

***TIDC
PERFORMING
ARTS STUDIO***

***CHILD SAFETY
POLICY***

2023

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1. Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of TIDC performing arts studio to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments.

2. Context

This policy reflects our commitment to provide a safe environment where every person has the right to be treated with respect and is safe and protected from harm.

It complies with our obligations under the *Children's Protection Act 1993*, including: Section 8B – 8D – child safe environments and criminal history assessments for people working with children;

It also complies with the Child safe environments: Principles of good practice and Child safe environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children issued by the Chief Executive. (Section 8A, *Children's Protection Act 1993*).

3. Scope

This policy, from the date of endorsement, applies to all people involved in the organisation, including:

- employees (permanent and casual)
- volunteers
- contractors
- sub-contractors
- work experience students
- indirect service providers
- any other individual involved in this organisation

Note: In this policy, the term "employee" is intended to cover all persons occupying any position listed above

4. Commitment to child safety

All children who come to TIDC performing arts studio have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our services and the welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all children are valued and feel safe.

This policy was developed in collaboration with all our employees, volunteers, the children who use our services and their parents.

5. Children's participation

TIDC performing arts studio encourages and respects the views of children and young people who access our services. We listen to and act upon any concerns that children, young people or their families raise with us. We teach children what they can do if they feel unsafe.

We ensure that children, young people and their families know their rights and how to access the complaints procedures available to them.

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

6. Recruitment practices

TIDC performing arts studio takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We employ a range of screening measures and apply best practice standards in the screening and recruitment of employees and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all employees.

We conduct criminal history assessment for people working with children, as set out in Section 8B of the *Children's Protection Act 1993*. Criminal history assessments are required for anyone within our organisation that:

- has regular contact with children and is not directly supervised at all times;
- works in close proximity to children on a regular basis and is not directly supervised at all times; or
- supervises or manages persons who:
 - have regular contact with children or
 - work in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or
 - has access to sensitive records relating to children or young people.

Exemptions from this requirement may apply in some circumstances.

We ensure that criminal history information is dealt with in accordance with the Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children, issued pursuant to Section 8A, *Children's Protection Act 1993*.

7. Code of Conduct

All members are made aware of, and must abide by, our Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct was developed in collaboration with all our employees, volunteers, the children who use our services and their parents. (see page 8)

8. Support for employees and volunteers

TIDC performing arts studio seeks to attract and retain the best employees and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We ensure that employees/volunteers who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their capacity is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment.

Strategies we have implemented include:

- All new employees undergo induction and receive a copy of our child safe policy and code of conduct.
- All employees receive regular supervision sessions that include a focus on ongoing learning about child protection and other matters that affect children and young people.
- Continual guidance and updated information in regards to dance training.

9. Reporting and responding to suspected child abuse and neglect

TIDC performing arts studio will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

All employees and volunteers understand their obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line on **13 14 78** as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected.

From time to time we provide opportunities for employees to attend information sessions about these mandatory reporting obligations (*Note: offering formal training for staff and volunteers is not a legal requirement*). We also ensure that employees have access to relevant information resources such as:

- Child safe environment: Guidelines for mandated notifiers and information for organisations (available to view or download from www.families.sa.gov.au/childsafe)
- Families SA reporting child abuse website: <http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/default.aspx?tabid=485>
- Free online SMART (Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma) Learning package, developed by the Australian Childhood Foundation: www.childhood.org.au

We ensure that support is also available for the employee making the report, particularly where an ongoing service is provided to the child, young person and their family.

Supporting children, young people and their families

Child Protection is everyone's responsibility. TIDC performing arts studio recognises that even where a report is made, we may still have a role in supporting the child or young person. This support may include:

- Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
- Displaying information about services that can assist children and their families (such as the Kids Helpline and Youth Healthline) in areas accessed by children and their families.

Dealing with reports or concerns relating to the actions of an employee or volunteer of our organisation

In addition to making a report to the Child Abuse Report Line, employees and volunteers must also report to the principal, Kerreane Sarti or management if reasonable suspicion is formed that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected by another member, employee, or volunteer.

