



CHILD PROTECTION 2021/22 HANDBOOK



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Letter of Introduction

Dear Parents,

This Handbook guides our staff and families in matters related to the health, safety and care of children at ABA. At the beginning of each school year, it is important to review such policies. The ABA Child Protection Policy is based on international law and on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of which Oman is a signatory. These two key articles from the U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child are important, and we wish to draw your attention to them:

Article 19 - Protection from abuse and neglect

The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.

Article 34 - Sexual exploitation

The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

By enrolling your child at ABA, you agree to work in partnership with the school and abide by the policies of the school. All of us at ABA want you to know that we genuinely value our partnership with you in providing for the safety and care of your children. It is for this reason that ABA has endorsed a Child Protection Policy that defines the standards that all ABA students should be treated with respect and dignity at all times. ABA will:

1. Provide age-appropriate lessons to help students understand personal safety, needs and rights.
2. Provide parent materials and information sessions
3. Annually train faculty and staff to recognize and report issues of abuse and neglect.

Let's work together at home and school to ensure that our children are safe and are knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities to themselves and to each other. I thank you for your support of our efforts and invite you to contact your school counsellor or principal regarding any specific questions you may have in this regard.

Sincerely,

Craig Williamson
Head of School

ABA Child Protection Policy

Policy 7.6.3

ABA seeks to be a safe haven for all our students. Child Protection procedures derived from this policy will be stated in an ABA Child Protection Handbook. This handbook will be communicated to all who work with ABA students.

All staff employed at ABA must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering abuse or neglect.

Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will be in accordance with Omani law and the child protection procedures resulting from this policy statement. The ABA administration shall be responsible for ensuring that screening and criminal background checks for staff are provided.

ABA Statement of Child Protection

Child abuse and neglect are concerns throughout the world. Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles to the child's education as well as to their physical, emotional, and spiritual development. ABA endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which our host country, Oman, is a signatory, as well as the Oman Child Law (2014).

Schools fill a special institutional role in society as protectors of children. Schools need to ensure that all children in their care are afforded a safe and secure environment in which to grow and develop, both at school and away. Educators, having the opportunity to observe and interact with children over time, are in a unique position to identify children who are in need of help and protection. As such, educators have a professional and ethical obligation to identify children who are in need of help and protection and to take steps to ensure that the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect.

ABA's commitment to Child Protection is aligned with the faculty code of conduct (Appendix F) and the parent commitment declaration (see Appendix G), and applies to all faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers who represent the school and who interact with children or young people in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

In the case of a staff member reported as an alleged offender, ABA will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, keeping the safety of the child at the highest priority.

For detailed information on the Convention on the Rights of Child see the following link:
http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30160.html

Child Protection Team

Child Protection Officer	Reporting teacher	School Nurse
School Counselor x 3	Principal x 3	Head of School

Roles are assigned on a case-by-case basis.

Child Protection Reporting Procedures

At ABA we aim to focus our energy on implementing policies and procedures that prevent incidents of child abuse from occurring; however, the Child Protection disclosure flowchart below outlines the procedures we have in place for reporting and responding to suspected, observed or disclosed incidents of child abuse.

Where there is cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff member to report their suspicions to the counselor, or to the principal. In all cases, the principal will be notified. It is the responsibility of the principal to inform the head of school of the suspected case of child abuse or neglect.

All staff, faculty and administrators are mandated to report incidences of abuse and neglect. All ABA employees are also required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect. All reports of abuse and neglect must be made to the counselor within 24 hours for immediate response.

Step 1: Reporting:

When a child reports abuse or self-harm or there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse or neglect is occurring, the ABA teacher will report and follow advice from the appropriate ABA counselor within 24 hours.

The counselor will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident and will form a school-based response team as needed (within 24 hours) to address the report. The response team will include at least the Principal, Counselor and Child Protection lead, and in some cases, the other Counselors, the School Nurse, and other individuals as the Principal deems necessary. In all cases, follow up activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures that information is documented factually, and that strict confidentiality is maintained.

