in charge.
- If you are talking with an individual learner, make sure you can be seen by others.
- If you go on tour or on camp think about arrangements before you go.
- Don't lift individual learners in your car.
- Don't share a bed, shower, bath or similar space with a learner.
- If you have boys and girls, try to have a male and female practitioner to supervise.
- Don't enter a learner's room and don't invite learners into your room.
- Make sure boys and girls have the privacy they need from each other in sleeping arrangements and washing.

### An After School Practitioner makes sure she is never alone with a learner.

**Jolene** finds a way to talk with a troubled learner privately but in full view of the other learners. Jolene and Cheslyn are teaching English After School to a group of learners. One of the learners, a boy called Mohammed is acting very differently from how he usually does. He is just sitting in front of his books staring at the door with tears streaming down his face.

Jolene wants to talk with Mohammed privately away from all the other kids but she knows that she should never be alone with a learner. There is a bench in full view of the classroom door but a little way out in the courtyard. Jolene leaves Cheslyn in charge of the class and asks Mohammed to join her on the bench. This way everyone near the door in the classroom can see them but they can't hear them. They can still talk privately.

“You can still talk privately in full view of others.”





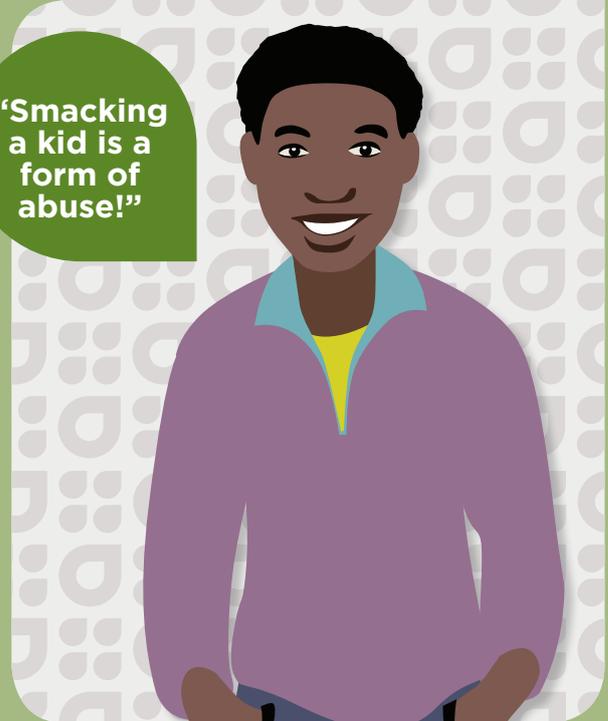
## Report abuse of learners by programme staff

As an After School Practitioner you are required by law to protect the children in your care. This includes protecting them from being smacked or hit. Even though it is against the law, it is very common for children to be smacked in South Africa. This can make it hard for some After School Practitioners to report colleagues. There is a very clear legal process that must be followed if smacking or any other kind of physical violence is used against a learner child (see page 16 for more).

- Document the abuse.
- Report to the principal, programme coordinator, social worker or the police.
- Give care and/or counselling to the learner or group of learners.

### An After School Practitioner reports the abuse of a learner even though it meant reporting another After School Practitioner.

“Smacking a kid is a form of abuse!”



#### **Sonwabo** reports to the programme coordinator that Sandile has hit a child.

Two After School Practitioners, Sandile and Sonwabo, are running an After School Programme together. Sandile had an argument with a learner and ended up hitting the child on the forehead with her slipper. In Sandile's community hitting a child is normal and Sandile smacks her own kids. The learner had a swelling and a blackish mark where Sandile had hit her.

The organisation's child protection policy clearly states that hitting is not allowed as a form of discipline and also that if any incidence or abuse happens it should be reported immediately (and within 24 hours). The next day Sonwabo reported the abuse. Sandile was immediately suspended pending a disciplinary hearing.

The social worker sent a report of the case to the Department of Social Development to inform them of what happened. The case was also reported to the police. The learner was taken for counselling and group sessions were done with the learners that witnessed the incident.



