

**circus
ipswich**

be daring. be safe. belong.

**CHILD
PROTECTION
POLICY**

Prepared 2023

CIRCUS IPSWICH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

At Circus Ipswich, we are committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people who participate in our programs. This Child Protection Policy outlines our commitment to protecting children from harm and promoting their well-being. The policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and anyone else involved in the provision of services at our Circus School.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is developed in accordance with relevant legislation and standards, including but not limited to:

- a. Queensland Child Protection Act 1999
- b. Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000
- c. Queensland Human Rights Act 2019

3. NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

We support the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles) and will endeavour to embrace them at our Organisation.

The National Principles require that:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the Organisation is safe for children and young people.

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4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. Board of Directors/Management

The Board of Directors and management of Circus Ipswich are responsible for:

- a. Establishing and implementing child protection policies and procedures.
- b. Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and standards.
- c. Providing adequate resources and training to staff and volunteers.
- d. Appointing a designated Child Protection Officer to oversee and coordinate child protection matters.

4.2. Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to:

- a. Promote the safety, well-being, and rights of children.
- b. Familiarize themselves with this policy and related procedures.
- c. Report any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse or neglect immediately to the designated Child Protection Officer.
- d. Actively participate in child protection training and professional development.

5. RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

5.1. Working with Children Checks

All staff and volunteers, including contractors, must possess a valid blue card or exemption card issued by the Queensland Government under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000. It is mandatory for individuals working or volunteering with children to have these checks conducted and updated as required.

5.2. Reference Checks

Reference checks will be conducted for all potential staff and volunteers to verify their suitability for working with children. References should be obtained from previous employers or relevant professional sources.

5.3. Interview Process

During the interview process, specific questions related to child protection may be asked to assess the applicant's understanding of child safety and their ability to contribute positively to a child-safe environment.

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6. CODE OF CONDUCT

All staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to the following code of conduct:

- a. Treat all children with respect, dignity, and fairness.
- b. Maintain professional boundaries and avoid any behavior that could be perceived as inappropriate or harmful.
- c. Listen to and respect children's views and opinions.
- d. Refrain from any form of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse.
- e. Report any concerns or suspicions about the welfare of a child immediately to the designated Child Protection Officer.
- f. Maintain confidentiality when dealing with child protection matters, sharing information only with those who need to know.

7. REPORTING PROCEDURES

7.1. Reporting Obligations

Any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse or neglect must be reported immediately to the designated Child Protection Officer or, in their absence, to the senior staff member on duty. Reports will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity.

7.2. Support for Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers who make a report or are involved in the child protection process will be provided with appropriate support and guidance throughout the investigation and resolution of the matter.

8. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Regular child protection training and education sessions will be conducted to ensure that all staff and volunteers have the knowledge and skills to effectively safeguard children and respond to child protection concerns.

9. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant legislation and standards. Any changes or updates to the policy will be communicated to all staff, volunteers

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OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

- Safeguarding children from harm and abuse is an essential responsibility for Circus Ipswich Inc. We are committed to ensuring that any child who comes into contact with our Organisation or services is properly safeguarded. Every person under this policy must ensure that they play an active role in ensuring that children are properly safeguarded.
- We believe that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and we are committed to the protection of children and young people. This policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as volunteers or staff, to guide our approach to child protection and safeguarding.
- It is our intention that a child safe culture should be embedded in all levels of our Organisation, including but not limited to our leadership and governance as well as amongst all of our other Workers.
- When dealing with concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, we are guided by a consideration of what is in the best interests of the child.
- We strive to:
 - ensure that our Workers have the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe ensure that any of our Workers who work with children have the necessary skills, attributes, experience and qualifications to uphold this Policy and provide the support and supervision that children require-
 - ensure that any children who come into contact with our Organisation and who have concerns about their safety or need assistance know where to go and who to talk to ensure that any children who come into contact with our Organisation and who have concerns about their safety feel comfortable seeking assistance
 - maintain the safety and security of any of our facilities or environments which may be accessed by children (including any online facilities or environments, websites or platforms)
 - promote a workplace which values diversity and inclusion
 - where appropriate, involve children and their families in decisions that affect them
 - promote a culture of child safety at all levels in our Organisation
 - take any allegations or complaints in relation to child safety seriously, and respond promptly and appropriately
 - report any allegations or concerns to relevant authorities whenever appropriate or necessary