***NOTE:** *in cases of observed injury/bruising, the child will be referred to the school nurse. The injury will be recorded, and information provided to the school-based response team.*

The team will use the following procedure:

1. Interview staff member/reporter as necessary and document information relative to the case.
2. Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.

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3. Report the status of the case to the Head of School.
 4. Develop an action plan.

Step 2: Action Plan

Based on the acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child and family.

Actions that may take place are:

- An email notification or phone call from the Nurse to parents in case of observed injury/bruising
- Discussions between the child and counselor to gain more information. These discussions will be developmentally appropriate. The well-being of the child will be considered regarding further steps that may be taken, including discussions with parents and outside authorities.
- In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counselor, or administrator
- Meetings with the family to present ABA's concerns.
- Support for family and child.
- Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling.

In cases of severe abuse or where outside authority and intervention is deemed necessary, a report made to the Child Protection Team may result in further investigation, and **one or more** of these possible actions may follow:

- Communication with the School Board.
- Consultation with a legal advisor.
- Consultation with the ROP Child Protection Liaison Officer.
- Notification of the management of the sponsoring employer of the concern with the child/family, or to the child welfare office at the family's home country.
- Consultation with the consulate of the country of the involved family.
- Formal or informal consultation with local authorities.

In the event that the report of abuse or neglect involves a staff or faculty member of ABA, the Principal and Head of School will follow board policy pursuant to ethical professional behavior and discipline procedures outlined in the Faculty and Staff Handbooks.

Step 3: Follow up

During this process:

- The team will maintain contact with the child and family to provide support and guidance as appropriate.
- The team will provide the child's teachers, principal and Head of School with ongoing support and updates.
- The team will provide resource materials and strategies for teacher use if necessary.
- The team will maintain contact with any outside professionals and organizations involved in order to update the progress of the child in school.
- The team is not responsible for providing in-depth counselling to the offender.

All documentation of the investigation will be kept in the child's confidential records file located in the counselor's office and a copy will be stored with the Child Protection lead. Records sent to schools to which the student may transfer will state that there is a confidential file for the child. ABA makes every attempt to share this information to protect the child.

Many cases will be managed internally by the team, such as those involving:

- Student relationships with peers (minor conflicts)
- Bullying or Cyberbullying
- Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home
- Student-parent relationship
- Health issues such as low self-esteem, grieving.

Some cases will be referred to outside resources, for example:

- Mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, self-harm, suicidal ideation.
- Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect
- Sexual abuse and incest.

Note about Confidentiality:

Confidentiality is essential UNLESS someone discloses that they or someone else is in danger. Then, it is the responsibility of the ABA Child Protection Team to follow the necessary procedures to ensure the safety of the child.

Child Protection Online Safety Guidelines Procedures for Parents

Support the ABA Acceptable Use Guidelines (Appendix I) for your child

Monitor and approve your child's login location for online learning and video conferencing. Teachers will alert you if a one-on-one conference is planned with your EC or Elementary child.

Meetings with Middle School and High School students will occur with individual teachers and student support staff members as part of our online educational program.

Assist your child to balance screen time and usage

If you are concerned about the safety of a child, please inform the relevant school counselor - contacts below.

Child Protection Online Safety Guidelines Procedures for Students

Login location - When video conferencing, your location should be open and accessible and approved by your parents.

ABA Mufti dress code guidelines should be followed when video conferencing, both one on one with a teacher and as part of a group.

ABA expectations regarding appropriate language and behaviour with teachers and students should be maintained when online.

ABA Acceptable Use Guidelines (appendix I) apply to all online learning situations. Students are not permitted to record or take screenshots of live online classes.

Academic honesty rules apply to all online learning situations

If you are concerned about an online interaction or a friend, please inform the relevant school counselor - contacts below.