## Use consequences for rules that are broken

As an After School Practitioner you need to be proactive in getting good social behaviour from the learners in the group. This means you need to make it very clear at the start of the programme what you expect from learners and what the consequences will be for poor (or bad) behaviour. (See the section on developing a learner Code of Conduct on page 32). Talk with learners about what the consequences of breaking the Code of Conduct will be. Make sure everyone has a voice.

You need to talk about all the ways learners could be violent, including carrying a weapon, hitting, or pushing. If learners are being violent you need to be very clear about what the consequences will be.

### An After School Practitioner uses the learners' Code of Conduct to apply consequences.



**Ayanda** says that violence is not ok on his programme. Ayanda is an After School Practitioner running a drama programme. One of the boys in his group is a regular bully called Fezeka, who is 13 years old. One Tuesday afternoon, when the learners were working in groups of three, 11 year old Themba approached Ayanda and complained that Fezeka had tripped him up. Themba said his wrist was sprained as a result of his fall.

Ayanda immediately went to Fezeka and called him aside. Ayanda identified the particular behaviour Fezeka had shown, i.e. tripping Themba. Ayanda reminded Fezeka of the Code of Conduct he and the other learners had agreed to at the start of the drama programme. They had all agreed that bullying and the use of physical force was against their Code of Conduct. They had also agreed that the consequences of going against the Code of Conduct were suspension and possible dismissal from the programme.

Ayanda suspended Fezeka from the programme and made an appointment for him to see the Programme Coordinator later that afternoon.



## Take time to solve anti-social behaviour

As an After School Practitioner you will know that there is no “one size fits all” when it comes to dealing with learners who are acting out with behaviours that don’t work for the whole group. It takes time and effort to really teach a child how to behave in a group. When learners behave in ways that disrupt the group, they are often looking for attention.

- For some learners any kind of attention, even if they are being hit or shouted at, is better than no attention.
- When you react to learners’ behaviour, rather than the need behind it, the behaviour will continue.
- When you meet the need behind the bad behaviour, the behaviour will change.

You should never shout at a learner. You should never hit a learner. People used to think smacking a child would teach them a lesson. It just teaches a child that violence is acceptable and how to avoid pain. These days, hitting a learner is against the law. Now we know that using consequences works to help learners behave well. Try to link the consequences to the behaviour. For instance if a learner has stolen something with his hands, talk to the child about the other things he could do with his hands. For example, he could use his hands to make things or to help with cleaning. Also try to find good behaviour to praise in learners. Learners will change their behaviour much more quickly if they get attention for behaving well. For more on giving positive feedback, see page 31.

## An After School Practitioner spends time talking with a child who is rude.

**Kameshni** asks a swearing learner how else he could use his mouth. Kameshni and Glen work on an After School Programme teaching kids to surf. Glen’s mom used to hit him if he swore at her. She would give him a hiding if he didn’t tidy up his things. Because of the way he was brought up, Glen believes that hitting a child is the way to teach a child. Glen is shocked when he reads in the Code of Conduct that he is not allowed to hit a learner. These kids will just do whatever they like!

One day Andre, one of the 11 year olds on the programme, swears at him. Luckily, Glen’s colleague Kameshni stops Glen from hitting Andre. Kameshni takes Andre aside and they talk about his mouth that did the swearing. Kameshni talks with Andre about all the different things he can say with his mouth. She asks Andre: “What are the things you might choose to say with your mouth?”

Glen is amazed: “You spent so much time with him when he was so rude.” Kameshni says: “I think he was swearing because he wants attention. Now I have given him attention that builds him up and makes him feel good about himself.” “But it takes so much time,” says Glen. “Ja,” says Kameshni, “It’s easy just to smack a child. If you really want him to learn you have to put in the time.”

**“A need for attention is usually the reason for bad behaviour.”**





## Use consequences for violent behaviour

As an After School Practitioner you may not hit a learner or use violence of any kind with learners. This means that even when learners are using violence with each other, or against you, you will not use violence against them. Violence includes any kind of hitting, smacking, throwing of objects at a person, pushing, hair pulling, ear twisting or kicking. Violence can also include ordering learners to do excessive physical activity.

Sometimes learners will act out with violence against a coach or another After School Practitioner. It can be very hard for you as the After School Practitioner not to strike back in

some way. And yet you must not. You do not have the right to hit them back. What you can do is:

- Ask the learner to leave the programme.
- Report the violent behaviour to the principal or programme coordinator.
- Lay a charge of assault at the police station.

