

# Child Safe Policy

## Purpose

The NSW Government introduced the Child Safe Standards, which are minimum standards for services in relation to children and young people to help protect them from harm.

The purpose of the Child Safe Policy is to ensure that all employees, consultants, contractors or volunteers engaged by the Studio are aware the commitment and obligation to creating a child safe organisation.

The policy aims to communicate the Studio's commitment to child safety, in a way that can be understood by all. This Policy links to the Studio's Terms and Conditions that relates to all students, Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets and customers regardless of age.

# Scope

This policy applies to all:

- teachers
- volunteers/cadets
- students
- customers

It applies to a broad range of situations where interactions with children and young people may occur and it covers adult to adult interactions via the terms and conditions section.

It is important that all teachers and contractors are aware of their obligations in relation to any **Reportable Conduct**.

# Statement of Commitment

The Studio is committed to the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people.

The Studio:

- will uphold the rights of children and young people who come into contact with the Studio so that they feel heard on matters relevant to their safety and so that they feel safe and protected

- has zero tolerance for child abuse and will take all allegations of reportable conduct and safety concerns very seriously, ensuring such conduct is dealt with in accordance with government guidelines and the law
- is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risk early, and removing and reducing these risks
- has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets and volunteers
- will provide training and education to Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets and volunteers on the Child Safe Standards, Reportable Conduct Scheme and creating a child safe organisation
- will provide a safe environment for, and consider the needs of, children and young people with a disability, and consider their needs in providing that environment
- will provide a safe environment for, and consider the needs of, children and young people who have suffered trauma, and consider their needs in providing that environment
- will provide a safe environment for, and consider the needs of, same sex attracted and intersex children and young people, and recognises gender diversity in providing a safe environment, and consider their needs in providing that environment.

# Studio's approach to child safety

## Building a child safe culture

All Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets have a responsibility to support the Studio's commitment and obligation to creating a child safe environment and a safe environment for all age groups.

## Child Safe Code of Conduct

All Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets must ensure that at all times they display appropriate standards of behaviour towards children and young people, ensuring their rights are respected, they feel safe and protected and their concerns are taken seriously.

The Studio's Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults towards children and young people. It aims to protect children and young people and reduce opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also helps Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets by providing them with guidance on how to best support children and young people and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations.

# Training and supervision

The Studio is committed to ensuring that Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets have access to appropriate professional learning and training opportunities to develop and maintain an understanding of child safety and prevention of harm. To support Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets, training will be available to Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets who are likely to come into regular contact with children and young people. This training will include how to identify, assess and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

# Recruitment

The recruitment and selection of Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets aims to support the Studio's commitment to promoting an organisational culture of child safety. The Studio carries out reference checks and police record checks for adults to ensure that the right people are recruited.

For positions that involve contact with children and young people, recruitment should be based on selection criteria which clearly demonstrate commitment to child safety to assist the department in ensuring that the most appropriate Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets are employed. Selection is based on pre-screening activities that included a working with children check, to reflect an understanding of, and commitment to, a child safe environment.

# Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The department works to ensure all children and young people, families, Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets and volunteers understand their obligations and know who to tell if they observe abuse, are a victim, or if they notice inappropriate behaviour. The department takes all allegations of child abuse and reportable conduct seriously. It is committed to ensuring that such allegations are addressed in accordance with departmental processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Child safe issues should be reported to the Studio owner. If a Teacher/ Volunteer/ Cadet has a reasonable belief that reportable conduct may have occurred, then they must report the incident to the Studio owner. If the incident is a criminal offence, the incident must also be reported to the police on 000.

The following reportable conduct must be reported:

**Reportable conduct** includes:

- (a) a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded, or
- (b) sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, or
- (c) physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, or
- (d) any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child, or

- (e) significant neglect of a child.

## Standards and Obligations

All Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets are responsible for the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children and young people. All Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets are expected to act in accordance with all relevant legislation and this Code of Conduct:

Uphold the rights of children and young people who come into contact with the department to feel heard on matters relevant to their safety.

- provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment that supports and values the ideas and opinions of children and young people and treats them with respect regardless of their race, colour, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, culture, property, disability or other status
- actively promote and consider the cultural safety and inclusion of all children and young people
- empower children and young people by providing an environment where they can actively participate and ‘have a say’, especially on issues that are important to them
- listen and respond to the views and concerns of children and young people, including where it relates to concerns that they feel unsafe
- abide by the Studio’s commitment and obligation to be a child safe organisation

- identify and mitigate risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from abuse
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse to the Studio owner
- report any concerns, allegations, disclosures or observations of child abuse in line with the department's policies and processes, mandatory reporting and reportable conduct reporting requirements
- report all child safety concerns to the Child Safety Officer, or other relevant person
- work with children and young people in an open and transparent way.
- respect the privacy of children and young people and their families and only disclose information to people on a need to know basis and in accordance with privacy legislation
- observe professional boundaries with children and young people at all times
- disclose any information of charges, convictions of abuse and all other offence history in accordance with the department's Criminal Record Check policy.

All Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets must not:

- condone or participate in behaviour that is illegal, unsafe or abusive to children and young people.
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.



- exaggerate or trivialise allegations or issues relating to child abuse or the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- discriminate against children and young people on the basis of their age, gender identity, sex, race, cultural or sexual orientation.
- develop inappropriate relationships with children or young people, including relationships that show favouritism.
- display violent or inappropriate behaviour towards a child or young person.
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children and young people or exhibit behaviours with children and young people which may be construed as inappropriate
- put children and young people at risk of abuse
- conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- engage in open discussions of a mature nature in the presence of children and young people
- use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with, or in the presence of, a child or young person
- discriminate against any child or young person, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability

- use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children and young people or expose them to offensive or sexualised content.
- exchange personal contact details with a child or young person such as phone number, social networking sites or email address, unless necessary
- have unauthorised contact with a child or young person client or their family outside of the Studio, including online, on social media or by phone.

# Consequences of breaching the Child Safe Code of Conduct

All Teachers/ Volunteers/ Cadets who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with the relevant industrial instrument and/or relevant terms of engagement.

## Definitions

**Child** means a child or young person under the age of 18 years.

**Child abuse** means a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded, sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child or significant neglect of a child.

**Child Safe Standards** as made under section 17(1) of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.

# Contact

Please contact the Studio owner in relation to the matters arising under this policy:

Kerry-Anne Knibbs

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Email: [www.ebbandflowstudioart.com.au](http://www.ebbandflowstudioart.com.au)