For queries about...	Contact ABA school counselors.
A social/emotional concern	Elementary School Colette O'Driscoll codriscoll@abaoman.org
A Child Protection concern	Middle School Claire Anthony canthony@abaoman.org
An online safety concern	High School Alli Hostetter ahostetter@abaoman.org

Child Protection Identification Guidelines

Physical abuse may involve hitting, punching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, biting, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, hair pulling or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child. (These symptoms could also indicate harm to self, such as cutting and suicidal ideation).

Signs of physical abuse (including but not limited to)

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc. Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Being aggressive towards others
- Being very passive and compliant
- Chronic running away

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve: conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved; that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children; causing children frequently to feel frightened; or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Signs of emotional abuse (Including but not limited to)

- Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed
- Highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situations
- Low self-esteem

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- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations Extremes of passivity or aggression
 - Drug or alcohol abuse
 - Chronic running away
 - Compulsive stealing
 - Obsessions or phobias
 - Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration Attention-seeking behavior
 - Persistent tiredness
 - Lying

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Children involved in commercial sex work are victims of sexual abuse, whether they perceive themselves as victims or not.

Signs of sexual abuse (Including but not limited to):

- Pain or irritation to the genital area Vaginal or penile discharge
- Difficulty with urination Infection, bleeding, STDs
- Fear of people or places Aggression
- Regressive behaviors, bed-wetting or stranger anxiety Excessive masturbation
- Sexually provocative
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Being unusually quiet and withdrawn or unusually aggressive
- Suffering from what seem to be physical ailments that can't be explained medically
- Showing fear or distrust of a particular adult
- Mentioning receiving special attention from an adult or a new "secret" friendship with an adult or young person
- Refusal to continue with school or usual social activities
- Age inappropriate sexualized behavior or language

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or physiological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Grooming is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child or young person for sexual activity at a later time. Grooming can include communicating and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent/carer. Young people are often 'groomed' before they are sexually abused. At first, they may be tricked into thinking they are in a safe and normal relationship so they may not know it's happening or may feel they have no choice but to be abused. It

may be hard to identify when someone is being groomed until after they have been sexually abused, because grooming behaviour can sometimes look like 'normal' caring behaviour, however, this is not always the case.

Examples of grooming behaviour may include:

- Giving gifts or special attention to a child or young person, or their parent or carer, making the child or young person feel special and/or indebted to an adult.
- Making close physical contact sexual, such as inappropriate tickling and wrestling/play fighting.
- Openly or pretending to accidentally expose the victim to nudity, sexual material and sexual acts (this in itself is classified as child sexual abuse but can also be a precursor to physical sexual assault).
- Controlling a child or young person through threats, force or use of authority making the child or young person fearful to report unwanted behaviour.
- Groomers may rely on mobile phones, social media and the internet to interact with children in inappropriate ways and will often ask the child to keep their relationship a secret. The grooming process may continue for months before the offender arranges a physical meeting.

[https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/expolitatio
ngrooming.aspx#](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/expolitatio
ngrooming.aspx#)

In addition to knowing the signs of victimization, below are some **early warning signs to look out for in potential offenders:**

Signs of offenders (students)

- Unusual interest in sex, sexualizing inanimate objects and activities
- Does not stop sexual misbehavior when told to stop
- Uses force and coercion in social situations
- Unusual intensity when discussing sex and sexuality
- Socializes with children much younger
- Gives gifts, requires secrecy in relationships

Signs of offenders (adults)

- Has "favorite" student or child
- Attempts to find ways to be alone with children
- Inappropriate language, jokes and discussions about students/children
- Sexualized talk in the presence of students/children
- Gives private gifts or has private chats on Facebook/internet

Source: Association of International Schools in Africa Child Protection Handbook for Teachers, Administrators, and Board Members. May 201

Bullying & Cyberbullying

Accusations of bullying and cyberbullying are taken seriously at ABA. Parents and students should become familiar with ABA's cyber-bullying policy and what to do in the event a child is being cyberbullied.

Definition of Bullying: Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. The bully intends to hurt, embarrass, or intimidate the victim.

Definition of Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is when one person or a group of people aim to threaten, tease, or embarrass someone else by using a mobile phone, the internet or other technologies.