### An After School Practitioner takes a stand against learner on coach violence.

**Achmat suspends a learner from the programme and reports him to the school principal.** Achmat was an After School Practitioner coaching cricket. One day, near the end of the season, after a hard practice session, Leonard, one of the best players on Achmat's team thought he could get away with bad behaviour because the team needed his talents so much. In fact, Leonard was a better cricket player than Achmat, and he knew it. At the beginning of the practice Leonard threw a cricket glove in such a way that it hit Achmat on the head. "Ooops, sorry coach," said Leonard. Achmat ignored this incident but it was a mistake, because Leonard wanted to test Achmat to see if there would be consequences for his behaviour. Later on during the practice, Leonard deliberately bumped into Achmat as he was running off the field. When Achmat had been a young cricket player his coach had had a sjambok that he used to hit them with. Achmat was angry and he wished he had a sjambok that he could thrash Leonard with now. Achmat knew that he could not act on his feelings. He knew that using violence against Leonard

"As a coach you can't strike back."



could result in him losing his job. But he could not allow Leonard's behaviour to continue. He suspended Leonard from the programme, despite the huge losses this would mean for the team. He also decided to report the matter to the school principal. As a coach Achmat knew that unless he took a stand, the violence would continue in his team.

# Be a Role Model

The third part of the Code of Conduct is all about being a role model for the learners on your programme. As an After School Practitioner the learners will be watching you closely and learning from the way you do things. There are many ways you can model for learners how to live a healthy life style, how to be fair, and how to encourage diverse views. This section looks at just one aspect of being a role model, taking a stand on discrimination.



## Actively include all learners and take a stand against discrimination

As an After School Practitioner, part of your role is to include everyone and show them respect. When you see people acting on stereotypes or prejudices you need to take a stand and stop the behaviour.

People often make judgements or are mean because of ideas they have about the group of people they might belong to. This could be on the basis of race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, family income, faith, culture, nationality, language or ability.

As an After School Practitioner you also have your own histories, beliefs and experiences. This can make you believe things about certain groups of people. It is important to try to be aware of where you might carry your own judgements about people. It is important that you don't carry these judgements into your work as an After School Practitioner.

### An After School Practitioner stops a learner from putting down another learner.

**Ric** reminds a learner that this programme includes everyone. Ric has been working as a rugby coach and he takes his position as a role model for the twelve year olds he coaches very seriously. One of the things he and his team always agree on is that they will not discriminate against people or pick on people for being different. At the beginning of the programme they talk about what discrimination is. This is also in the Code of Conduct that Ric signed.

Ric is on the edge of the field with a soccer coach called Sarah, and some kids in her team, including Gerswin. Jonathan, one of the rugby team members walks past. Jonathan says to Gerswin "Hey Gerswin! You're such a darkie. Maybe you should join the soccer team."

Ric feels really scared. He has heard people saying things like this before and he has always been quiet out of fear. But he knows

"If I can take a stand against people using words that hurt others, then the learners will too."



that all the kids in the team are watching him and waiting to see what he will do. These are 12 year olds. If he says nothing now, how will they react when they are older? Ric takes a deep breath and asks Jonathan to stop walking.

"I don't like the way you were talking to Gerswin. It sounded like you were trying to put him down. In this team we welcome everyone and we don't use words and behaviour that hurt others. Jonathan please respect other people in the team and think before you say something like that."

# Build Learners' Confidence

The fourth part of the Code of Conduct (pages 31 to 32) is about finding ways to build learners' confidence. As an After School Practitioner the way you talk to learners and notice things about them can really build their self-esteem. There are many ways to build learners' confidence. This section looks at two aspects of building learners' confidence: giving positive feedback and creating an empowering environment.



## Give positive feedback

As an After School Practitioner, the greatest gift you can give your learners is your attention. If learners feel truly noticed, they will thrive and grow. You should look at each learner and notice something that you can give them feedback on. Remember that positive feedback is not just about achievements learners have reached, but also about their way of being in the world.

