



LIFEFORTE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Lifeforte International Schools is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This policy provides a framework for ensuring a safe and supportive environment, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, national child protection laws, and best practices.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, governors, parents, and any individuals working within or visiting the school premises. It aims to ensure that:

- All children feel safe, valued, and respected.
- The school provides a nurturing and secure environment.
- Staff understand their responsibilities in preventing harm, protecting children, and supporting those in need.

2. CORE PRINCIPLES

Lifeforte International Schools' safeguarding policy is built on three fundamental elements:

2.1 Prevention

- Creating a positive, inclusive school atmosphere that encourages children to speak up.
- Teaching students about their rights and safety through curriculum-integrated activities.
- Providing appropriate support and pastoral care to all students.
- Promoting awareness of child protection through training and communication.

2.2 Protection

- Implementing clear procedures for identifying and addressing safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring all staff are trained to respond effectively and sensitively to child protection issues.
- Maintaining open lines of communication between students and trusted adults.

2.3 Support

- Providing assistance to students who have experienced abuse or neglect.
- Supporting staff and families in understanding and responding to safeguarding issues.
- Working with relevant authorities to offer necessary interventions and care.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all members of the school community.

3.1 Child Safeguarding and Protection Officer (CSPO):

- Oversees all child protection matters.
- Acts as the main contact for staff, parents, and external agencies.
- Provides training and ensures compliance with safeguarding procedures.
- Maintains accurate safeguarding records and ensures confidentiality.

3.2 Principal and Senior Leadership Team (SLT):

- Ensures safeguarding is embedded within the school's culture.
- Provides support to staff in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Conducts regular policy reviews and risk assessments.

3.3 All Staff and Volunteers:

- Have a duty to report concerns to the CSPO immediately.
- Undertake safeguarding training annually.
- Create a safe and supportive learning environment for students.

4. CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

- Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the CSPO.
- Staff must document concerns in writing with dates, times, and detailed observations.
- Confidentiality must be maintained, except where disclosure is necessary for child protection.
- The school will work closely with child protection agencies to ensure the best outcome for students.
- Children who are victims of abuse must be listened to and supported without judgment.

5. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction.
- Regular refresher training is provided to keep staff updated on best practices and legislative changes.
- Training covers recognizing signs of abuse, online safety, peer-on-peer abuse, and safe working practices.

6. SAFER RECRUITMENT

- Rigorous background checks are conducted for all employees and volunteers.
- Identity verification, references, and criminal record checks are mandatory before hiring.
- The school maintains a single central record of all staff vetting and checks.
- Staff members are monitored and supported to ensure they uphold safeguarding principles.

7. SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

The school actively addresses key safeguarding concerns, including:

7.1 Peer-on-Peer Abuse

- A zero-tolerance policy is enforced for bullying, harassment, and physical or sexual violence.
- Clear reporting structures ensure students feel safe to disclose concerns.
- Support systems are in place for both victims and perpetrators.

7.2 Online Safety

- Students are educated on responsible internet use and cyber threats.
- Strong IT security measures and monitoring systems are in place.
- Parental guidance is provided to help children navigate online risks.

7.3 Child Exploitation and Abuse

- Staff are trained to recognize signs of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE).
- Immediate action is taken where risks of exploitation are identified.

7.4 Mental Health and Well-being

- The school offers pastoral care and access to counselling.
- Mental health awareness is promoted through curriculum and assemblies.
- Staff are trained to support students experiencing emotional distress.

8. REPORTING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

- Allegations against staff must be reported to the Principal immediately.
- If the allegation concerns the Principal, it should be escalated to the School Leadership.
- Investigations are conducted in line with legal and ethical guidelines.
- Confidentiality is upheld to protect the rights of all parties involved.

9. WORKING WITH PARENTS AND EXTERNAL AGENCIES

- Parents are informed about the school's safeguarding policies and responsibilities.
- Collaborative relationships with child welfare agencies ensure effective interventions.
- Safeguarding concerns are communicated with parents unless it compromises the child's safety.

10. MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW

- This policy is reviewed annually and updated as needed.
- Regular audits are conducted to assess policy effectiveness.
- Feedback from students, staff, and parents is incorporated into policy revisions.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: KEY CONTACTS FOR SAFEGUARDING WITHIN THE SCHOOL

Role	Name	Contact Information
Child Safeguarding & Protection Officer (CSPO)	Dr Olukunle Sokoya	kunlesokoya@lifeforte.com 0805 226 4640
Deputy Child Safeguarding & Protection Officer (DCSPO)	Mr Tayo Adebayo	olutayo.adebayo@lifeforte.com 0815 552 8829
Safeguarding Officer	Mrs Biodun Adebayo	0803 681 0495
Senior Mental Health Lead	Dr Tunde Aboyade	0808 729 3307
Safeguarding Team	Dr Lanre Johnson	0816 022 3872
Safeguarding Team	Mrs Solape Adesiyan	0802 301 7324
Safeguarding Team	Mr. Seyi Agbebi	0802 324 5554

APPENDIX 2: RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All staff and volunteers at **Lifeforte International Schools** must be able to recognize the signs of abuse and neglect. Safeguarding training ensures that concerns are identified early, reported appropriately, and acted upon in the best interests of the child.

1. Types of Abuse

Abuse can be classified into four main categories: **Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and Neglect**. Children may experience multiple forms of abuse simultaneously.

2. Signs of Abuse

A. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves deliberately causing physical harm to a child. It includes hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, and other intentional harm.

Possible indicators:

- Unexplained bruises, burns, fractures, or bite marks.
- Injuries with inconsistent or changing explanations.
- Fearful behaviour, flinching when approached, or reluctance to go home.
- Wearing long sleeves or covering the body inappropriately (to hide injuries).
- Aggressive, withdrawn, or self-destructive behaviour.

B. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent ill-treatment that affects a child's emotional development. This includes threats, humiliation, isolation, and neglect of emotional needs.

Possible indicators:

- Low self-esteem or confidence issues.
- Difficulty forming relationships or trusting adults.
- Frequent emotional outbursts, aggression, or self-harm.
- Inappropriate emotional responses (e.g., excessive fear of making mistakes).
- Regressive behaviour (e.g., bedwetting, thumb sucking).

C. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It includes both physical contact (e.g., rape, molestation) and non-contact activities (e.g., exposure to pornography, grooming).

Possible indicators:

- Sudden changes in behaviour or personality.
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour for their age.
- Difficulty sitting or walking, pain in genital areas.
- Unexplained fear or aversion to a particular person.
- Nightmares, bedwetting, or sudden fear of being alone.

D. Neglect

Neglect occurs when a child's basic needs are not met, including food, clothing, medical care, and supervision. It can cause severe developmental harm.

Possible indicators:

- Constant hunger or malnourishment.
- Poor hygiene, dirty or inappropriate clothing for the weather.
- Frequent absences from school, appearing tired or listless.
- Medical conditions left untreated.
- Lack of parental supervision, engaging in risky behavior.

3. Additional Forms of Abuse

In addition to the primary categories, staff should be aware of:

A. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- Receiving gifts, money, or attention in exchange for sexual activities.
- Unexplained absences or a change in behavior.
- Sudden possession of expensive items.

B. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Involvement in gangs, drug dealing, or other criminal activities.
- Unexplained travel to different locations.
- Fear of authorities or reluctance to talk about activities.

C. Online Abuse

- Excessive secrecy about online activities.
- Receiving inappropriate messages or engaging in risky online behaviors.

4. Responding to Concerns

- Always **listen carefully** to a child without leading or questioning them.
- **Do not promise confidentiality**—explain that you must share concerns with safeguarding officers.
- **Document concerns immediately**, noting dates, times, and details.
- **Report suspicions to the Child Safeguarding & Protection Officer (CSPO) immediately—do not investigate yourself.**

APPENDIX 3: DETAILED REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

All safeguarding concerns must be reported following the procedures outlined below.

1. Immediate Action in Response to a Concern

If a staff member has a concern about a child's welfare, they must:

1. **Ensure the child is safe.** If the child is in immediate danger, call emergency services.
2. **Listen to the child carefully.** Allow them to speak freely without interrupting or asking leading questions.
3. **Make a factual written record of the concern.**
 - Include direct quotes from the child if possible.
 - Record date, time, location, and any observations.
 - Avoid making assumptions or personal interpretations.
4. **Report immediately to the Child Safeguarding & Protection Officer (CSPO).** If the CSPO is unavailable, report to a deputy CSPO.