When dealing with students on an issue of bullying or cyberbullying, the following questions are a good basis to ascertain whether or not bullying is taking place.

- Is it a deliberate action?
- Is it unfair?
- Is it repeated over time?

If the answer to all three is yes, then it can be termed as bullying.

Following this, the type of bullying is identified; is it physical or emotional or cyberbullying?

Physical bullying can include; hitting; kicking; punching; pushing; throwing objects; stopping someone from doing something; damaging someone's property; tripping; slapping; spitting.

Emotional bullying can include; humiliating another student; making nasty or threatening comments; spreading rumours/talking about others behind their back; stealing someone's property; name-calling; excluding an individual; persuading others to exclude another pupil; intentionally hurting someone's feelings; ganging up against another pupil.

Cyberbullying can include; text messaging bullying; picture/video-clip via mobile phone cameras; phone call bullying via mobile phones; email bullying; chat-room bullying; bullying through instant messaging (IM); bullying via websites.

What is cyberbullying?

“Cyberbullying is when one person or a group of people aim to threaten, tease, or embarrass someone else by using a mobile phone, the internet or other technologies.”
(www.direct.gov.uk)

Categories of Cyber-bullying (Source; University of London 2008)

- Text messaging bullying
- Picture/video-clip via mobile phone cameras
- Phone call bullying via mobile phones
- Email Bullying
- Chat-room Bullying
- Bullying through instant messaging (IM)
- Bullying via websites

How Families Can Prevent Cyberbullying

- Establish rules for interacting with people online or through any other form of technology.
- Identify problems that can be created when technology is misused.
- Protect passwords and personal information.
- Reinforce family values and expectations.
- Cultivate and maintain an open, candid line of communication.
- Recognize warning signs that something abnormal is occurring.

Warning Signs a Child May be a Victim of Cyberbullying if he or she...	Warning Signs a Child May be Cyberbullying Others if he or she.....
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unexpectedly stops using the computer• Appears nervous or jumpy when an instant message is received, or phone message is received• Avoids answering his or her cell phone in front of you• Appears uneasy about going to school or outside in general• Appears to be angry, depressed, or frustrated after using the computer• Avoids discussions about what he or she is doing on the computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quickly switches screens when you walk by• Uses the computer at all hours of the night• Gets unusually upset if he or she cannot use the computer• Is using multiple online accounts or an account that is not his or her own• Laughs excessively while using the computer• Avoids discussions about what he or she is doing on the computer or becomes defensive

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becomes abnormally withdrawn from usual friends and family members • Is being bullied at school 	
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What Should Students Do if They Witness Bullying or Cyberbullying?	What Should Students Do if They are Being Bullied or Cyberbullied?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document what they see and when. • Don't encourage the behavior. • Don't forward hurtful messages. • Don't laugh at inappropriate jokes. • Don't condone the act just to fit in. • Don't silently allow it to continue. • Stand up for the victim. • Tell an adult they trust to support them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignore minor teasing or name-calling. • Block messages from unknown people. • Don't respond to the bully. • Keep a log/journal of attacks. • Keep all evidence of bullying. • Talk to an adult they trust to support them.

Steps ABA Will Take When a Bullying or Cyberbullying Incident is Reported

- A member of staff will speak with the student(s) involved.
- The administration will be informed.
- An investigation will take place.
- Action will be taken, and parents and advisors informed.

Reference:

Hinduja, Sameer and Patchin, Justin (2014). *Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying*. Corwin Press.

Suicide/Self Harm definitions and protocols

Suicide/Self-harm

Self-harm is a broad term that can be used to describe the various things that young people do to hurt themselves physically. It includes cutting or scratching the skin, burning/branding with cigarettes/lighters, scalding, an overdose of tablets or other toxins, tying ligatures around the neck, punching oneself or other surfaces, banging limbs/head and hair-pulling (Mental Health Foundation, 2006). School response is as per the disclosure process.

Suicidal ideation Thinking about, considering, or planning for self-injurious behavior may result in death. A desire to be dead without a plan or intent to end one's life is still considered suicidal ideation and should be taken seriously. School response as per disclosure process.