- You could give positive feedback on strengths in a learner's way of being that you notice. For example, the learner may be especially caring of others. It's important to say that you notice they are caring, but also to give an example or a situation of when you have seen them being caring. This way they really know you have noticed something positive about them. Other strengths in a learner's way of being that you could notice are commitment, a positive attitude, curiosity, bravery, love of learning, team work or honesty.
- You could give them positive feedback on doing something that has been difficult for them. Perhaps they have shown patience especially where this has been hard for them. Maybe they have taken a risk in doing something that they were too afraid to do before. Again be as specific as possible by naming the situation you have observed.
- You could give them positive feedback on something that they do well. For example the learner may manage a ball or equipment in a particularly effective way. Again try to be as specific as possible, giving an example or a situation where you have seen this. Other things learners may do well are reading, writing, explaining, listening or organising.

An After School Practitioner watches her learners closely to find things they are doing well.



**Retlabilie** appreciates Marie's ability to listen. Retlabilie is an After School Practitioner. She notices that one of her learners, Marie is very quiet. She doesn't participate much, although she seems to take in a lot. Every time Retlabilie gives an instruction, Marie gets out her books and gets on with it. Retlabilie appreciates having Marie listening so closely to her. It is great when all the instructions are given out to know that Marie knows what to do. One day Retlabilie says to Marie. "I notice how well you listen. Even today when I was talking and the others were distracted you kept your attention on me. Being able to listen can help with your learning and relationships. I really appreciate your listening Marie."

Marie's face flushed because she wasn't used to getting any kind of attention. It was not something she had noticed in herself. Now Retlabilie had brought it to her attention she knew it was true and she was proud.



## Create an empowering environment

As After School Practitioners you create the space where learners learn and grow. One of the things you can do is make this a space where no learner feels judged, where every learner can have their voice heard, and where learners are included in making decisions that affect them. One of the first things to do with a new group of learners is to let them know they have rights and work with them to create a Code of Conduct.

### LET CHILDREN KNOW THEY HAVE RIGHTS

After School Practitioners use children's rights, written into South African law, as a way to protect children in their care. If children know their rights they can also play a part in protecting themselves and each other. After School Practitioners should spend some time explaining children's rights to them. In an After School Programme, children have these rights:

- They have the right to learn in a safe place.
- They have a right never to be hit, hurt or abused in any way.
- They have the right to have their voice heard on matters that have to do with them.

**An After School Practitioner speaks about how important it is to let learners decide things for themselves.**

**"I'm clear about the house rules from the start."**



As well as having rights, there is a very important principle written into the law when it comes to dealing with all children:

- Whatever is done with learners, it must be in their best interests.

### FACILITATE A GROUND RULES SESSION

To make it a safe and fun space where we all learn, ground rules are needed. Ground rules make sure everyone is respected and everyone's contribution is valued. The best ground rules are those that are worked out with the whole group of learners present. Invite learners to suggest ground rules and write these down on a piece of cardboard or paper. If the group struggles to come up with ground rules, you can support them by asking about things which might affect them. For example, "What rules do we need around cell phones?" Or "What rules do we need around listening to each other?" You could also ask: "What else do we need to have in place for us to feel safe and learn together?"

After you have explored all the things that learners need to feel safe, have fun and learn together, you could allow each learner to sign the ground rules. Note that too many rules will be difficult for children. For smaller children stick to around 5 and for older children and adolescents no more than 10.

**Brendan** talks about how learners should take responsibility for their own behaviour.

As a coach I play the role of social worker, mother, father and policeman. As a coach I know it's all about my attitude with the kids. I have to get to know them to work with them in the right way. I'm clear about the "house rules" from the start. The consequences of breaking the rules must be upfront. We must give our children the responsibility to think for themselves. Give them all the ingredients but let them bake their own cake. The players can write their own consequences. It gives them responsibility for their own behaviour. Kids must be allowed to make mistakes. That is how they learn.

## Sample Code of Conduct for learners

As a learner in the After School Programme,

I am here to learn. I know that some of the things I learn on the programme will help me in my life when I leave school. They might even help me get to my dreams!

I know that what I do impacts on the other learners and the staff of the programme. I commit:



### To know my rights

I understand that I have rights and things that I can expect from the programme.