The Three-Step Process

CONCERN ARISES



STEP 1: IMMEDIATE NOTIFICATION

- Inform CSPO or DCSPPO immediately
- Do not delay for any reason



STEP 2: IF CSPO/DCSPPO UNAVAILABLE + IMMEDIATE DANGER

- Report to next senior safeguarding officer or SLT
- Do not assume someone else will act



STEP 3: CSPO TAKES ACTION

- CSPO assesses and determines next steps
- May refer to social care/police
- You support as requested

EMPHASIS: "IMMEDIATE means IMMEDIATE. Not after lunch, not at the end of the day. The moment you have a concern."

2. How to Record a Concern

All staff should complete a **Child Protection Concern Report** with the following details:

- Child's full name, age, and class.
- Date, time, and location of the incident.
- Exact words used by the child (if applicable).
- Details of any injuries observed.
- Names of any witnesses.
- Actions taken (e.g., who was informed, any immediate protective measures).

3. Child Safeguarding & Protection Officer: Responsibilities

Once a concern is reported, the CSPO must:

1. **Review the report and assess the risk level.**
2. **Consult with senior leadership if necessary.**
3. **Take appropriate action, which may include:**
 - Speaking with the child in a safe, supportive manner.
 - Gathering additional information from relevant staff.
 - Contacting external child protection agencies if needed.
 - Notifying parents unless this could endanger the child.
4. **Keep clear, confidential records** of all actions taken.

4. Escalation Procedures

If a child is at risk of significant harm, the CSPO must escalate the case immediately by:

- Contacting child protective services.
- Seeking guidance from the local safeguarding authority.
- Coordinating with law enforcement if necessary.

5. Allegations Against Staff

- If a safeguarding concern involves a staff member:
 - The **Principal** must be informed immediately.
 - If the concern involves the Principal, the **School Leadership Board** must be contacted.
- A formal investigation will be conducted in line with safeguarding procedures.
- The staff member may be suspended during the investigation to protect all parties.

6. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- **Safeguarding information must be shared on a need-to-know basis only.**
- Records must be **kept confidential and stored securely.**
- Reports should be factual and free from opinion.

7. Supporting the Child

- Ensure the child is **not blamed, shamed, or ignored.**
- Provide **ongoing emotional support** through the school's pastoral care system.
- Monitor the child's **well-being and academic progress.**

APPENDIX 4: GUIDELINES ON SAFER WORKING PRACTICES

Lifeforte International Schools is committed to maintaining high standards of professional conduct to create a safe environment for students. Staff and volunteers must adhere to the following guidelines to ensure the safety and well-being of children.

1. Maintaining Professional Boundaries

- Always maintain appropriate professional relationships with students.
- Avoid any actions that could be misinterpreted as grooming or favoritism.
- Ensure physical contact is minimal, appropriate, and for justifiable reasons (e.g., administering first aid).
- Never share personal contact details (e.g., personal phone numbers, social media accounts) with students.

2. Interactions with Students

- Ensure all interactions are respectful and appropriate, both in-person and online.
- Avoid one-on-one meetings with students in private or secluded areas. Always meet in visible, open spaces or with another staff member present.
- When discussing sensitive matters, ensure transparency by informing a colleague or recording key points.
- Never make suggestive or inappropriate comments, even as a joke.

3. Physical Contact

- Physical contact should only occur when necessary (e.g., comforting a distressed child) and must be appropriate for the situation.
- Do not engage in physical restraint unless absolutely required for safety, and always report any incident where restraint was used.
- If first aid is required, explain what you are doing and ensure another adult is present when possible.

4. One-on-One Situations

- Avoid situations where you are alone with a student. If unavoidable, ensure visibility by keeping doors open or informing another staff member.
- If transporting students (e.g., for school activities), ensure parental consent is obtained, and another adult is present whenever possible.

5. Use of Digital Communication and Social Media

- Do not communicate with students via personal social media accounts, messaging apps, or private emails.
- Use official school communication channels for all interactions.
- Be mindful of language and tone in written communication, ensuring professionalism at all times.

6. Reporting Concerns

- If you witness or suspect inappropriate behaviour by another staff member, report it immediately to the Child Safeguarding & Protection Officer (CSPO).
- If you are unsure whether a behaviour is inappropriate, seek guidance from a senior staff member.
- Do not promise confidentiality to a student when they disclose a safeguarding concern—explain that you must share it with appropriate personnel to keep them safe.