In response to any report to management concerning a member, employee or volunteer of this organisation, management may determine to take disciplinary action.

Other protective actions may also be introduced to ensure the safety of children and young people within our organisation.

10. Strategies to minimise risk

Policies and procedures –

- **Transportation** – it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that children are signed into the studio and picked up on time.
- **Taking images of children** – Due to child protection laws and privacy issues, we are unable to allow parents to take photos or videos of students during any Open Days or concerts.

TIDC may take photos of the students in dance costume or during class time – with the permission signed for by the parents – these photos may be used for advertising and or social media – if parents have consented to such.

Parents must indicate on their child's enrolment form if they Do or Do not give permission for their child to be photographed and for their image to be used on the TIDC performing arts studio website or Facebook page or in school publications.

Please note that no names or other identifying information are used with photos on the website or in school publications.

- **Supervision of children** – children are under full supervision while in the class room by the studio teacher – it is the parent’s responsibility to ensure the students care and safety outside of the class room.
- **Complaints procedures** – see Code of Conduct below.
- **Physical contact** – see Code of Conduct below.
- **Responsibilities** – see Code of Conduct below.
- **Procedure for breaches of policy** – see Code of Conduct below.
- **Training\cyber safe guidelines-** Ensure that all social networking conduct is consistent with all of the policies contained in our student & faculty handbooks.
- **Protecting privacy and confidentiality-** Information pertaining to students and/or their families, whether financial, personal, or confidential, is never to be discussed with anyone other than the director. As a condition of employment, staff must and hereby do agree that all such information is the exclusive property of TIDC Performing Arts Studio and that they will not at any time disclose to anyone any such information, whether or not it has been specifically designated as “confidential.” If they are ever unsure of their obligations regarding this policy, it is their responsibility to consult with the director for clarification.
- **Procedures for dealing with situations where a member is being investigated for, or is charged with, a serious criminal offence.**

See Code of Conduct below.
- **Body Stocking Policy** - It is a policy of TIDC Performing arts studio that body stockings be worn by students for all concerts, displays and competitions.
- **Toilet Policy** - If a child is unable to toilet themselves, parents are required to wait in the waiting room for the entire class so that they can assist their own child when the need arises. For those students

that can toilet themselves and a parent cannot be located in the waiting room, class helpers will escort the child to the toilet and ensure their safe return to class, but due to child protection issues they will be unable to assist children inside the toilet cubicle. Parents are encouraged to discuss this policy with their children.

As a professional I believe that I am a part of a community of care. While working with children to develop their skills and appreciation of dance in a positive supportive environment, I am committed to their safety and wellbeing. I will treat them with respect and understanding at all times.

In order to ensure children and young people are kept safe from harm I will:

- Supervise the children at all times during dance lessons only.
- Ensure that any member of my staff with whom your child may come in contact is aware of child abuse and child protection.
- Ensure that no visitors or outsiders have contact with the children.
- Notify you if I am unable to teach your child/children.
- Only allow the child to go home with a nominated person for whom permission has been given.
- Notify the Department of Child Safety if I suspect or am told that your child is being harmed at home.
- Notify the police if I suspect or am told that your child is being harmed outside the home.
- Notify the Department of Child Safety if I am concerned that your child is self-harming.

Code of Conduct

Principles I will demonstrate:

- Fostering of mutual respect between myself and children and young people.
- Understanding of children and young people, their ages, stages of development, special circumstances, special needs.
- Use of language which is age/stage appropriate, clear, non- bullying, non-sexual.
- Use of physical contact only in the circumstance where it is necessary for me to place a child's or young person's feet or arms in the correct position and permission of the child has been gained after the reason for touching has been explained.
- Willingness to listen to child's or young person's concerns/issues.
- Willingness to use a variety of methods to motivate child/young person.
- Openness to parent/child suggestions, feedback and complaints.

Students will demonstrate:

- Willingness to learn.
- Willingness to listen and receive instructions.
- Respect for other children, young people and adults who may be waiting.
- Keeping themselves safe while waiting for lesson.
- Responsibility for appropriate behaviour and reporting inappropriate behaviour and unsafe situations or harm.