- I have a right to learn in a safe place.
- I have a right to have my voice heard on matters that have to do with me.
- No-one has the right to hit me, hurt me, or abuse me in any way.
- I know that as a child, whatever is done must be in my best interests.
- I know that if anyone goes against these rights, I should talk to an adult I trust. This could be the After School Practitioner, the principal, a parent, a social worker or a teacher.



### To be respectful of self, others and shared property

From my side, I understand that the things that I do, and the way I behave, impacts not only on my own learning, but on everyone else in the programme. I commit to being respectful of other learners, the After School Practitioner and the rules of the programme. Specifically I commit to:

- Being on time and staying for the duration of the session
- Being willing to learn
- Looking after my own things
- Looking after shared property and throwing away litter
- Listening and having one person talking at a time
- Asking an adult for help if necessary
- Keeping my cell phone turned off or on silent
- Not teasing or putting anyone down
- Being caring and helpful on the programme
- Not using abusive language
- Not hitting or showing violence towards anyone



### To never use violence or drugs

I know that any kind of violence and drugs is not allowed at an After School Programme. Specifically I pledge:

- To never bully or threaten any other learner or staff member
- To never bring a weapon into the programme
- To never be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on the programme
- To never carry alcohol or drugs into the programme
- To report to an adult if I see anyone using violence, drugs or carrying a weapons at the After School Programme

Name of Learner.....Signature.....

Place.....Date.....

# Appendices

Appendices contains summaries of relevant legislation. There is also a series of sample policies which organisations can use.

## Summaries of legislation

This section gives short summaries of the main laws in South Africa which protect children. The overarching law is the South African Constitution, the supreme law of the land. Children's rights are found in section 28 in the Bill of Rights and they form the basis for the "best interest of the child principle" which should be applied in all matters affecting children. The Children's Act, the Sexual Offences Act and the South African Schools Act give realisation to the protection of children and their rights as stipulated in the Constitution.

### THE CHILDREN'S ACT (2008)

The Children's Act governs all the laws relating to the care and protection of children. It defines the responsibilities and rights of parents. It makes provision for the establishment of Children's Courts and the appointment of welfare officers. It regulates the establishment of places of safety, orphanages and the rights of orphans and sets out the laws for their adoption. It also provides for the contribution of certain people towards maintenance. In most cases, the guiding principle is the best interests of the child.

The Children's Act is very clear about protecting children from physical and sexual abuse and deliberate neglect. It makes provision for:

- Mandatory reporting of physical and sexual abuse and deliberate neglect
- A child protection register of all mandatory reports and tracking responses, and an offender register aimed at preventing perpetrators from working with children and causing further harm
- Identifying, reporting and referring children in need of social service professionals for investigation, assessment, referral and support services
- Children's courts where children in need of care and protection and their families, social workers and magistrates sit down and work out the best solution for the child
- Prevention and early intervention services to support families and respond to situations of risk before the child falls into the statutory care system

### THE SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT (2007)

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Amendment Act replaces some common law provisions on sexual offences and some sections of the old law, the Sexual Offences Act 23 of 1957. The Act also creates new sexual crimes. It has broadened the definition of rape and is inclusive of a wide range of crimes that commonly occur against children, including sexual grooming, sexual exploitation, and the use of and exposure to pornography.

## **THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT (1996)**

The South African Schools Act ensures that there is a uniform system governing schools. It sets out the laws for governance and funding of schools. The Act recognises that a new national system for schools is needed to redress past injustices, and it supports the rights of learners, educators and parents and sets out the duties and responsibilities of the State. The South African Schools Act outlaws corporal punishment in schools.

## **THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT (2013)**

The Protection of Personal Information Act (also known as PoPI), is to make sure organisations are responsible when collecting, processing, storing and sharing personal information. Personal information could include identity number, phone number, e-mail address, online/instant messaging identifiers, gender, marital status, race and ethnic origin as well as photos, voice recordings, and video footage (also CCTV). Organisations are held accountable should they abuse or compromise personal information in any way. PoPI says that individuals must consent to when and with whom their information is shared. It stipulates that there should be adequate measures and controls in place around how personal information is stored.

