

Child Safe Policy – Workers

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Definitions

Child/Children

Includes children and young people up to the age of 18 (unless otherwise specified in this Guide or by law).

Child Performer/Child Employee

Includes children and young people up to the age of 18 (unless otherwise specified or by law) that perform work for an organisation (both paid and unpaid).

Core Staff

Any adult (over the age of 18) engaged by Auspicious Arts Projects and acting as representatives of Auspicious Arts Projects including: full time, part time, casual and agency staff, contractors, volunteers and students.

Client

Auspiced parties as named in Auspice Agreements and/or under Tender Agreements including: unincorporated individuals, groups, and organisations.

External Staff

Any adult (over the age of 18) engaged by Auspicious Arts Projects on behalf of a Client that may work with children at any time during their engagement, including: full time, part time, casual and agency staff, contractors, volunteers and students.

Note: Throughout this policy the term “workers” is used when referring to Core Staff, Client, and External Staff as a group.

Parent/Carer

Includes any parent, legal guardian, carer or family member responsible for a child.

Supervisor

Qualified employee appointed to supervise or chaperone children (e.g. child performers, education program participants, work experience students). For the purposes of this policy, the definition of supervisor includes chaperones unless otherwise indicated.

Reportable Conduct

This includes: sexual offences, sexual misconduct, and physical violence against, with, or in the presence of a child. It also includes any behaviour that is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm to a child, and significant neglect.

Scope

This policy applies to any adult person (over the age of 18) engaged by Auspicious Arts Projects Inc under an agreement that may work or interact with children at any time as detailed above. All workers, including contractors and volunteers engaged by Auspicious Arts Projects under an agreement, have a legal and moral obligation to keep children safe and promote their best interests.

This policy applies to all workers while:

- at work – such as at rehearsals, during performances, on production tours, while travelling for work;
- at work-related functions – such as opening nights, after parties, Christmas parties, conferences, industry events; and
- outside of work where there is a connection to the workplace – such as on social media.

Policy

Auspicious Arts Projects is a not-for-profit creative community management organisation. We provide independent artists with a secure and accessible framework to assist them with creative developments and producing work. Auspicious Arts Projects applies for and receives funding on behalf of unincorporated individuals, groups, or organisations and is responsible for ensuring that the project or activity for which the funds have been granted is completed, acquitted, and the funds accounted for. Auspicious Arts Projects also undertakes to support implementation and compliance with policies and procedures.

Statement of Commitment

Auspicious Arts Projects is strongly committed to the safety and well-being of all children that interact with our organisation by creating and maintaining a child safe environment.

- All children working with or engaged by Auspicious Arts Projects have a right to feel and be safe, respected, valued and protected from harm. Children should be made aware of and feel confident in their rights and responsibilities.
- We will take all necessary steps to prevent and protect children from abuse and neglect
- We support, enable and promote the active participation of children
- We aim to create an environment where children gain satisfaction from their interaction with our organisation as employees, participants in a class/program/workshop, or other activity
- We value diversity and we do not tolerate any discriminatory practices
- We are committed to protecting children engaged with our organisation from physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse, as well as neglect and contempt, ridicule, hatred, or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture, religion, gender (including transgender status), sexual orientation or disability.

Responsibilities

The Board of Auspicious Arts Projects has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place.

The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Safe Code of Conduct are in place, and supporting Core Staff to undertake child protection responsibilities.

Auspicious Arts Projects Core Staff are responsible for:

- Providing Clients with an up to date copy of this policy and any documents relevant to the implementation of this policy
- Making relevant documents easily accessible by uploading relevant documents to our website, distributing documents to all relevant individuals, and having copies available upon request
- Ensuring Clients fulfil their obligations relevant to the implementation of this policy
- Offering a clear, accessible and confidential channel for feedback and complaints
- Supporting and contributing to the implementation and review of this policy

Clients are responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with this policy within the scope of their auspiced project
- Contributing to the implementation of this policy by managing and supporting External Staff
- Reporting any breaches of policy to Auspicious Arts Projects as soon as the breach becomes apparent

Everyone is responsible for:

- Promoting child safety at all times
- Familiarising themselves with relevant laws, the Child Safe Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and procedures
- Assessing the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicating/minimising the risk to the extent possible
- Reporting inappropriate behaviour or suspected abuse
- Providing an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety

Implementation

Auspicious Arts Projects will take all reasonable steps to ensure we engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children.