In order to make the dancing lesson a positive experience for your child /children, parents should:

- Raise any issues or concerns with me either via email or phone.
- Drop off and pick up child /children in a timely fashion, leaving the child /children in my care only.
- Receive feedback about your child / children's progress.
- Provide resources as requested;
- Alert teacher to any concerns as soon as they arise when possible.
- Give positive and negative feedback on my policies and procedures.
- Work with me to ensure the time and money spent on dancing lessons is well spent.
- Have any personal information treated confidentially and privacy respected.

In order to make the most of the time your child/children are in the dance lesson, I have the right to:

- End the lesson if a child or young person is non-compliant or obstructive in lesson.
- Raise concerns with child/young person and/or parent if there are concerns.

- Expect the child/young person/parent make concerns known as soon as they arise so that resolution occurs as quickly as possible.

Children and young people who attend dancing lessons have the right to:

- Feel safe.
- Be listened to.
- Be involved in decisions that affect them.
- Have their cultural values respected.
- Have their best interests considered.
- Ask if they don't understand.
- Be respected.
- Be understood.
- Be safe and free from harassment, bullying or abuse of any kind.

Parents and caregivers have the right to:

- Receive regular feedback on children's progress.
- Ask questions or raise concerns about instruction or children's progress.
- Make complaints as per procedures.
- Stay and observe lesson unless there is an issue for the child if parent present.

Procedures for handling suspicions or disclosures of harm:

A copy of this document is held at each venue where lessons are held. If you wish to sight this please ask.

Procedure for making complaints:

- Contact me as soon as possible if you have a concern so that I am able to respond as quickly as possible.
- Either at beginning or end of lesson or a time convenient to both parties when there is sufficient time to discuss issues.
- Not in the hearing of other parents or children.

RISK REGISTER

Risks	Likelihood	Consequences	Level of Risk	Treatment to prevent or reduce harm
Parent does not arrive to pick child up	Possible	Moderate	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Procedure for drop off and pick up provided to parent and discussed •Parent provides two other contacts if unable to pick up child •Child to be in sight at all times until parent arrives
Child says that he/she does not want to go home with parent	Unlikely	Major	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ask child for reason •If answer suggests harm to child from someone at home, report to relevant authorities •If not discuss issue with parent
Child discloses that he/she is being physically harmed by parent/sibling	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Depending on information given either report or discuss with parent •Ring Department of Child Safety to clarify if unsure and to report disclosure
Child discloses that he/she is being sexually abused by parent or family member	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Report to Department of Child Safety •Provide support to child through Crisis Care if necessary
Child discloses that he/she is being sexually abused by someone outside the family	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Report to police •Provide support to child and notify parents
Child complains to parent that during dancing lesson he/she was verbally abused	Unlikely	Major	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provide copy of teacher code of conduct and commitment to protecting children from harm •Provide procedures for making complaint •Request that parent attend lessons to observe
Child complains to parent that during lesson he/she was physically or sexually abused	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Refer parent to code of conduct but also their right to report these claims after having clarified issue with child •Parent to inform teacher of any issue that the child has in relation to a lesson to clarify issue
Child presents with depression, sadness and some talk of self-harm	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Report behaviour to D of CS immediately
Child's behaviour makes lesson untenable and could cause harm to child or teacher	Possible	Moderate	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Refer child to code of conduct •Speak with parent about child's behaviour involving child in that discussion •Require that parent immediately picks up child from lesson •Require parent to attend any future lessons

Child abuse affects the whole community, not just the child and family involved.

Child abuse is anything which individuals, institutions or processes do (or fail to do) which directly or indirectly harms children in the 'here and now' and /or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development into adulthood.

Stopping child abuse starts with us. Everyone including parents and caregivers, professionals, neighbours, workmates, families and friends, are needed to protect children and young people in our communities.

If you have any concerns about my Child Protection Policy and Risk Management Strategy please contact me on 0432 252 268.

Evaluation of these strategies and the development of additional strategies to minimise and control risks to children and young people occur as part of our ongoing risk management process.