# Sample policies



## Child Protection Policy

The main body of this book contains everything that should be in a child protection policy. Your organisation should go through it carefully and make sure that practical arrangements are in place for all of the different aspects to be carried out. In particular, you should find ways to support After School Practitioners to take on child protection in a full and practical way.



## Anti-Bullying Policy

..... (Programme's name) is committed to providing a caring, supportive and friendly environment where young people learn to value and respect each other and are challenged to reach their full potential through active participation.

..... (Programme's name) also:

- Respects every child's need for, and rights to, an environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available
- Respects every individual's feelings and views
- Recognises that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special
- Shows appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress

..... (Programme's name) therefore has the following policy on bullying:

Bullying is a form of violence. Bullies create fear in their victims because they themselves are experiencing feelings of disempowerment.

Forms of bullying:

- Cyber: using social media or networks to demean or belittle others
- Physical: using force such as physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any other unwanted physical contact
- Verbal: using words to insult or hurt others such as name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Non-verbal: ignoring or excluding someone
- Emotional: abusing the feelings of others, such as emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and exclusion of individuals
- Mob: threatening with gangs or other menacing groups

Racial, sectarian or homophobic taunts, comments, graffiti and gestures and/or sexual comments and suggestions are found in all the different forms of bullying. In addition to bullying these actions are also discriminatory in terms of the Constitution.

Bullying will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of bullying will be addressed.

Learners from ethnic minorities, disabled learners, learners who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties can be more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

Everybody has the responsibility to implement this policy and to work together to stop bullying – learners, parents and After School Practitioners.

- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and told what will be done with the information.
- Learners will be told what is being recorded, in what context and why.
- Learners being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to a safe After School programme environment which allows for their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.

## **Procedures**

Any reported incidents or suspicions of bullying should be reported to

.....(*Programme Manager's name*)

..... (*Programme Manager's name*) will investigate the complaint objectively and will listen carefully to all those involved. Where possible, the parties will be brought together to see if the issue can be resolved with a (genuine) apology.

If appropriate, parents of those involved will be informed and asked to meet with ..... (*Programme Manager's name*) to discuss the situation.

If the issue is not resolved the After School Programme manager will bring together a small panel (Board member, Chairperson, senior After School Practitioner) to meet with the parties together and separately to try and resolve the issue.

If a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, the small panel will decide on the course of action to be taken.



## SAFETY POLICY

In an ideal world all After School Programmes will be held in safe and secure places. However many of the programmes are based in communities which are themselves not safe or secure. While every effort needs to be made to enable learners to be as safe as possible, programmes managers need to ensure their safety policy does not commit to things that they cannot deliver. Any aspects of the policy which **MUST** be included are marked with an \*.

..... (*Programme's name*) is committed to protecting the wellbeing of the programmes' staff, After School Practitioners, learners and visitors by doing everything it can to provide a safe and healthy environment. All learners should be able to grow and develop their potential in an environment without fear of harm. They should be able to expect a confident and speedy response in the case of accident or injury.

As a programme hosted at ..... (*Hosting school's name*), ..... (*Programme's name*) is committed to observing the health and safety procedure developed and endorsed by ..... (*Hosting school's name*). This is available for staff and After School Practitioners to view at all times.

..... (*Programme's name*) recognises that After School Practitioners need particular awareness and caution around the following safety considerations:

### **Access to premises**

- Premises should be clearly demarcated and secure. \*
- Access to the premises should be monitored at all times.
- Only learners, After School Practitioners, parents, school staff and approved volunteers should be allowed on the premises. No other people, including friends or family that do not fall within this category should be allowed on the premises.\*
- Clear signs should be posted at appropriate places to warn off trespasses.\*
- Learners should not be moving around the premises without express permission from a senior person.