Suicide Death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior. Crisis Team response (See below) **Suicide Behaviour** Suicide attempts, intentional injury to self-associated with at least some level of intent, developing a plan or strategy for suicide, gathering the means for a suicide plan, or any other overt action or thought indicating intent to end one's life. Crisis Team response (See below)

Crisis response team - Guidelines in the event of attempted suicide, suicide or trauma, on or off-campus. [Link to Toolkit for Schools: After a Suicide](#)

Crisis Response Team Members:

- Head of School
- Director of Student Support
- ES Principal
- MS Principal
- HS Principal
- School Nurse
- Director of Human Resources
- EA to Head of School (minutes)

Steps the Crisis Response Team will take following a report of attempted suicide, suicide or trauma:

- Mobilize the crisis team - confirm the incident
- Assess the safety and security of students, faculty, support staff
- Gather all relevant information - document the facts

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- Communicate as appropriate with various groups in the school community
 - Provide resources to support members of the community
 - Maintain an environment focused on normal educational activities
 - Identify media accounts that may need monitoring and monitor peer reactions

Definition of terms

Child Protection is a broad term used to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In this document, the term “child protection” applies to the protection of children in international schools. **Please note that this definition also includes harm to self.**

Child Protection Policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to protecting students from harm (to self and from others) and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of students. It serves to create a safe and positive environment for children and to demonstrate that the school is taking its duty and responsibility seriously. This handbook considers that schools will provide appropriate child safety classes supported with a well-defined curriculum to increase children’s ability to understand abuse prevention.

Child protection concerns include suspected, alleged, self-disclosed, or witnessed abuse of a child by anyone associated within or outside the school which must be investigated and followed by appropriate action.

Child Abuse According to the World Health Organization, child abuse constitutes “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to the following associations and conferences for the resources and guidance in creating this handbook.

Association for the Advancement of International Education: Child Protection School Evaluation

Association of International Schools in Africa: Child Protection Handbook for Teachers, Administrators, and Board Members.

Council for International Schools (CIS): Child Protection Workshop

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Resources

https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.cfm

<http://www.aifs.gov.au/cfca/pubs/papers/a143161/cfca11.pdf>

Finkelhor, D and Jones, L. (2006). Why have Child Maltreatment and Child Victimization Declined? *Journal of Social Issues*, 62(4): 685-716.

Finkelhor, D. (2009). The Prevention of Childhood Sexual Abuse, *The Future of Children*, 19(2),169-194.

Finkelhor, D. (2007). Prevention of Sexual Abuse Through Educational Programs Directed Toward Children. *Pediatrics*, 120(3), 643.

Hopper, J. (2012). *Child Abuse Statistics, Research and Resources*, downloaded from www.jimhopper.com.

Jones, L. and Finkelhor, D. (2009). *Updated Trends in Child Maltreatment*: Durham, NH. Crimes Against Children Research Center.

Plummer, C. (2013, March). *Using Policies to Promote Child Sexual Abuse Prevention: What is Working?* Harrisburg, PA: VAWnet, a project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence.

WHO and ISPCAN, (2006). Preventing child maltreatment: a guide to taking action and generating evidence.

Appendices

Appendix A - Elementary School Child Protection Curriculum Overview

Each grade level will focus on these major concepts/big ideas in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Grade Level	Lesson 1	Lesson 2
K3-Grade 5	Keeping Myself Safe	Who Can Help Me

Appendix B - Secondary School Child Protection Curriculum Overview

Four core concepts are in the secondary curriculum and remain the same in each grade. Identify, Access, Act and Values teaching. Introducing and reviewing these learning objectives is key to students learning. Developmentally appropriate content and delivery for each lesson ensure a varied and rich learning experience.