11. Harassment/bullying

TIDC performing arts studio opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. We take this issue seriously and encourage anyone who believes that they, or another person, has been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise this issue with the principal, Kerreane Sarti or management.

12. Communication

TIDC performing arts studio will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of and has had an opportunity to read the policy.

We also ask employees, volunteers and parents (where appropriate) to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and will abide by our child-safe policy. We retain a copy of all signed statements.

13. Related policies and procedures

- Code of conduct as above
- Acknowledgement Statement to be signed by employees & volunteers indicating they have read and will abide by this policy- see end of document
- TIDC Studio Handbook
- TIDC Preschool Handbook
- TIDC Recreational Handbook

- TIDC Performance group Handbook
- Staff and volunteer recruitment procedures, including those relating to conducting criminal history assessments (refer to appendix 1)
- Child Protection guidelines for employees and volunteers (refer to appendix 2)
- Risk management Strategy as above

Approved by Kerreane Sarti	Date January 2, 2023	Review date: January 1, 2024
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Conducting criminal history assessments

Assessments required for prescribed positions

All employees and volunteers of TIDC performing arts studio who occupy a prescribed position (as set out under Section 8B (8) of the *Children's Protection Act 1993*) are required to undergo a criminal history assessment once every three years.

Criminal history assessments are also required prior to the appointment of new employees or members to prescribed positions.

Exemptions from this requirement may apply in some circumstances (see below). However TIDC performing arts studio retains the discretion to decide on a case-by-case basis whether any relevant exemptions will be exercised.

This requirement applies to all employees who regularly work with or around children in an unsupervised capacity or have access to prescribed records relating to children.

Procedure for conducting criminal history assessments

Note: The Children's Protection Act 1993 enables organisations to decide the manner in which they will conduct criminal history assessments. Please choose the option below that reflects the method of assessment that your organisation has adopted.

Option 1

A current Letter of Clearance from the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) Screening Unit is a precondition of engagement of employees and volunteers who work in a prescribed position at TIDC performing arts studio. The cost of obtaining a Letter of Clearance will be negotiated between TIDC performing arts studio] and the employee or volunteer.

Prior to the appointment of a new employee/volunteer and then at three yearly intervals, TIDC performing arts studio will direct the employee/volunteer to obtain a Letter of Clearance from the Screening Unit as evidence that the applicant does not pose an increased risk of harm to children. Letters of Clearance are obtained for all current employees/volunteers who are working with children once every three years.

TIDC performing arts studio may obtain a further criminal history assessment for an employee/volunteer at any time that TIDC performing

arts studio believes it necessary or desirable for the purpose of maintaining a child safe environment.

The informed written consent of the employee/volunteer is required prior to conducting a criminal history assessment. The Screening Unit's informed consent form is available from www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/screening.

Information relating to a person's criminal history and the assessment process is managed securely and confidentially and in accordance with the *Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children* issued pursuant to Section 8A of the *Children's Protection Act 1993*.

Option 2

A satisfactory criminal history assessment is a precondition of working in a prescribed position at TIDC performing arts studio.

Prior to the appointment of a new employee/volunteer and then at three yearly intervals, this organisation will direct the employee/volunteer to obtain a National Police Certificate (NPC) from South Australia Police. The cost of obtaining a NPC will be negotiated between TIDC performing arts studio and the employee/volunteer.

South Australia Police require the explicit written consent of the applicant prior to the release of criminal history information. The NPC application form is available from http://www.police.sa.gov.au/sapol/services/information_requests/national_police_certificate.jsp.

Where a person has no disclosable criminal history, the assessment is successfully completed and no further action in respect to an assessment is required.

Where an individual does have a criminal history, TIDC performing arts studio assesses this information in accordance with Standard 5 of the *Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children*.

Each assessment is conducted on its individual merits and with consideration to the inherent requirements of the position. Principles of procedural fairness and natural justice are applied throughout the decision-making process and the individual is provided an opportunity to confirm or dispute the information contained within the report and to provide contextual information for consideration during the assessment process.

The National Police Certificate will not be retained once a decision has been made regarding the person's suitability to work with children. The National Police Certificate will not be retained beyond three months in any circumstances.