### **Walking to and from the After School Programme**

- Learners and After School Practitioners should always walk to and from the programme in a groups of three or more. In the case of junior school learners, at least one adult should be present.
- Regular discussion should be held amongst learners and After School Practitioners to gather and impart information about dangerous zones in the area. Both learners and After School Practitioners should steer clear of these areas and report any additional information they may have about these areas.\*
- Learners and After School Practitioners should notify their caregivers/parents or other family members about where the programme is being held and what time they can be expected home.\*

## ***Physical Safety***

- No weapons of any kind should be brought on to the premises. Further, no hazardous substances, drugs or alcohol are allowed on the premises.\*
- Learners and After School Practitioners must wear relevant protective gear for all contact sports. Dangerous tackling must be identified and disallowed.\*
- The programme must ensure that there is access to safe drinking water and that learners are reminded to drink regularly. Learners should be trained to identify signs of dehydration, i.e. headache, sleepiness, very yellow urine.\*
- A first aid box should be available on the premises.\*
- Where possible After School Practitioners should be trained in basic first aid.\*

## ***Emergency services***

A list of emergency services for the area should be posted in a place where all learners and After School Practitioners can see it. \* The following service providers should be included on the list:

- ambulance
- fire station
- police
- Child Line
- Life Line
- poison

## ***Emergency evacuation***

The programme should have a clear procedure in case emergency evacuation is needed. A map showing evacuation routes must be visibly displayed and include the location of fire extinguishers. Different contingencies should be worked out in the case of fire, bomb, crime (including gang interference) or medical emergency. This needs to include a clear incident command system. A command system sets out who can give the orders each time a new person or institution arrives. For example the After School Practitioner might give orders until the police arrive and at which point they take command.

## ***Reporting safety incidents***

Safety incidents must be reported to:

- The Principal of the school (where After School Practitioners are on school premises) or the head of the organisation in the case of off-site programmes
- Safer Schools Hotline 0800 45 46 47
- SAPS

## ***Awareness and building a culture of safety***

Designate a particular After School Practitioner to take on a safety portfolio and offer him or her training and mentorship in this role.

At least once per term all After School Practitioners and learners are to be reminded of key items in the safety policy.



## CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION POLICY

..... (Programme's name) is committed to providing a safe environment for learners and After School Practitioners.

..... (Programme's name) recognises that trust is essential for good youth work and is the foundation for all relationships within

..... (Programme's name). Maintaining confidences is an integral part of building trust between learners, After School Practitioners and the organisation, and will be respected at all times, apart from where it conflicts with reporting child protection concerns.

In addition, The Protection of Personal Information Act (2013) places an obligation on all organisations to obtain, handle and store personal information in a responsible manner.

..... (Programme's name) therefore states:

### **Learners**

..... (Programme's name) is committed to ensuring that learners are able to share information with After School Practitioners in a confidential manner.

Learners can expect that any information they give to an After School Practitioner is treated as sensitive and confidential and will not be shared UNLESS:

- The After School Practitioner believes that the learner, or another learner, is in danger or is being harmed. In this case the learner will be told that the information has to be shared with the appropriate agencies and will be encouraged to agree with this.
- The learner discloses that they are involved, or plan to become involved in acts of terrorism.

### **After School Practitioners**

All After School Practitioners at ..... (Programme's name) are expected to uphold the organisations' commitment to confidentiality. This means that After School Practitioners are expected to:

- Keep records, files and documents stored in a safe and secure manner
- Not discuss any information given by a learner in confidence, unless they have a child protection concern or the learner gives their permission
- Tell a learner when information cannot be kept confidential (i.e. a child protection concern)

- Encourage a learner to talk to other people (e.g. parents or guardians) or professionals, where they feel it would be in the learners' interest

After School Practitioners can expect that the organisation will:

- Provide them with a suitable means for storing confidential documents
- Ensure that their own information is stored securely, is kept confidential and only seen by colleagues in relation to their role
- Safely destroy personal information when the After School Practitioner ceases to work for the organisation
- Take disciplinary action where the Confidentiality Policy is not upheld (unless due to child protection concerns or a court order)

### ***Parents and Caregivers***

Parents or caregivers of learners attending the programme can expect that the information they provide (e.g. medical information, contact information) will:

- Be kept in a secure, confidential manner and only used for the purpose provided (i.e. to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the learner)
- Enable the After School Programme to ensure that parents receive information that is necessary e.g. newsletters, letters and emails regarding information about upcoming events, fundraising activities, and activities
- Not be sold
- Will not be shown to organisations without prior consent



## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

..... (*Programme's name*) takes the safety and privacy of learners extremely seriously.