7. Off-Site Activities and School Trips

- Ensure all off-site activities are risk-assessed and approved by school leadership.
- Maintain professional conduct at all times, especially during overnight trips.
- Do not enter students' rooms unless absolutely necessary and ensure another staff member is present.

8. Responding to Allegations

- If an allegation is made against you, cooperate fully with the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Maintain professionalism and avoid discussing the matter with colleagues or students.
- If a child accuses a staff member of misconduct, it must be taken seriously, and appropriate investigative procedures must be followed.

9. Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

- Keep safeguarding discussions confidential, only sharing information with those who need to know.
- Maintain accurate records of safeguarding concerns and interactions with students.
- Follow the school's protocols for documenting and reporting incidents.

10. Seeking Guidance

- If unsure about appropriate conduct, seek guidance from a senior leader or safeguarding officer.
- Participate in regular safeguarding training to stay informed of best practices.

APPENDIX 5: LEGAL AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK REFERENCES

Lifeforte International Schools' safeguarding policy aligns with international, national, and local legal frameworks to ensure the highest level of child protection. This appendix outlines the key legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice frameworks that inform the school's safeguarding procedures.

1. International Legal Frameworks

The school follows globally recognized principles for child protection, including:

A. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989)

- Recognizes the fundamental rights of children, including protection from abuse and neglect (Articles 19 and 34).
- Affirms that children have the right to express their views and be heard in matters affecting them.

B. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

- Emphasizes the right to security and protection from harm for all individuals, including children.

2. National Child Protection Laws and Policies

The school adheres to **Nigerian child protection laws** and applicable **policies** to ensure compliance with local regulations.

A. Child Rights Act (2003)

- Establishes legal protections for children against abuse, exploitation, and neglect.
- Outlines penalties for individuals or institutions that violate children's rights.

B. Child Rights Law of Oyo State (200)

- provides a legal framework to safeguard children's rights to survival, development, protection, and participation.

C. Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (2015)

- Criminalizes domestic violence, child abuse, and gender-based violence.
- Provides protective orders for victims of abuse.

D. Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.) Act (2015)

- Regulates online safety for children.
- Criminalizes cyberbullying, child exploitation, and the distribution of harmful content.

E. Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act (2015)

- Prohibits child trafficking and child labour.
- Establishes measures to protect victims and prosecute offenders.

F. National Policy on Safety, Security & Violence Free Schools

- Provides guidelines for safeguarding children in schools, religious institutions, and workplaces.

3. Statutory Guidance and Best Practices

Lifeforte International Schools follows established safeguarding guidance, including:

A. Minimum Standards for Safe Schools (Nigeria – Education in Emergencies Working Group)

Requires schools to implement robust safeguarding policies.

Mandates background checks for staff and regular child protection training.

B. Department for Education. (2025). Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE)

4. School-Specific Safeguarding Measures

Lifeforte International Schools aligns with best practices in international **education standards**, ensuring compliance with:

A. Safer Recruitment Practices

- Conducts **rigorous background checks** for all staff, including identity verification and criminal record screening.
- Requires safeguarding training for all employees before employment.

B. Mandatory Reporting Protocols

- All school staff must report **any suspicion of child abuse** to the **Child Safeguarding & Protection Officer (CSPO)**
- Reports are **documented and securely stored** to maintain confidentiality.

5. Compliance and Policy Review

- The **School's Safeguarding Policy** is reviewed **annually** to reflect changes in legislation and best practices.
- Staff undergo **regular safeguarding training** to stay informed of updates.
- The school ensures compliance with all statutory **and regulatory requirements related** to child protection.