In accordance with its legal requirements, TIDC performing arts studio will retain the following information regarding its decision:

- That a criminal history report was obtained.
- How the criminal history information affected decision making processes.
- Statutory declarations (where applicable)

TIDC performing arts studio may obtain a further criminal history assessment for an employee/volunteer at any time that TIDC performing arts studio believes it necessary or desirable for the purpose of maintaining a child safe environment.

Other evidence

Where appropriate, TIDC performing arts studio may utilise a number of forms of evidence (obtained within the last three years) to assess a person's suitability to work with children. This includes:

- A National Police Certificate that does not expressly state that it cannot be used as a clearance to work with children
- A Letter of Clearance to work with children from the DCSI Screening Unit
- A valid and current interstate working with children check.

Acceptance of other forms of evidence is at the discretion of TIDC performing arts studio and is subject to the person completing a 100-point check to confirm the true identity of the applicant.

TIDC performing arts studio may also at its discretion seek a statutory declaration for any *employee(s)* or *volunteer(s)* who have been citizens or permanent residents of a country other than Australia since turning 18 years of age.

Exemptions

The following organisations, persons and positions are exempt from the application of Section 8B of the Act:

- (a) an organisation that provides equipment, food or venues for children's parties or events and does not provide any other services;
- (b) a person who undertakes work on a voluntary basis to provide a service in his or her capacity as a parent or guardian of a child who is ordinarily provided with the service;
- (c) a person who undertakes work on a voluntary basis to provide a service and who is under 18 years of age;
- (d) a person who undertakes work in the course of, or for the purposes of, an event or activity that takes place over a period of not more than 10 consecutive days or not more than 1 day in any month;
- (e) a person appointed as a police officer;

(f) a person who is a registered teacher (within the meaning of the *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004*);

(g) a person who undertakes, or a position that only involves, work that is not for the exclusive benefit of children and is not provided to any child on an individual basis;

(h) a position that only involves prescribed functions because children are employed or engaged to work as volunteers by the person occupying the position or by that person's employer;

(i) a position in which all work involving children is undertaken in the presence of the children's parents or guardians and in which there is ordinarily no physical contact with the children.

Child Protection guidelines for employees and volunteers of TIDC performing arts studio

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for employees and volunteers of this organisation.

All employees and volunteers of this organisation are responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of children and young people by:

- Ensuring the safety and welfare of the child or young person is paramount at all times.
- Treating all children and young people with dignity, equality and respect.
- Adhering to this organisation's child safe policy at all times.
- Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people within the organisation.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people within the organisation.
- Ensuring children and young people understand their rights and explaining to the child in age-appropriate language what they can expect when participating in a service, activity or program offered by the organisation.
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian.
- Notifying the **Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78** as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected.

Employees/volunteers will not:

- Take part in any unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person.
- Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.
- Develop any 'special' relationships with children or young people outside of the professional relationship.

Acknowledgement Form

IMPORTANT NOTE: Requiring that employees/volunteers sign an acknowledgement form could possibly prevent later claims of ignorance of your school policies.

This Child Safe Policy has been prepared to enhance your understanding of the child safe policies, practices, and procedures of TIDC Performing Arts Studio, it is important that you read this entire document. We reserve the right to make changes at any time without notice and to interpret these policies and procedures at the discretion of the director. This Child Safe Policy supersedes all prior documents and previously issued policies.

After you finish reading this Child Safe policy and within seven (7) days of receipt of it, please sign, date, and return this Acknowledgement Form. Make a copy of these pages for your records before submitting them.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the policies outlined in this Child Safe Policy. You agree to comply with the policies contained in this document and to read and understand any revisions to it and be bound by them. You understand that this document is intended only as a general reference and is not intended to cover every situation that may arise during your employment. This Child Safe policy is not a full statement of TIDC Performing Arts Studio policy. Any questions about its contents can be discussed with the director.

Employee/Volunteer name (print legibly)

Employee/Volunteer signature

Date

If this release is obtained from a Employee/Volunteer under the age of 18, then the signature of that presenter's parent or legal guardian is also required.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____