Grade Level	Concept 1	Concept 2	Concept 3	Concept 4
Grade 6-8	Identify: Safe and Unsafe Situations	Access trusted Persons	Act to Stay Safe	Value Self and Community
Grade 9-12	Identify: Safe and Unsafe Situations	Access trusted Persons	Act to Stay Safe	Value Self and Community

Appendix C - ABA Child Protection Policy translations

[Child Protection Policy \(Arabic\)](#)

[Child Protection Policy \(Hindi\)](#)

[Child Protection Policy \(Malayalam\)](#)

[Child Protection Policy \(Tamil\)](#)

[Child Protection Policy \(Telugu\)](#)

Appendix D - Calendar of Child Protection Activities for Parents and Faculty.

Audience	August	September/October
Parent Information	Parent-Child Protection letter for signature included in the start of year school information pack. Advise of parent information session in September	September 2021: Counselor and Principal led parent information morning: intro to CP, common language, curriculum overview, reporting procedure. All parents invited to attend CP information session- revisit of previous information and targeted at parents new to ABA. Link to information on Website/Newsletter
Faculty Information	August PD days. Intro to CP led by CPO: Including Briefing on disclosure/suspicion and reporting procedures. Ensure access and signed acknowledgement of the CP Handbook. (to be completed September 2021).	
Student Information		September/October 2021: Child Protection Lessons for all students K3-Gr 12 (following parent information sessions)

Appendix E - Myths vs Facts about child abuse and neglect in International Schools

Myth: *Child abuse is carried out by strangers.*

Fact: Research indicates that 90% of abuse is from domestic causes and is committed by individuals known to the child. International school communities tend to have families that move often and are separated from their extended families in their home-of-record. When abuse is within the family, the transient lifestyle then increases the risk to international school students who tend not to have access to outside resources, and therefore cannot get help.

Myth: *Learning about child protection is harmful to your children.*

Fact: Research indicates that developmentally appropriate education makes children more confident and able to react to dangerous situations. Teaching using a specific population context increases protective behavior.

Myth: *Abuse education is sex education.*

Fact: Research-based programs prepare students to develop the skills and attitudes to keep themselves safe from perpetrators, and behaviors that include bullying, harassment and other forms of exploitation.

Myth: *Abuse is a matter of culture; physical or sexual abuse falls within the norms of some cultures and is acceptable.*

Fact: The reality is that there is no excuse for child abuse! No culture supports harming children.

Myth: *Child abuse is a result of poverty and happens in low socioeconomic circumstances.*

Fact: Research indicates that child abuse occurs in all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural sectors of society. A common characteristic of an abusive family is isolation, such as that commonly found in our international school families who move often or are separated from their extended families at home.

Myth: *International Schools do not have to report abuse to local authorities.*

Fact: International schools are bound by the laws of the host country and as such international schools must be knowledgeable and compliant with the child protection laws in their locale. Furthermore, international schools are legally and ethically liable for any violation of existing laws related to reporting of cases of abuse or neglect; there are cases now pending where schools are facing legal action regarding non-compliance.

Appendix F - Child Protection Faculty Code of Conduct

As a measure of prevention and of setting clear expectations this is to be agreed to and signed by all school personnel and all volunteers who are part of the school community.

ABA is committed to the safety and protection of children. This Code of Conduct applies to all faculty, staff, employees, volunteers and students who represent the school and who interact with children or young people in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

The public and private conduct of faculty, staff, employees, students, and volunteers acting on behalf of ABA can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work.

We should be aware of our own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with children and youth and be particularly aware that we are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. We must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviors with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses. We are to provide safe environments for children and youth at all ABA campuses, schools, and institutions.

We must show prudent discretion before touching another person, especially children and youth, and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. ABA personnel and volunteers are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child.

Physical contact with children can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a child or young person are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed, or in a room with the door left open, and another staff member or supervisor is notified about the meeting.

We must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that children are being abused in any way. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate school and civil authorities as described in the Child Protection reporting procedures of the school.

Faculty, staff, employees, and volunteers should refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol at all times, and from the use of tobacco products,

alcohol and/or drugs when working with children. Adults should never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to young people. Staff members and volunteers should not accept gifts from or give gifts to children without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.