Lifeforte International Schools remains steadfast in its commitment to safeguarding and child protection. All concerns must be reported to the CSPO or appropriate authorities without delay to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

APPENDIX 6: BODY MAP

This must be completed at time of observation

Names for Child:

Date of Birth:

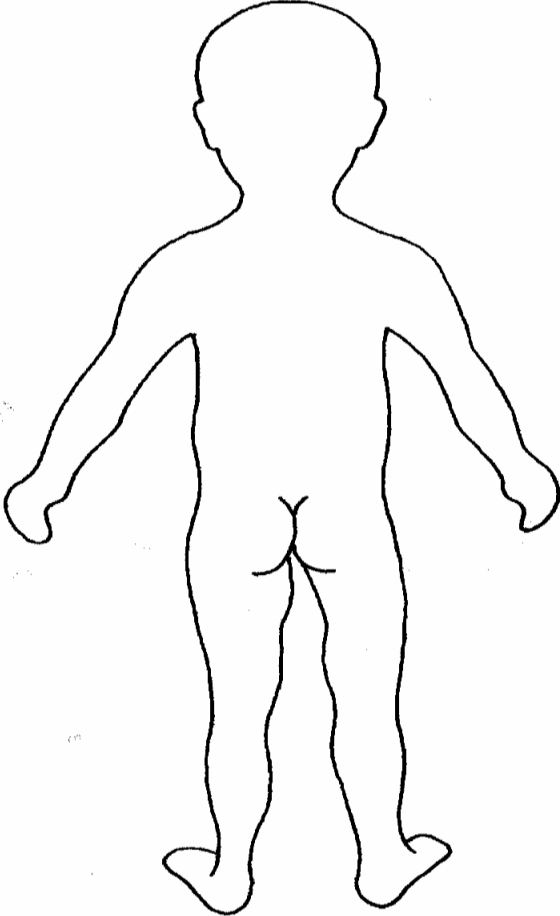
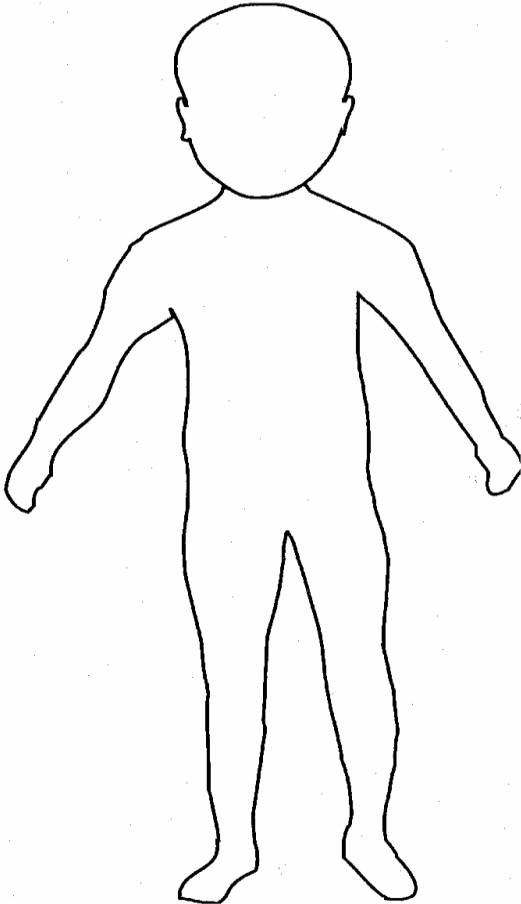
Name of Worker:

