

# SYDNEY DANCE COMPANY

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Children and young people have a right to be emotionally and physically safe at all times and SDC is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, stable and secure environment for all children. SDC believes that the welfare of children participating in our educational programs is of the highest priority and fosters practices to support children's health, developmental needs, self-respect and dignity.

SDC will take all reasonable steps to protect children from neglect, physical, sexual, psychological and emotional abuse whilst in our care.

SDC will not tolerate child abuse and will deal with any allegations of child abuse consistently and appropriately. Child Protection Policy violations may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and reporting to the appropriate government or legal authorities.

It is the responsibility of all staff members to ensure children are protected and treated with respect.

This Child Protection Policy, in conjunction with the Child Protection Procedure Document, is designed to:

- Minimise the risk to young people and children involved in SDC programs.
- Provide consolidated procedures to allow any incidents or allegations of child abuse to be handled in an effective and appropriate manner.

SDC commits to including children in our child protection practices. Children need to feel safe to come forward with any concerns and receive support from those around them. Children will be made aware of what child protection procedures and strategies are in place, where appropriate, and provided with opportunities to come forward with concerns. Feedback will be sought from children and parents through program evaluations and maintaining an open dialogue with families.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All SDC staff members engaged to work directly with children will:

- undergo an in person interview and provide two confidential references which will be checked by senior staff members at SDC
- must provide a valid Working with Children Check. No individual may be employed to work with children, by law, who does not hold a Working with Children Check.
- have appropriate training and experience in the creation and delivery of such activities, especially around working with children best practice
- adhere to the SDC Code of Conduct, which outlines appropriate and expected behaviour when dealing with others
- notify their supervisor of any suspicion or knowledge of, unfair or harmful behaviour towards children
- be familiar with Working with Children regulations in the State of employment
- be familiar with Working with Children procedures at SDC relevant to their role.

## SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all SDC staff and should be read in conjunction with the related policies below. This Policy is in addition to and complements existing or future policies regarding employee responsibilities and behaviour.

## REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every year, when there is a change in relevant legislation and/or when there is a change of direction in programming or activities involving children or young persons.

<b>Publication Date</b> March 2016	<b>Review Date</b> March 2017
<b>Related SDC Documents</b> SDC Corporate Policy - Code of Conduct SDC Disciplinary Procedure Document SDC Child Protection Procedure Document SDC Child Abuse Reporting Procedures flow chart SDC Incident Report Form SDC Applying for a Working With Children Check information sheet	<b>Responsible Position</b> Director of Education and Outreach
<b>Applies to</b> All SDC Staff, Contractors and Volunteers	<b>Approved By</b> SDC Board 27/4/16

## Revision Record

Date	Version	Revision Description
December 2012	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy creation</li> </ul>
March 2016	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full policy review and expansion</li> </ul>

Definitions	
<b>Adult</b>	Any person 18 years of age or over.
<b>Child</b>	Any person under the age of 18 years.
<b>Child Protection</b>	"To provide for the care and protection of, and the provision of services to, children and young persons." (Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998).
<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	"Serious psychological harm can occur where the behaviour of their parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child or young person, resulting in serious emotional disturbance or psychological trauma. This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour." (NSW Family and Community Services)

<b>Neglect</b>	“Child neglect is the continued failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the basic things needed for his or her proper growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care and adequate supervision”. (NSW Family and Community Services)
<b>Notifier</b>	An individual who informs Sydney Dance Company of a child’s disclosure or any suspicions, concerning allegations against SDC Staff.
<b>Physical abuse</b>	“Physical abuse is a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child or young person caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person”. (NSW Family and Community Services)
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	“Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust”. (NSW Family and Community Services)
<b>SDC</b>	Sydney Dance Company
<b>SDC Staff</b>	Any person employed or engaged by Sydney Dance Company. This includes but is not limited to Board members, Permanent, Fixed Term and Casual staff, Volunteers, Contractors, Interns and associated contractors.
<b>Working with Children Check</b>	A Working With Children Check is a requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work. It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct. (Office of the Children’s Guardian)
<b>Young Person/People</b>	Usually a person between the ages of 12-25