As Core Staff members, Client Managers are responsible for being the first point of contact to provide advice and support to children, parents (including carers or legal guardians), Clients and External Staff regarding the safety and well-being of children engaged with the organisation. This includes being the first point of contact for dealing with any complaint of abuse or conduct not in keeping with this Policy and Code of Conduct.

Auspicious Arts Projects will:

- Encourage Core Staff to attend periodical information sessions to remain up-to-date with knowledge of child protection, nature and signs of child abuse, cultural competency, regulation updates and other matters that affect children; and share updates with relevant Clients and External Staff
- Induct Clients to our Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and procedures
- Support Clients to induct External Staff to our Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and procedures
- Ensure all workers feel encouraged and empowered to report any complaints, concerns or perceived risks to child safety to the relevant Core Staff member or other relevant management position
- Attain and keep a record of Working with Children and/or criminal history/police checks for anyone with direct and unsupervised contact with children, such as employees designated to supervise or chaperone children
- Work with Clients to ensure relevant Child Employment permits are obtained when engaging children on a paid or voluntary basis
- Offer a clear, accessible and confidential channel for feedback and complaints

Clients will:

- Conduct thorough referee checks on all employees
- Develop clear duty statements and job descriptions for roles that involve work with children that state clearly the commitment to providing safe environments for children
- Ensure External Staff feel encouraged and empowered to report any complaints, concerns or perceived risks to child safety to the relevant Core Staff member or other relevant management position
- Provide Auspicious Arts Projects with the Working with Children and/or criminal history/police checks for any External Staff with direct contact with children
- Ensure relevant working permits are obtained when engaging children on a paid or voluntary basis.
- Ensure supervisors and chaperones recruited are suitably experienced and qualified to care for the safety and well-being of children in accordance with their age and needs
- Ensure parents/caregivers of children are supplied with copies of Policies and Procedures relevant to Child Safety
- Remain compliant with the Child Safety procedures relevant to the Australian state or territory the work is produced and/or performed in

Child Safe Code of Conduct

Auspicious Arts Projects has developed a Child Safe Code of Conduct to provide guidance to all workers on expected behaviours when in direct contact with or working around children.

Relevant workers must confirm by signing, that they have read, understood and will comply with the Child Safe Code of Conduct. This confirmation will be retained by Auspicious Arts Projects.

Auditions and Casting

Auspicious Arts Projects will support Clients to ensure the casting and audition process for child performers (under 15 years) is a safe and positive experience. Clients will:

- inform parents (including carers or legal guardians) in the audition notice of relevant production details and how any concerning issues will be managed including:
 - details regarding choreography, content, and involvement of potentially frightening or confusing elements (e.g. animals, pyrotechnics)
 - details of how the potential negative effects of identified issues will be mitigated
 - a statement that parents, carers or legal guardians are encouraged to discuss issues with children and express any concerns they may have with the relevant point of contact (e.g. supervisor, relevant management, Child Safety Officer)
- allow children to meet supervisors and employees in a friendly and unthreatening environment
- have auditions conducted by appropriately experienced and screened employees
- allow children and parents, carers or legal guardians adequate time to discuss and raise any concerns they may have
- avoid the casting of children we believe might be being pushed past their limits by parents, carers, legal guardians or agents
- notify children of success or otherwise as soon as possible, and providing constructive feedback where possible
- provide a positive audition experience for children that will build their confidence.

Using Images of Children

Auspicious Arts Projects aims to protect the safety and privacy of child performers, and will support Clients to:

- obtain informed consent from a parent (including carers or legal guardians) and child (if 15 years of age or older) for the use of images of child performers
 - Consent will be sought prior to taking or publishing images. Signed consent forms will be sought from parents/carers/legal guardians and we will provide details on how and where the images will be published, and if images will contain identifying or personal information about the child (e.g. school uniform, name, hobbies). Images containing identifying or personal information will be avoided where possible.
- inform parents, carers or legal guardians if the organisation wants to film or take photos of children for analysis purposes or to improve performances
- ensure that if photos or filming of child performers is going to take place at a venue different from the usual workplace venue, that a parent, carer or legal guardian has agreed to be present or their consent has been provided for the supervisor to be present instead
- make sure professional photographers are aware that any images taken will remain the property of the relevant Auspicious Arts Projects client and cannot be used or sold for other purposes. Any digital files must also be destroyed or handed over to the relevant Auspicious Arts Projects client.
- make sure photographers are not left unsupervised with children or have individual access to children
- avoid the use of images of children in minimal clothing (e.g. revealing costumes)
- provide details to parents, carers and legal guardians on who to contact if they have concerns or complaints around the use of inappropriate images or inappropriate behaviour in taking or publishing images.