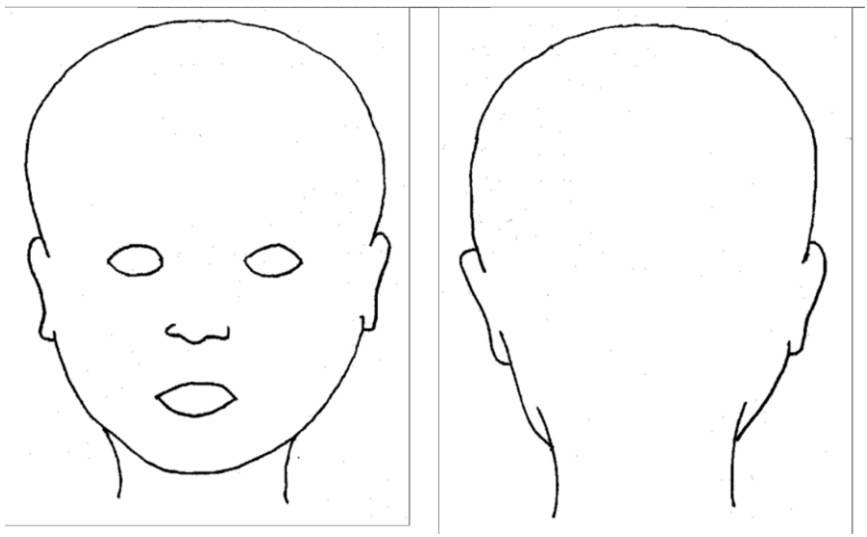
Date and time of _____

Observation: _____

FRONT

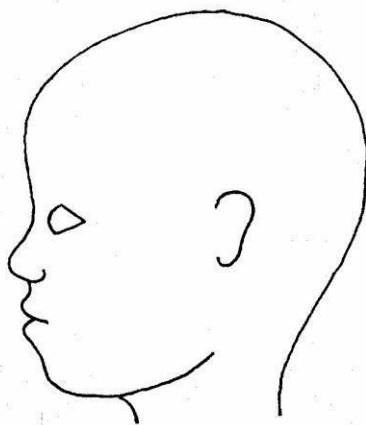
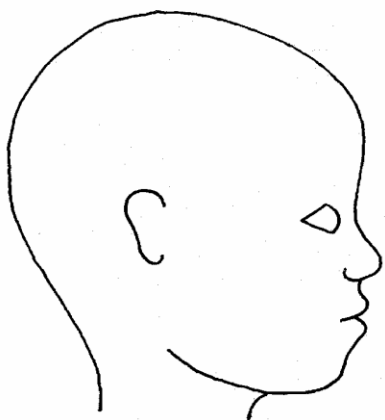
BACK

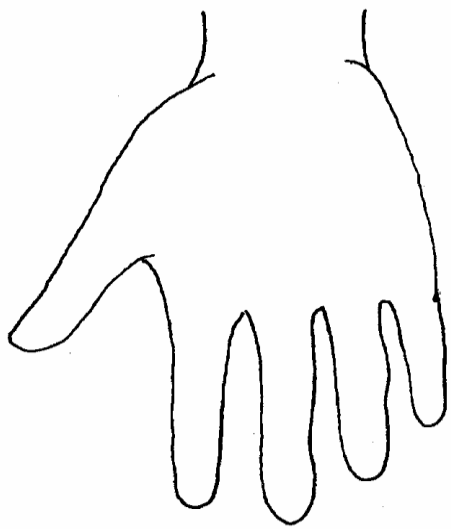




RIGHT

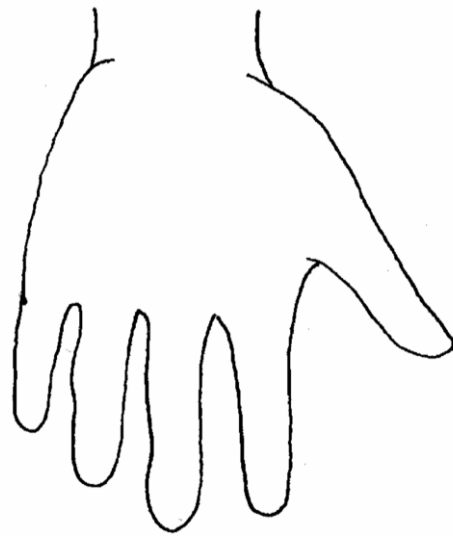
LEFT



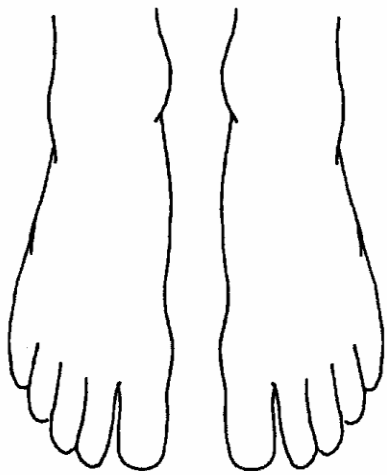


RIGHT

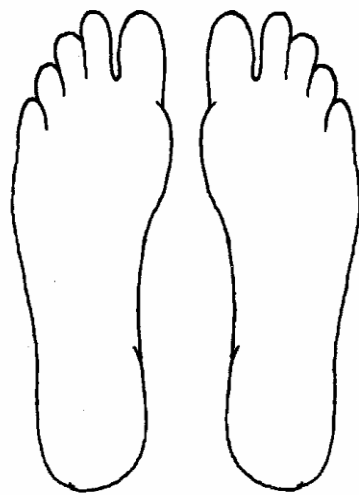
PALM



LEFT



R TOP L



R BOTTOM L

