



## **Encounters with the Media**

### **Introduction**

Childhood First's goal in any encounter with the media is to build positive relationships. Any situation which engenders press interest in the Charity or one of our centres should be taken as an opportunity to forge mutually beneficial links with news organisations. However, we must always be mindful of the media's capacity to 'misrepresent'.

### **Solicited and Unsolicited Contact**

All contact with the media has Childhood First's reputation at stake.

Any contact from a journalist or news organisation should be regarded as a potentially positive expression of interest in Childhood First and the vital work in which we are engaged. Our aim is always to work to develop positive links with media professionals: positive media coverage can be highly beneficial to an organisation such as ours, and we will always do our best to educate journalists about the work carried out in our centres and the unique benefits which we can give the children and young people in our care.

However, there are potential pitfalls to be avoided when dealing with journalists. Therefore, any press or other broadcast enquiries should be referred to Stephen Blunden or a member of the Institute Executive Board (IEB).

In the event of an enquiry by a journalist which suggests the possibility of a potentially negative article, contact details must be passed to Stephen Blunden or a member of the IEB even when out of hours or if they are on annual leave.

Stephen Blunden will decide, in each case, whether the Chairman and/or Trustees should be notified of potential or actual media activity.

Staff contracts all state that they are not allowed to publish anything about our work without prior clearance.

If you are invited by the media to comment on an issue relating to Childhood First (such as children, residential care, social services, therapy) and this is outside of a formal interview specific to Childhood First, please do so as a private individual rather than a representative of Childhood First.

*Reviewed May 2020*