Social media include the various types of website that enable people to interact online. This includes, but is not limited to, multimedia, social networking sites, such as Facebook, blogs, wikis, pod casts, forums, micro blogging and YouTube.

..... (*Programme's name*) prohibits all After School Practitioners and other staff from publishing or commenting via any form of social media in any way that suggests they are doing so in connection with .....  
..... (*Programme's name*) or the school premises on which it is located.

In accordance with obligations under the Protection of Personal Information Act the .....(*Programme's name*) strictly prohibits all After School Practitioners and other staff from disclosing any information regarding learners, staff or other stakeholders, be this either written, pictorial or photographic and other confidential information regarding .....  
(*Programme's name*), even in private messages between other members of staff.

If an After School Practitioner or staff member is required to be engaged in work related to social media, they must obtain the permission of the person in charge. Staff may not use ..... (*Programme's name*) for social media identities, login IDs and user names without prior approval from the person in charge.

..... (*Programme's name*) must not appear on internet postings unless After School Practitioners or staff are speaking on .....  
..... (*Programme's name*) behalf and clear permission is granted.

Where After School Practitioners and staff are allowed to identify themselves as volunteers and employees of ..... (*Programme's name*), there is responsibility for representing .....  
(*Programme's name*) in a professional manner. After School Practitioners and staff are also expected to mention that the views and opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do necessarily represent the views of .....  
..... (*Programme's name*) management or staff, as everything that is posted reflects on ..... (*Programme's name*) and its image.

After School Practitioners and staff must always exercise good judgement and common sense regardless of whether online comments relate to their job. All After School Practitioners and staff must respect copyright, privacy, fair use and other applicable laws including the .....(*Programme's name*) own copyright and brands.

After School Practitioners and staff must not post comments that can be interpreted as:

- Personal attacks
- Defamation
- Bullying and harassment
- Spam
- Offensive comments
- Illegal activities

Any misuse of social networking sites that has a negative impact on .....  
.....(*Programme's name*) may be brought as a disciplinary offence. Instances where..... (*Programme's name*) is brought into disrepute may constitute misconduct or gross misconduct and disciplinary action will be applied.

Social media policy taken from <http://abcxyzclubs.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/social-media-policyNOV15.pdf> accessed on 6 December 2016

# Sample forms

## Consent form for photographs

Name of the child's parent, guardian or caregiver: .....

Name of child:.....

Name of After School Programme: .....

Contact person and their phone number in case of questions: .....

Occasionally, we may take photographs of the learners on our programme. We may use these images in our programme's prospectus or in other printed publications that we produce, as well as on our website. We may also make video or webcam recordings for provincial and interprovincial events, monitoring or other educational use.

From time to time, our programme may be visited by the media who will take photographs or film footage of a visiting dignitary or other high profile event. Learners will often appear in these images, which may appear in local or national newspapers, or on televised news programmes.

To comply with the The Protection of Personal Information Act (2013) we need your permission before we can photograph or make any recordings of your child. Please call our contact person if you have any queries. Please answer the questions below, then sign and date the form where shown and return the completed form to the programme.

*Please circle your answer*

May we use your child's photograph in the programme's prospectus and other printed publications that we produce for promotional purposes?

**Yes / No**

May we use your child's image on our website?

**Yes / No**

May we record your child's image on video or Webcam?

**Yes / No**

Are you happy for your child to appear in the media?

**Yes / No**

Parent, guardian or caregiver's signature: .....

Date: .....

Name (capitals): .....



# AFTER SCHOOL GAME CHANGER

Practitioner Code of Conduct Handbook, 2016/2017

## Manage your programme



Put policies in place



Build relationships with schools and other stakeholders



Develop and maintain a referral system



Recruit and orientate After School Practitioners

## Live the Code of Conduct



Be professional



Protect learners



Be a role model



Build learners' confidence



**Western Cape  
Government**

Please report any safety related issues to:

Safe School Hotline  
0800 454647

For any further information, please contact the office of the After School Game Changer:

Email Address: [Afterschool@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:Afterschool@westerncape.gov.za)

Contact Number: 021 483 9844

Address: 2nd Floor, Protea Assurance House,  
Green Market Square, Cape Town

Website: <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/after-school-game-changer/>