



# **SA Stage Dancing Society Inc.**

## **POLICY DOCUMENT**

# **CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

Version 2

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## **Child Safe Policy**

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## **1. Purpose**

### **Describe the purpose of your policy**

This policy was written to demonstrate the commitment of the SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. (the Society), its committee, members and volunteers to child safety and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments at events organised by the Society, principally our annual eisteddfod.

Note that this policy should be read in conjunction with the Society Code of Conduct and the Eisteddfod Rules and Special Conditions.

## **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 abuse.

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; and
- Section 11 – Mandatory reporting.

It also complies with the Child Safe Environments: Principles of Good Practice and Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children issued by the Chief Executive of the Department for Families and Communities.

## **3. Scope**

This policy, from the date of endorsement, applies to all committee members, Society Members, volunteers, principals and staff of competing dance schools, competitors, children, parents, carers and other individuals involved in the Society or in Society events.

## **4. Commitment to child safety (include risk management )**

### **Describe your commitment to child safety**

All children who come to Society events 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 events as competitors or audience members and the welfare of the children attending our events 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.

The Society evaluates and manages risk on an ongoing basis reviewing event venues, setting policies for equipment testing and tagging prior to use and acting on reported concerns in a timely manner working with competitors, competing schools or venue management as appropriate.

As the Society does not have sufficient volunteers in most years to be able to actively manage activities in dressing rooms we are reliant on dance schools and parents of competitors assigned to the dressing rooms to report any emerging concerns or perceived risks.

This policy is a living document and will be reviewed in collaboration with all our committee members, members, volunteers, dance school principals and staff, the children who use our services and their parents.

## **5. Children's participation**

### **Describe how your organisation encourages the participation and involvement of children**

SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. committee, members and volunteers encourage children to express their views, and make suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect children. We actively encourage children who use our services to 'have a say' about those things that are important to them. We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

We teach children what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

Our Code of Conduct is distributed with each entry form and is posted in dressing rooms. Children are encouraged to raise any concerns they have via their dance teacher, via a parent or direct to a committee member, additionally feedback forms are available in dressing rooms and from the ticket box and can be submitted anonymously if required.

The Society will also undertake active opinion surveys of competitors, dance school staff and parents.

## **6. Recruitment practices**

While it is only in rare instances that a SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. Committee member or volunteer would be alone with a child at a Society event unless they are a parent or guardian of the child the Society 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 committee and volunteers.

We conduct criminal history assessment for people working with children, as set out in section 8B of the *Children's Protection Act 1993*. We ensure that criminal history information is dealt with in accordance with the standards developed by the Chief Executive of the Department for Families and Communities.

Further we conduct criminal history assessment for committee members and volunteers working more than 9 days at our events. Where a volunteer is working for less than 9 days, the need for a criminal history assessment is assessed on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the position, person and level of risk involved. The society has and will maintain a VOAN number to support this. If a volunteer refuses to undergo a criminal history assessment the Society will not utilise that volunteer to work in any role or situation which may cause risk to children.

Volunteers assisting in dressing rooms are not volunteering directly with the Society but with their respective dance schools, we require all competing dance schools to agree that their staff and volunteers participating in Society events will abide by the terms of this policy while working at our event.

The Society will accept criminal history assessments conducted by other organisations so long as they are less than 3 years old.

The Society requires that all organisations and their staff and sub-contractors providing services to our competitors at our events abide by the terms of this policy while working at our events. This includes but is not limited to venue staff, videography and photography.

Competing dance schools and organisations providing services to our competitors may provide evidence of their own Child Safe Policy or criminal history assessment measures which will be accepted by the Society.

## **7. Code of Conduct**

All members are made aware of, competing dance schools, competitors and parents, and must abide by, our Code of Conduct.

Our Code of Conduct is appended to each entry form available for download from our website, the entry form requires signed acknowledgement that competitors, dance teacher and parent have read and will abide by the Code of Conduct.

Our Code of Conduct is posted in each dressing room.

## **8. Support for employees and volunteers**

SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. seeks to attract and retain the best committee members and volunteers. We provide support and supervision, as required, so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We ensure that volunteers and committee members who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and access to information so that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment.

## **9. Reporting and responding to suspected child abuse and neglect**

SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

All committee members 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 by a member of their family.

We ensure that committee members and volunteers are aware of how to make appropriate reports of abuse or neglect. We also provide opportunities for employees and volunteers to attend an information session on mandatory reporting.

Employees and volunteers must also report to the President or other member of the executive committee any reasonable suspicion that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected by another member, employee, or volunteer.

SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. may resolve to take protective action to keep the child and others safe. All sensitive information only to be made available to relevant agencies on a need to know basis and in accordance with South Australian law.

## **10. Strategies to minimise risk**

The SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. does not provide direct services to children but rather provides a framework and arranges a venue where dancers, mainly children, can compete against other dancers in solo, duo/trio and troupe performances. Children are either entered in our eisteddfod by their dance school or, in a very small number of cases, as members of the Society.

- Taking images of children  
To be reviewed for addition to the Society Code of Conduct
- Supervision of children  
This is primarily the responsibility of the dance schools, their staff and parents, the Society does not have sufficient members or volunteers to be able to supervise all children attending except when waiting to go on stage

- Complaints procedures  
Review of rules to be undertaken to ensure that all forms of complaints are covered
- Physical contact  
To be discussed by committee
- Responsibilities  
Under development for all committee roles
- Procedure for breaches of policy  
Policy Document to be created
- Training\cyber safe guidelines  
Access to Society IT Systems is protected by username and password combinations assigned to each individual who needs access
- Protecting privacy and confidentiality  
The Society communicates with Members and Dance School Principals. The Society does not keep any direct contact details for children unless they are members in their own right. Access to Society Information Systems is on a need to know basis, Information is secured by individual username/ password combinations, all additions and changes to records are recorded
- Procedures for dealing with situations where a member is being investigated for, or is charged with, a serious criminal offence – To be reviewed by committee for development of a policy
- Risk reviews can be undertaken at any time but as a minimum reviews will be undertaken prior to an eisteddfod if there are changes to the venue or our operations and at the eisteddfod de-brief meeting following each eisteddfod

## **11. Harassment/bullying**

SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying, please refer to our Code of Conduct. 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 their dance teacher or directly with the Society via the ticket box.

## 12. Communication

SA Stage Dancing Society Inc. will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of and has had an opportunity to read the policy.

The policy will be made available in several ways once endorsed:

- As a downloadable document from our website
- E-mailed to all committee members and members
- E-mailed to all new dance schools wishing to enter our eisteddfod
- E-mailed or posted to all new members
- E-mailed, posted or hand delivered to all volunteers
- E-mailed or posted to all sponsors
- E-mailed, posted or hand delivered to all adjudicators

We also ask committee members, volunteers and suppliers of services (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

**List related policies and procedures that support your child-safe policy.**

- Society Code of conduct
- All entries require a signature agreeing that competitors, dance teachers and parents will abide by the code of conduct, for 2011 it is intended to expand this to include the Child safe Policy
- Any relevant policies or procedures that your organisation has developed to protect children, including:  
To be reviewed by committee for development during 2011

| Approved by | Date | Review date |
|-------------|------|-------------|
|             |      |             |

*In developing this sample policy and template, the Department for Families and Communities has drawn on resources prepared by the Play by the Rules initiative ([www.playbytherules.net.au](http://www.playbytherules.net.au)), South Australian Office for Volunteers ([www.ofv.sa.gov.au](http://www.ofv.sa.gov.au)) and the NSW Commission of Children and Young People ([www.kids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au)).*