Auspicious Art Projects aims to protect the safety and privacy of child audience members or education program participants by supporting Clients to:

- use the Terms and Conditions of purchase and placement of a notice in a prominent position at the venue to make ticket holders aware that professional photographers may be engaged for official and marketing use
- make parents, carers or legal guardians of education program participants aware that professional photographers may be engaged for official and marketing use
- only publishing images that do not contain identifying information about children (e.g. school uniform, name) unless consent from parents/carers/legal guardians has been obtained
- make sure professional photographers are aware that any images taken will remain the property of the relevant Client and cannot be used or sold for other purposes. Any digital files must also be destroyed or handed over to the relevant Client.
- make sure photographers are not left unsupervised with children or have individual access to children
- provide details to parents, carers and legal guardians about who to contact if they have concerns or complaints regarding the use of inappropriate images or inappropriate behaviour in taking or publishing images.

Exposure to Adult Themes

Child performers (under 15 years) will not be placed in a situation that exposes them to inappropriate behaviour or language for their age level. This includes:

- nudity (male and female genitals, buttocks and female breasts)
- obscenities, 'adult' talk (e.g. overtly sexual), smoking of any substance or drinking of alcohol (except as required in the performance following a conversation with the child about the use of adult language, substances or alcohol for dramatic purpose)
- harassment, humiliating or demeaning behaviour
- aggressive, threatening or uncontrolled behaviour
- inappropriate influence in regard to opinions, beliefs, behaviour or conduct.

It is important that the production that child performers partake in, and the performance required of them, is not overtly dangerous, distressful, or inappropriate in any way, with regard to the child's age, culture, religion, maturity, emotional or psychological development and sensitivity.

If, due to the dramatic context of the production, children are required to participate in scenes containing potentially distressing, controversial or negatively influential material or themes, Auspicious Arts Projects will support Clients to discuss this with the child's parent/s, carer/s or legal guardian/s at the beginning of the rehearsal process and seek their consent.

All relevant details will be clearly explained to children and parents, carers or legal guardians, and all efforts will be made to minimise a child's exposure to potentially upsetting material. Where required, Auspicious Arts Projects will support Clients to discuss strategies for minimising a child's exposure to upsetting themes with the relevant regulatory authority for child employment.

Complaints and Reporting Procedure

We believe employees, parents (including carers or legal guardians), and children should feel enabled, empowered and supported to safely raise any concerns or complaints about any perceived risks to a child's safety or signs of abuse.

Auspicious Arts Projects has developed a procedure to respond to any complaint of abuse or conduct not in keeping with this Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct, including means to take disciplinary action or rectify issues when necessary.

Auspicious Arts Projects undertakes to offer a clear, accessible and confidential channel for feedback and complaints.

Privacy and Storage of Information

Information shared and collated as part of a complaints process will be securely stored, accessible only by necessary parties.

- Incident reports, complaints and records of other matters relating to child safety will be stored securely for a period of 25 years.
- In line with the recommendations put forward by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, we will store securely, for at least 45 years, records relating to child sexual abuse that has occurred or is alleged to have occurred. This is to allow for delayed disclosure of abuse by victims and to take account of limitation periods for civil actions for child sexual abuse.

Risk Management and Review

Auspicious Arts Projects takes a preventative and proactive approach to minimising the risk of harm to children. As part of our organisation's WH&S risk management process, this policy will be reviewed annually, and after every reportable incident, to assess whether the organisation's child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under the organisation's care.

Related policies

This Child Safe Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Complaints Handling and Reporting Procedure
- Code of Conduct
- Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Complaint Handling and Investigation Procedure – Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Age Discrimination Act 2004	Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992	Sex Discrimination Act 1984
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)	Racial Discrimination Act 1975
Fair Work Act 2009	National Employment Standards
Fair Work Regulations 2009	Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986	Australian Human Rights Commission Regulations 1989
Protected Disclosure Act 2012 (Vic) replacing Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 (Vic)	