Communication with children is governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between ABA parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers, and minors:

Communication between ABA (including volunteers) and minors that is outside the role of the professional or volunteer relationship (teacher, coach, host, etc.) is prohibited. Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the school are to be made using a school email address.

Electronic communication that takes place over a school network or platform may be subject to periodic monitoring.

Faculty, staff, and volunteers who use any form of online communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with minors may only do so for activities involving school business.

Sample behavior practices that will protect teachers from false allegations:

Avoid situations in which you are alone with a child. This includes not transporting youngsters alone in your car. When it is necessary to speak privately with a child, find a space out of earshot, but within sight of others for your conference.

The privacy of children in situations such as toileting, showering and changing clothes should be respected. When it is necessary to supervise children in these situations, at least two adults should be present and intrude only to the extent that the health and safety of the children require. Adult volunteers should preserve their own privacy in these situations also.

Avoid touching areas that are normally covered by swimming suits; breasts, buttocks, and groin. When hugging is appropriate, hug from the side over the shoulders, not from the front.

Sexual jokes, comments of a sexual nature, kissing, sensual massages or sexual gestures are not appropriate behavior for an adult staff member or volunteer.

When volunteering to supervise overnight activities, adults should not share sleeping quarters with children other than their own.

Revealing personal information about one's sex life by an adult volunteer or staff member is never appropriate.

Do not use corporal punishment in any form.

It is the adult's responsibility to set and respect boundaries. When a child attempts to involve an adult in inappropriate behavior, the adult must reject the overture.

Statement of Acknowledgement of Faculty Code of Conduct for signature

I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth participating in ABA programs.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Never be alone with children and/or youth at school activities without another adult being notified.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children – when necessary – only in ways that are appropriate, public, and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of ABA and with the ABA Child Protection procedures to report suspected child abuse.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping or humiliating, ridiculing, threatening, or degrading children and/or youth.
- Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children and/or youth.
- Give a child who is not my own a ride home alone. (Except for emergency situations only and with consent from parents).
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to children or youth without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
- Engage in private communications with children via text messaging, email, Facebook, Twitter or similar forms of electronic or social media except for activities strictly involving school business.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth at any time.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children and youth under the auspices of ABA, I am subject to a criminal history background check. My

signature confirms that I have read this Code of Conduct and that as a person working with children and youth I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from ABA.

Name: _____ Signature/Date: _____

* Code of Conduct might be different for after-school instructors and contractual staff

Appendix G -Parent Commitment Form Policy 7.6.3

ABA seeks to be a safe haven for all our students. Child Protection procedures derived from this policy will be stated in an ABA Child Protection Handbook. This handbook will be communicated to all who work with ABA students.

All staff employed at ABA must report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering abuse or neglect.

Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect will be in accordance with Omani law and the child protection procedures resulting from this policy statement. The ABA administration shall be responsible for ensuring that screening and criminal background checks for staff are provided.

Parent commitment

We acknowledge that by enrolling our children at ABA, we understand and commit to upholding rights and protecting all children. We also recognize the importance of these values in the education of our children and agree to reinforce these values at home.

I / We undertake to:

- Support the ABA Child Protection Policy and procedures included in the Child Protection Handbook which is located within the Parent Portal Handbook tab on the ABA website.
- Be present in Muscat, and if we must leave, arrange a caretaker for our child/children, and inform the school of those arrangements, including emergency contact information, to the Secondary School or Elementary School Main Office. This caretaker must be able to serve in the capacity of in loco parentis, with full authority to make parental decisions to ensure appropriate supervision and to respond to a medical emergency.
- Share in the responsibility to bring forth information that supports the ABA Child Protection Policy with respect to the “Child Protection Disclosure Flowchart” found in the Child Protection Handbook.

The ABA Child Protection policy works for the child, for the family, and for our community. Research indicates that international communities are as prone to child abuse as communities in their home country. Child abuse is a multi-faceted issue that involves the dynamics of the child, the family, and the community. The ABA Child Protection Policy works to respond at all three levels.

Please sign below and return to your child's advisor or homeroom teacher.

Thank you.

Student name:

Parent name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix H - Sultanate of Oman Child Protection information

Child Protection Hotline: 1100

Child Protection Department: 24182223

Convention on the Rights of the Child (Oman, 2016)

The combined third and fourth periodic report of Oman under the Convention on the Rights of the Child can be read via the following link:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16945&LangID=E#sthash.p5u2AJU6.dpuf>

Corporal Punishment in Oman (2016)

<http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/assets/pdfs/states-reports/Oman.pdf>

Access to justice for the child in Oman (2014)

https://www.crin.org/sites/default/files/oman_access_to_justice.pdf

Appendix I- ABA Acceptable Use Guidelines

ABA teachers and administration believe that providing network access for users' personal electronic devices will enhance the educational experience for ABA students. For this reason, ABA has set up a wireless network.

1. **Acceptable Devices.** Users may access the wireless network with any approved device. Users may only access the network with devices that are their own personal property or school-owned.
2. **Personal Responsibility.** The school assumes no responsibility for the loss of, theft of or damage to any personal device that a user brings to ABA or any information on that device.
3. **Security.** Users shall not impair the security of the network. This expectation includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Users are expected to maintain up to date antivirus and antispyware protection on all devices that are connected to the wireless network. Devices without up-to-date security programs may be denied access to the network.
 - b. Users are expected to safeguard all network passwords. Users should not share network passwords with others and should change passwords frequently. Users are expected to notify an administrator immediately if they believe their account has been compromised. Users are expected to log onto the wireless network only with their account and not to allow others to use their account or to use the accounts of others.
4. **Limited IT Support.** Users are responsible for setting up and maintaining personal devices that they connect to the network. IT support for user-owned devices may be sought to deal with wireless connectivity issues.
5. **Authorized Use.** Students may use the wireless network when they are not in class. Students may not use the wireless network in class unless authorized by the teacher of that class.
6. **Inappropriate Use.** The wireless network is a shared and limited resource and all users have an obligation to use that resource responsibly. Users are provided access to the wireless network for educational purposes. Incidental personal use of the network is acceptable outside class, but users should not use the network for personal activities that consume significant network bandwidth or for activities that violate school policy or local or international law. These include but are not limited to:
 - c. Online gaming unless approved by a teacher.

-
- d. Downloading software, music, movies or other content in violation of licensing requirements, copyright or other intellectual property rights.
 - e. Downloading, viewing or sharing inappropriate content, including pornographic, defamatory or otherwise offensive material.
 - f. Conducting any activity that is in violation of school policy or local, or international law.
 - g. Participating in political activities.
 - h. Conducting for-profit business unless authorized by the school administration.
 - i. Using hacking tools on the network or intentionally introducing malicious code into the School's network.
 - j. Using any software or proxy service to obscure either the student's IP address or the sites that the student visits.
 - k. Using peer-to-peer/torrent programs.
 - l. Disabling, bypassing, or attempting to disable or bypass any system monitoring, filtering or other security measures.
 - m. Accessing or attempting to access material or systems on the network that the student is not authorized to access.
7. **No Expectation of Privacy.** The School can and does monitor internet access and activity on the School's network, including but not limited to sites visited, content viewed and an email sent and received. The School may examine a student's personal device and search its contents if there is a reason to believe that school policies, regulations, or guidelines regarding access to the network or use of the device have been violated.
 8. **Disruptive Activity.** Users should not intentionally interfere with the performance of the school's wireless and wired network.
 9. **Unauthorized Networks.** Users may not create unauthorized wireless networks to access ABA's wireless network. This includes establishing wireless access points, wireless routers, and open networks on personal devices.
 10. **No Use of Wired Networks.** Students may use only the ABA student wireless network for personal devices. They may not attach personal devices to the wired network.
 11. **Consequences of Inappropriate Use.** Students who misuse ABA's student wireless network will be subject to discipline which may include loss of access to student wireless or all internet access and/or other appropriate disciplinary or legal action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct