

**BUNDANOON COMMUNITY
ASSOCIATION INC. /**

MELTING POT THEATRE –

A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION

**POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND
DOCUMENTS**

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The Employer/Organisation is the Bundanoon Community Association Incorporated (ABN 69 402 145 252). Melting Pot Theatre is a formal subcommittee of the Bundanoon Community Association Incorporated and this child safe policy is delegated by the Bundanoon Community Association Incorporated to Melting Pot Theatre to manage and ensure compliance.

DEFINITIONS used in Melting Pot Theatre’s Child Safe Policies, Procedures and Documents

Child/Children

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

Child Performer/Child Employee

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

Convenor

The manager of the Melting Pot Theatre subcommittee.

Employee

Any adult (18 years of age or older) engaged by an organisation that may work with children at any time including:

- employees (permanent and casual)
- leadership and management
- administration
- education instructors and youth workshop facilitators
- tutors
- performers, production and venue personnel (actors, stage management, chaperones, technical crew, etc.)
- volunteers
- contractors and sub-contractors
- work experience students/interns/secondments
- any other individual in the organisation that may deal with children
- board members.

Employer/Organisation

Organisation in the performing arts and entertainment industry that employs or engages children as part of their business activities.

An organisation may employ or engage children in a number of ways including (but not limited to):

- casting them in a production (child employees)

- attendance of and interacting with child audience members
- providing instruction to children as part of a class/program/workshop
- using photos of children for media and promotion
- using children for professional promotional material (photography, voice-overs, film commercials)
- providing internships or work experience
- any other form of direct interaction with children performed as part of the organisation's business activities.

Industry

Refers to organisations in the performing arts and entertainment industry. This includes any live entertainment involving a live performance including (but not limited to) dance, opera, music, circus, musical theatre and theatre. Organisations may be (but are not limited to) performing arts companies, festivals, concert promoters, or venues.

Mandatory and Voluntary Reporting

Individuals in roles involving health care, welfare, education, children's services, law enforcement, religious ministry, or psychology must report to authorities if they suspect a child is at significant risk of harm during their professional duties. Reports must include the child's identity or description and reasons for concern. If an individual suspects a child is at significant risk of harm while not engaged in one of the listed professional duties they make a voluntary report.

Parent/Carer

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

Reportable Conduct Schemes

The scheme monitors how certain organisations ('relevant entities') investigate and report on types of conduct ('reportable allegations' or 'reportable convictions') made against their employees, volunteers or certain contractors who provide services to children. Melting Pot Theatre is a subcommittee of Bundanoon Community Association which is an incorporated public authority.

Supervisor

A qualified employee appointed to supervise or chaperone children (e.g. child performers, education program participants, work experience students). For the purposes of Melting Pot Theatre's policies, procedures and documents the definition of supervisor includes chaperones unless otherwise indicated.

MELTING POT THEATRE – BEING A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION

The Australian Human Rights Commission defines a Child Safe Organisation as ‘one that creates a culture, adopts strategies and takes action to promote child wellbeing and prevent harm to children and young people.’

As a Child Safe Organisation Melting Pot Theatre consciously and systematically:

- creates an environment where children’s safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values and actions.
- places emphasis on genuine engagement with and valuing of children and young people.
- creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people.
- creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any potential harm.
- responds to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

While there are different child safe standards in Australian states and territories including some legislated standards, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles) provide a nationally consistent approach to creating organisational cultures that foster child safety and wellbeing and help keep children safe from harm in organisational settings.

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

To create and maintain a Child Safe Organisation, an organisation must demonstrate:

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

MELTING POT THEATRE CHILD SAFE POLICY ALIGNMENT WITH NSW CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The NSW Child Safe Standards provide a vital framework to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in all organisational practices. Melting Pot Theatre's "Child Safe Policy" serves to uphold these standards, fostering an environment where children feel safe, respected, and valued.

Standard 1: Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

Our policy is grounded in a commitment from senior management to prioritise child safety in all aspects of our operations. We ensure that our leadership understands and values a child-centred approach, which is essential for creating a protective environment.

Standard 2: Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

We actively seek and encourage the involvement of children in decisions that affect them. Our policy outlines processes for children's feedback and participation, ensuring their voices are heard and that they have agency within our organisation.

Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved

Our policy ensures that families and community members are kept informed about child safety practices and are encouraged to engage with our organisation. By fostering strong relationships, we create a collective responsibility towards child safety.

Standard 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account

We recognise the diverse backgrounds of children and families. Our policy establishes practices that respect and promote equity, ensuring that all children, regardless of their circumstances, receive equal protection and support.

Standard 5: People working with children are suitable and supported

Our policy encompasses comprehensive recruitment procedures to evaluate candidates for child-related positions, featuring mandatory Working With Children Checks (WWCC) for all staff, volunteers, and contractors. Continuous training and support are provided to maintain a secure setting where children's welfare is paramount, with rigorous practices in place to ensure role suitability and safety.

Standard 6: Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused

Our policy outlines clear procedures for reporting and addressing suspected abuse, ensuring all staff understand their duties and have easy access to effective reporting channels. This transparent process is designed for children, families, and staff to lodge complaints without fear of retribution. We prioritise child-centric approaches in our complaint handling, fostering open communication and a secure environment where issues can be raised confidentially. Staff undergo training to respond adequately, prioritising the child's viewpoint in addressing concerns.

Standard 7: Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training

Regular training and professional development are integral components of our policy. We ensure that all staff are knowledgeable about child protection practices and are equipped to recognise and respond to safeguarding issues.

Standard 8: Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse (or other kinds of harm) to occur

We maintain both physical and online environments that minimise risks of harm or abuse occurring. Our facilities are designed with child safety in mind, ensuring secure spaces for all activities involving children.

Standard 9: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved

Our policy emphasises the importance of continuous improvement in child protection practices. We regularly review and update our procedures to ensure they remain effective and responsive to the needs of children, families, and the community.

Standard 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

Our "Child Safe Policy" demonstrates a comprehensive alignment with the NSW Child Safe Standards, ensuring a holistic approach to child safety that is proactive, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of every child in our care. Encompassing a Child Safe Code of Conduct that dictates appropriate staff behaviour and thorough incident reporting protocols, our policy is clearly documented and readily accessible to all involved parties.

Conclusion

Melting Pot Theatre is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and enriching environment for all children, in line with the NSW Child Safe Standards. We embed these principles into our governance to ensure legal compliance and best practices for protecting children from harm. Our approach includes fostering a culture where children feel respected, valued and empowered, employing staff suitable for working with children, providing clear guidance on addressing safety concerns, and supporting young participants in contributing to their own safety. This dedication reflects our unwavering commitment to the wellbeing and protection of every child involved in our programs.

CHILD SAFE POLICY AND COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

1. Scope

This policy applies to any adult person (18 years of age or older) engaged by Melting Pot Theatre that may work or interact with children at any time including:

- employees (permanent and casual):
 - leadership and management roles
 - administration
 - education instructors and youth workshop facilitators
 - production and venue personnel (actors, stage management, chaperones, technical crew, ushers, etc.)
- volunteers
- contractors and sub-contractors
- tutors
- work experience students/interns/secondments
- any other individual in the organisation that may deal with children
- board members.

(Note: In this Policy, the term “employee” is used to cover all persons occupying any position listed above including voluntary work.)

A child includes children and young people up to the age of 18 (unless otherwise specified).

2. Commitment to Child Safety

All children working with or engaged by Melting Pot Theatre 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.

Melting Pot Theatre is strongly committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children that interact with our organisation as performers, employees, audience members, education program participants, or otherwise by creating and maintaining a child safe environment. The welfare of children entrusted under our care is our first priority.

Melting Pot Theatre believes that all children have the right to be safe and feel safe.

Melting Pot Theatre recognises that the safety and wellbeing of children is everyone’s responsibility.

Melting Pot Theatre has zero tolerance toward child abuse and neglect.

Melting Pot Theatre supports the participation and empowerment of children.

Melting Pot Theatre commits to providing a safe environment for all children.

Melting Pot Theatre commits to implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles) and providing the appropriate resources to do so.

3. Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Context

Melting Pot Theatre aims to uphold and support the following requirements, guidelines and principles in its endeavour to provide a child safe environment for all children.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

In 2017, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) tabled both general and specific recommendations for institutions that provide care and support to children.

A range of legislative changes were recommended following the conclusion of the Royal Commission. As a result, a number of states and territories have implemented or are in the early stages of implementing legislative reform to better reflect the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation

Following the conclusion of the Royal Commission, the National Principles were tabled on 19 February 2019. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed these principles with a view to future national consistency in relation to child safety standards.

The 10 principles provide a framework for ensuring organisations can detect and respond to child safety concerns and more effectively prevent risk from occurring.

Duty of Care

Organisations that work or interact with children and young people have an obligation to ensure processes are in place to avoid acts or omissions that place children in circumstances that may lead to harm.

Melting Pot Theatre will:

- Ensure that all reasonable steps are taken so that children are safe from child abuse and that they feel safe at all times.
- Enable all employees of Melting Pot Theatre to understand their role and responsibility in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children. That is, to ensure that employees who have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove a substantial risk, take steps to reduce or remove any substantial risk that a child will become the victim of child abuse.
- Ensure all employees of Melting Pot Theatre aged 18 and over understand their reporting obligations. That is, to ensure all employees of Melting Pot Theatre aged 18 and over (who are not Mandatory Reporters) who form a reasonable belief that a child abuse offence has been committed by an adult against a child report that information to police.
- Ensure that all employees of Melting Pot Theatre aged 18 and over that directly engage with children have a current Working With Children Check (WWCC).

Failure to Protect

An offence applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation.

A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit an offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

Failure to Disclose

The ‘failure to disclose’ offence applies to adults that have information that leads them to form a ‘reasonable belief’ that another adult has sexually offended against a child under 16 years of age.

Such adults must report the information to police and/or child protection authority as soon as possible, unless they have a ‘reasonable excuse’ for not reporting the information or are exempt from the offence. A reasonable excuse may include a fear of safety or the reasonable belief that the information has already been disclosed to appropriate authorities (e.g. police or child protection). It does not include concerns such as damage to reputation or financial status.

4. Definitions of Child Abuse

Child abuse describes an act or omission which results in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. This can be a single event or a series of traumatic events. Most instances of child abuse fall under the definition of cumulative harm (repeated acts of harm) and multidimensional harm (multiple types of child abuse). Child abuse can be perpetrated by parents/carers, other adults, or other children and young people. Where sexual abuse is perpetrated by children or young people it is usually referred to as ‘sexually harmful behaviour’.

Child abuse, including child harm and neglect, are commonly divided into the following sub-categories:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- sexual abuse
- grooming
- exposure to family violence.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse can consist of any non-accidental infliction of physical violence on a child by any person.

Examples of physical abuse may include beating, shaking, burning, assault with implements, and genital mutilation.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional child abuse occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected, isolated or frightened by threats. It also includes hostility, derogatory name-calling and put-downs, and persistent coldness from a person to the extent that the child suffers, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm to their physical or developmental health.

Neglect

Neglect is the failure to provide for the child's basic needs for life to the extent that the child's health and development are, or are likely to be, placed at risk, including:

- food
- clothing
- shelter
- medical attention
- supervision or care.

There are three different levels of neglect:

- 'Minor' neglect is low-level neglect that is trivial or temporary.
- 'Significant' neglect is medium-level neglect that causes harm to a child that is more than trivial or temporary.
- 'Serious' neglect involves the continued failure to provide a child with the necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention, or adequate supervision, to the extent that the child's health, safety and/or development is, or is likely to be, jeopardised. Serious neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child where the child is exposed to extremely dangerous or life-threatening situations.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse/harm occurs when a person uses power, force or authority to involve a child in any form of sexual activity. Behaviour that constitutes sexual abuse may include:

- touching or fondling children
- sending obscene or suggestive text messages to children
- exhibitionism and/or voyeurism in front of children
- exposing children to pornographic images
- penetration with a penis, finger or other object into the mouth, anus, or vagina.

Child sexual abuse may not always include physical sexual contact and can also include non-contact offences, for example:

- talking to a child in a sexually explicit way
- sending sexual messages or emails to a child
- exposing a sexual body part to a child

- forcing a child to watch a sexual act (including showing pornography to a child)
- having a child pose or perform in a sexual manner (including child sexual exploitation).

Child sexual abuse does not always involve force. In some circumstances, a child may be manipulated into believing that they have brought the abuse on themselves, or that the abuse is an expression of love, through a process of grooming.

Sexually harmful behaviour in children refers to harmful behaviour perpetrated by a child (17 years of age or younger) to another child. Harmful behaviours in children are often an indicator that they have experienced abuse or neglect. Where sexually harmful behaviour occurs, organisations have a duty of care to both children. Note that in children under 10 years of age, such behaviour is often referred to as sexually problematic behaviour.

Grooming

Grooming is predatory behaviour designed to prepare a child for sexual abuse. Many perpetrators of sexual offences against children purposefully create relationships with children and young people, their families and carers in order to establish the conditions necessary for them to abuse the child. For example:

- giving gifts or special attention to a child or their parent/carer (this can make a child feel special or indebted to an adult)
- controlling a child through threats, manipulation, force or use of authority (this can make a child scared to report unwanted behaviour)
- making close physical contact, such as inappropriate tickling and wrestling
- openly or pretending to accidentally expose the victim to nudity, sexual material, and sexual acts (this in itself is classified as child sexual abuse but can also be a precursor to physical sexual assault).

Grooming includes online grooming. It occurs when an adult uses electronic communication (including social media) in a predatory fashion to try to lower a child's inhibitions, or heighten their curiosity regarding sex, with the aim of eventually meeting them in person for the purposes of sexual activity.

It is important to note that when instances of grooming occur, other members of the child's community may also be 'groomed'. This allows perpetrators to establish trust and a connection with the child via their support networks, further enhancing the conditions for other forms of child abuse to occur.

Exposure to Family Violence

Family violence is behaviour by a person towards a family member where the behaviour:

- is physically, sexually, emotionally, or psychologically abusive;
- is economically abusive, which may include property damage, restricting access to financial resources, education or the workforce;
- is threatening or coercive; or

- in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for their own or another person's safety or wellbeing.

A child can be a direct victim of any of these behaviours. Family violence also includes behaviour that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, any of these behaviours.

5. Definitions of harm

Multidimensional harm

Multidimensional harm occurs when more than one harm type is experienced at the same time – e.g. sexual abuse also involving physical harm and emotional harm at the same time.

Cumulative harm

Cumulative harm refers to the effects of multiple adverse or harmful circumstances and events in a child's life. Cumulative harm may be caused by an accumulation of a single recurring adverse circumstance (such as unrelenting low-level care), or by multiple circumstances or events (such as persistent verbal harm and belittling, inconsistent or harsh disciplines and/or exposure to family violence).

6. Roles and responsibilities

The responsibilities of each role in relation to the development and compliance of Melting Pot Theatre's Child Safe Policy are detailed below.

Leadership

The Executive/Leadership will:

- Ensure awareness and commitment
 - Advocate and promote children's rights, empowering and engaging children in support of this policy and its expectations.
 - Promote child safe practices, including openness, accountability and continued improvement in identifying, reporting and responding to child abuse, child harm and neglect.
 - Ensure that all employees, volunteers and contractors are aware of their child safe obligations (both legislative and non-legislative).
 - Ensure that all staff are aware of and complete the appropriate recruitment, screening and employment practices in relation to safeguarding children and young people. This includes providing resources, training and advice in the application of this policy and ongoing development of child safe initiatives.
 - Authorise, review and promote commitment to this policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct for both Employees and Supervision of Children, the Child Safe Reporting procedure and other relevant policies and procedures related to safeguarding children both internally and publicly.
- Strategically shape policies and procedures
 - Ensure that policies are shaped by legislation, regulations and organisation learnings, which in turn will promote a change to the policy and all relevant policy or procedural guidelines.

- Ensure governance and operational level procedures are appropriate, relevant, understood and regularly reviewed in line with organisation processes.
- Ensure child friendly complaints mechanisms are in place.
- Offer support
 - Support children, families, employees, volunteers and contractors who have identified, responded to, or reported child harm or neglect. Appropriate support could include counselling and formal debriefing.
 - Receive, collate, review and respond to organisational incidents and outcomes (e.g. summary reports/aggregate recording of reports) on a six-monthly basis or sooner if required.
- Ensure continuous improvement
 - Evaluate and analyse complaints, concerns and safety incidents relating to this policy.
 - Monitor, manage, review and continually improve this policy, supporting resources and Melting Pot Theatre child safe reporting practices in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
 - Monitor compliance with the policy via an inbuilt mechanism for ongoing monitoring and review.
 - Respond to reports and administer external reporting requirements.
 - Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow for the development, effective implementation, communication and continuous improvement of this policy.
 - Develop opportunities for regular discussion and review at all levels to support a culture of continuous improvement and accountability of keeping children and young people safe from abuse and neglect.

Employees, volunteers and contractors

Employees, volunteers, and contractors will:

- Understand the signs of child abuse, child harm and neglect and how to respond.
- Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children in support of this policy.
- Undertake any induction and training anticipated in or in relation to this policy, and procedures relevant to safeguarding children.
- Maintain a comprehensive understanding of and comply with the commitments and expectations of this policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct for both Employees and Supervision of Children, the Child Safe Reporting procedure and other relevant policies and procedures related to safeguarding children.
- Seek guidance from a supervisor or manager if there is ever any lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this policy.
- Assist in creating and maintaining a child safe culture and a culture of inclusion and safety.

- Support a culture of openness, continued improvement and accountability to children and young people by engaging in regular review and discussion of Melting Pot Theatre’s policies and practices and providing feedback to support improvement.
- Take action to protect children from all forms of abuse and neglect, including by reporting any abuse committed by personnel within Melting Pot Theatre or by others. Where a child is in immediate danger, call 000.
- Support peers and children who have identified, responded to or reported child abuse, child harm, risk of harm, and/or neglect.

7. Supporting Children’s Participation and Satisfaction

Melting Pot Theatre supports, enables and promotes the active participation of children by:

- encouraging expression of and respecting the views of children and parents/carers
- encouraging and empowering children and parents/carers to raise any concerns or complaints
- listening to and acting upon any concerns raised by children and parents/carers
- seeking the input of children when making decisions about matters that concern them
- ensuring children understand their rights and the appropriate behaviour expected of both adults and children
- teaching children what they can do and who they can turn to if they feel unsafe
- ensuring employees dealing with children are skilful in facilitating their participation
- valuing diversity and not tolerating any discriminatory practices.

Melting Pot Theatre aims to create an environment where children gain satisfaction and fulfilment from their interaction with our organisation as performers, employees, participants in a class/program/workshop, or other activity by:

- supporting children to feel respected and in control of their behaviour/work
- ensuring children enjoy the overall experience of being engaged with a production or other organisational activity
- encouraging children to assist each other in fulfilling their employment obligations and developing a positive sense of pride in their work (e.g. discussing character development and stagecraft in groups and leading warmup activities)
- offering opportunities for children to derive personal satisfaction and a sense of achievement throughout their experience and the relationships they make
- encouraging children to develop self-discipline in balancing their commitment to their performance, their education and their social and family activities.

8. Valuing Diversity

Melting Pot Theatre values diversity and we do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

Our organisation is 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.

In our activities with children, we will promote the:

- cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- safety of children with a disability
- safety of children and young people who identify as LGBTQIA+
- safety of children who live in out-of-home care.

9. Recruitment Practices

Melting Pot Theatre will take all reasonable steps to ensure we engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children.

This involves maintaining a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening and selection process.

It is Melting Pot Theatre's policy to:

- interview and conduct thorough referee checks on all employees (with their most recent supervisors)
- develop clear duty statements and job descriptions for roles that involve working with children that state clearly our commitment to providing safe environments for children
- attain and keep a record of Working With Children or criminal history/police checks for anyone with direct and unsupervised contact with children, such as employees designated to supervise or chaperone children
- ensure supervisors and chaperones recruited are suitably experienced and qualified to care for the safety and wellbeing of children, in accordance with their age and needs
- require compulsory Working With Children Checks for all staff, contractors, students on placement, and volunteers who directly engage with children.

In the event that an employee commences employment with Melting Pot Theatre and fails to provide proof of their Working With Children Check Card, Melting Pot Theatre reserves the right to terminate employment without notice. [If a WWCC is required to perform the job, it should be included in the contract of employment.]

In the event Melting Pot Theatre becomes aware of an employee being charged with, convicted of, or found guilty of any relevant offences since having provided their last Working With Children Check, Melting Pot Theatre reserves the right to terminate employment without notice. [This consequence should be outlined in the contract of employment.]

The cost of Working with Children Check Renewals is the employee's/volunteer's responsibility.

Melting Pot Theatre will ensure that this policy is adhered to and, on a regular basis, will review its administrative compliance systems in relation to Working With Children Checks.

The convenor will ensure that all persons identified in this policy requiring a Working With Children Check provide proof of one.

10. Support for Employees

Melting Pot Theatre seeks to support employees by:

- inducting new employees to our Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct for both Employees and Supervision of Children, Child Safe Reporting Procedure, and other relevant policies and procedures
- encouraging relevant employees to attend periodical information sessions, as they become available, to remain up-to-date with knowledge of child abuse reporting procedures, the nature and signs of child abuse, cultural competency, regulation updates and other matters that affect children
- appointing a Child Safety Officer to be the first point of contact to provide advice and support to employees on the safety and wellbeing of children engaged with the organisation
- ensuring employees feel encouraged and empowered to report any complaints, concerns or perceived risks to child safety to the Child Safety Officer or other relevant management position
- ensuring designated supervisors and chaperones of children that are new to the role work with experienced supervisors sufficiently before working on productions or programs requiring single supervisors.

11. Child Safe Code of Conduct

Melting Pot Theatre has developed a Child Safe Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our employees on expected behaviours when in direct contact with or working around children.

All employees must abide by the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

We ask employees who work directly with children to sign a written statement confirming they have read, understood and will comply with the Child Safe Code of Conduct. We retain a copy of all signed statements.

12. Communication

Melting Pot Theatre is committed to encouraging employees, children and parents/carers to raise any concerns or provide their views on the wellbeing of children involved with our organisation.

Melting Pot Theatre keeps employees, parents/carers and children informed of our organisation's child safe policies and procedures by:

- ensuring that employees have read, understood, and are aware of their obligation under the Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct for both Employees and Supervision of Children, Child Safe Reporting Procedure and any other relevant policies and procedures
- making relevant documents easily accessible by displaying child safe materials in areas of common traffic, uploading relevant documents to our website, distributing documents to all relevant individuals, and having copies available upon request
- providing children and parents/carers with relevant and accessible child safe materials.

Parents/carers of children employed by Melting Pot Theatre as performers are provided with at least one contact from Melting Pot Theatre that is available to speak with them or to facilitate speaking with their children at any time during periods of work.

We provide parents/carers and child employees with information on:

- the child's expected role, activities, responsibilities and actions during their period of employment
- the child's progress throughout the production and timely notice of schedules
- the rights of parents and children regarding supervision and workplace conditions, as determined by relevant state regulation
- our Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct for both Employees and Supervision of Children, Child Safe Reporting Procedure and any other relevant policies and procedures

Children are encouraged to communicate and ask questions regarding their employment.

13. Child Safe Reporting Procedure

We believe employees, parents/carers 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.

Melting Pot Theatre 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 for both Employees and Supervision of Children, including means to take disciplinary action or rectify issues when necessary.

14. Risk Management

Melting Pot Theatre 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, we periodically conduct reviews to identify potential risks to the safety and wellbeing of children.

15. Breaches of Melting Pot Theatre Child Safe Policy

Melting Pot Theatre requires all staff, board members, volunteers, contractors and students on placement to adhere to the Child Safe Policy. Where a breach of policy is identified, Melting Pot Theatre will respond.

Those who breach this policy will face disciplinary action, up to and including termination of engagement with Melting Pot Theatre. Serious breaches of this policy and/or its related procedure will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

16. Implementation and Review Process

[Position of staff member appointed as Child Safety Officer/s] have been appointed as Child Safety Officer/s, responsible for being the first point of contact to provide advice and support to children, parents/carers and employees regarding the safety and wellbeing of children engaged with Melting Pot Theatre. This includes being the first point of contact for dealing with any complaint of abuse or conduct not in keeping with this Policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Our Child Safe Policy will be reviewed annually and we will undertake to incorporate feedback from children, parents/carers, employees and any other relevant personnel.

This Policy was approved _____ and last reviewed _____.

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CODE OF CONDUCT – EMPLOYEES

Melting Pot Theatre provides an open, safe, and friendly environment for all children. This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults toward children. The Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any possibility that abuse or harm could occur. It provides guidance to employees on how best to support children and prevent or better manage difficult situations.

1. Scope

All employees are required to comply with this Code of Conduct. This includes any adult (18 years or older) engaged by Melting Pot Theatre that may work directly with or around children including:

- employees (permanent and casual):
 - leadership and management roles
 - administration
 - education instructors and youth workshop facilitators
 - production and venue personnel (actors, stage management, chaperones, technical crew, ushers, etc.)
- volunteers (including any positions listed above)
- contractors and sub-contractors
- tutors
- work experience students/interns/secondments
- any other individual in the organisation that may deal with children
- board members.

(Note: In this Code, the term “employee” is used to cover all persons occupying any position listed above including those in voluntary positions.)

A child includes children and young people up to the age of 18 (unless otherwise specified).

2. Your responsibilities

Melting Pot Theatre’s employees are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children by:

- adhering to our child safe policies and procedures
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from the risk of abuse and neglect including:
 - physical abuse: purposefully injuring or threatening to injure a child
 - emotional abuse: an attack on a child’s self-esteem e.g. through bullying, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child
 - sexual abuse: any sexual act or sexual threat imposed upon a child

- neglect: harming a child by failing to provide basic physical or emotional necessities
- exposure to family violence: behaviour by a person towards a family member that may include physical violence or threats, verbal abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, financial and social abuse
- grooming: preparing a child for the act of a sexual activity
- treating all children with dignity, equality and respect
- listening to and valuing the ideas and opinions of children
- acting as a positive role model in your conduct with children
- developing positive relationships with children and parents/carers based on mutual trust and open communication
- being professional in your actions through your use of language, presentation and manner
- respecting the privacy of children and parents/carers, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know
- being aware of risks with communication and behaviour between employees and children (including online and mobile)
- being aware of risks with communication and behaviour between children (including online and mobile)
- aiming to ensure children understand they are valued members of the production, program, audience or other experience
- acknowledging the uniqueness and potential of all children, in recognition that enjoying their childhood without undue pressure is important
- if by chance any children are found unsupervised, directing and accompanying them to their supervisor or relevant management immediately
- reporting any breaches of these standards of behaviour to the Child Safety Officer or relevant management promptly. This can be done in person and/or via the designated email: Child.Safe@bca.asn.au

Melting Pot Theatre employees MUST NOT:

- discriminate against any child because of age, gender (including transgender status), cultural background, religion, vulnerability, disability or sexuality
- engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children
- engage in any activity with a child that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them
- take photos or videos of children without the explicit permission from the child (if 15 years of age or older), and parent/carer, and relevant management
- share personal information or images of children on social media without informed consent from the child (if 15 years of age or older), parent/carer and relevant management
- work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse
- show overly familiar physical affection towards children or any unnecessary physical contact with children
- marginalise or exclude specific children
- show favouritism towards specific children such as the offering of gifts, special thanks, special treatment or inappropriate attention
- subject children to any form of physical punishment, social isolation, immobilisation or any other conduct likely to humiliate or frighten children
- enter children’s dressing rooms (unless they are a designated supervisor, or approved to do so by a supervisor or relevant management)
- allow children to enter crew areas unless accompanied by their supervisor
- allow children to enter an adult’s dressing room, unless accompanied by their supervisor and approval has been granted by those in the dressing room and management
- close doors in rooms where children are present, unless children need privacy to dress
- allow children to (un)dress with others around (dressing should take place in private)
- do things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves, such as assisting with going to the toilet or dressing
- gossip in the presence of children
- distress a child for the purpose of eliciting a dramatic reaction
- develop any ‘special’ relationships with children outside of the professional relationship or arrange contact with children outside of work obligations
- have unauthorised contact with children online or by phone
- discuss topics with adult/mature themes in front of children.

All complaints or reports of conduct not keeping with this Code will be pursued in accordance with Melting Pot Theatre’s Child Safe Reporting Procedure, including means to take disciplinary action if necessary.

3. Additional guidance on professional conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to physical, virtual and online environments. In circumstances where the risk of unsafe conduct is increased or children may be particularly vulnerable, employees are required to act with an increased sense of professionalism and model the Code of Conduct’s professional boundaries and expectations.

Bathrooms/dressing room procedures

Melting Pot Theatre’s procedures for supervising and monitoring children and young people’s use of a bathroom whilst in Melting Pot Theatre’s care or activity include:

- Employees and stakeholders should not use the bathroom at the same time as children and young people.
- Children and young people not using the bathroom should wait outside of the bathroom with staff members/stakeholders.
- If children and young people are getting changed outside of the bathroom/dressing room in a communal space, ensure adequate privacy (keeping genders separate, ensuring adults of the same gender supervise etc).
- Minimise children and young people of different ages using the bathroom at the same time, where appropriate (i.e. a four-year-old and 16-year-old).
- If assisting children and young people in a toilet stall, the staff member/stakeholder should seek assistance from the child's parent/carer first. If unavailable, the door to the stall must be kept open.
- Require children and young people to ask permission to use the bathroom.
- If using a public bathroom, require all staff/stakeholders to check the facility prior to allowing the child to enter, and require the Supervisor to remain within the general bathroom area while the child is in the cubicle.
- Ensure staff and stakeholders know and understand the risks that bathroom times may create for sexual or physical abuse, or the recruitment of one another (peer to peer or by an adult) into situation of exploitation.

Engaging with children in a one-on-one setting

There are various circumstances in which an employee may work with a child or young person in a one-on-one setting. These include but are not limited to:

- conducting a solo performance or assessment
- engaging with a child or young person online for purposes of a makeup lesson or performance
- one-on-one coaching
- putting on a child's makeup
- assisting a child to get dressed in costume.

Working with children and young people in a one-on-one setting should only occur where there is a wellbeing or health reason to do so. For example, a child/young person who suffers from anxiety when performing in front of others may conduct their performance with a single teacher. Where such circumstances occur, employees should:

- operate where there is a line of sight to other adults and young people (e.g. keeping the door open, operating in a room that has clear windows, etc); and
- seek guidance from the convenor regarding the appropriateness and necessity to operate one-on-one with a child/young person.

Employees should also seek guidance from the Child Safety Officer when considering removing a child or young person from their ordinary course of work/activities.

Transporting students

Employees who transport students as part of Melting Pot Theatre’s activities should transport children and young people in groups and in Melting Pot Theatre’s vehicle or third-party provider. While Melting Pot Theatre does not encourage employees to use their own cars to transport children and young people or to transport children and young people in a one-one-one setting, there may be exceptional circumstances where this occurs (e.g. an emergency).

Children and young people may be passengers in an employee’s car if:

- there is more than one child/young person in the car throughout the journey; and
- written (or emailed) permission has been obtained from the child/young person’s parent/carer for each journey or set of journeys; and
- written (or emailed) permission has been obtained from the convenor or delegate for each journey or set of journeys; and
- the vehicle has comprehensive insurance and driver has a full unrestricted licence.

Children and young people may be transported by the designated supervisor (or member of management) in exceptional circumstances, such as a parent failing to pick up their child/young person late at night.

When this occurs, the designated supervisor should, obtain consent from the Child Safety Officer and child’s parent/carer prior to providing transport. If not possible, the Child Safety Officer and the child’s parent/carer are to be advised, as soon as practicable, that the transportation occurred, when it occurred and the reasons for the transportation.

When designated supervisors use their own car or travel in a one-on-one setting, it is advisable that the child/young person sits in the back seat of the car.

Contact outside of the organisation

Employees including third-party contractors, such as performers, must not arrange social activities or engage with children and young people outside of the organisation (including via online means such as social media).

Employees must also not engage in relationships with former children and young people (who are now adults) who are affiliated with Melting Pot Theatre until at least 12 months after either party leaves the organisation.

In instances where children and young people contact employees (including third-party contractors, such as performers, via social media or other means), employees should not respond to the child/young person and report the information to Melting Pot Theatre’s Child Safety Officer in person and/or via the designated email: Child.Safe@bca.asn.au

4. Breaches of the Code

All employees are required to report any breaches of this Code to Melting Pot Theatre’s Child Safety Officer in person and/or via the designated email: Child.Safe@bca.asn.au In instances

where an allegation of child abuse has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with Melting Pot Theatre’s Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Reporting Procedure.

Employees who breach this Code may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Melting Pot Theatre may also conduct an investigation and will report serious instances of child abuse to child protection authorities and/or the police.

Review

This Code of Conduct was approved _____ and last reviewed _____.

Acknowledgement

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times.

Signature _____

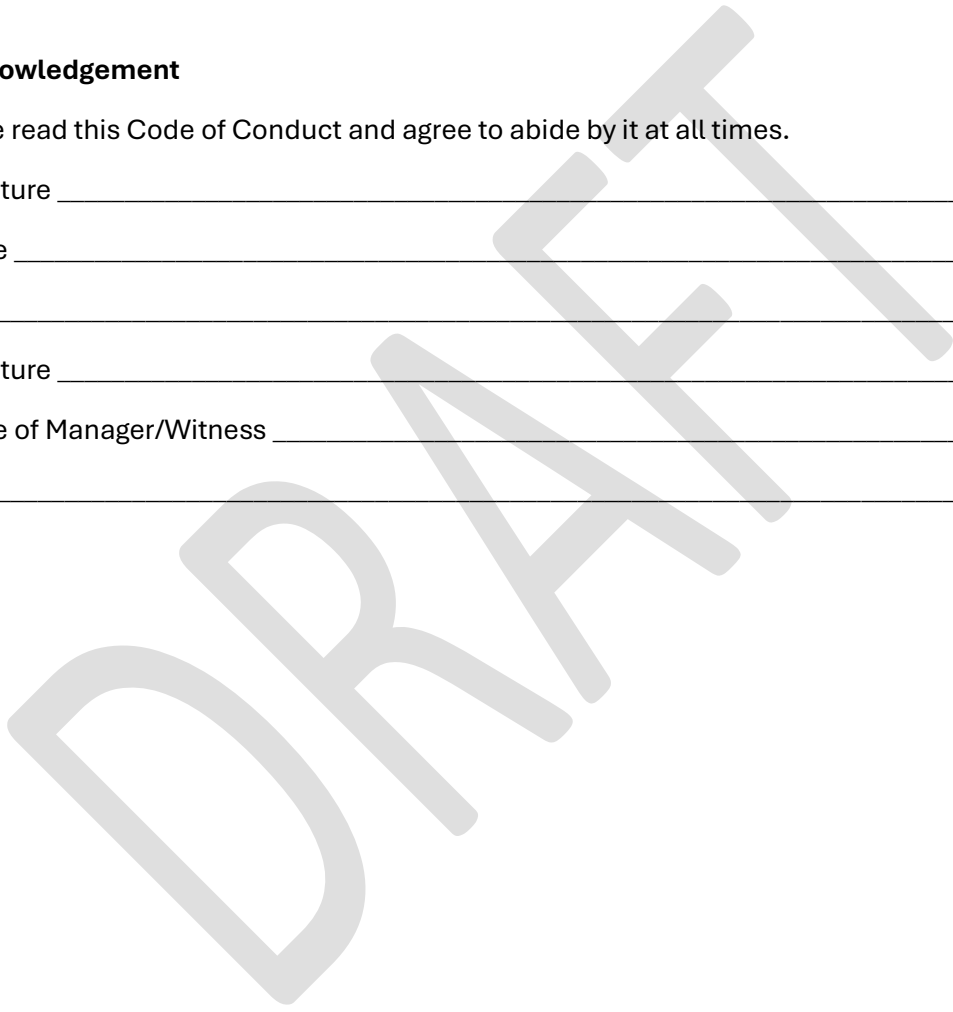
Name _____

Date _____

Signature _____

Name of Manager/Witness _____

Date _____



CODE OF CONDUCT - SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Melting Pot Theatre provides an open, safe and friendly environment for all children. This Code of Conduct outlines expected standards of behaviour regarding the supervision of children by designated supervisors (including chaperones) and any other relevant staff directly caring for children employed or engaged by Melting Pot Theatre (e.g. child performers, program participants, work experience students).

A child includes children and young people up to the age of 18 (unless otherwise specified).

Supervisors and/or chaperones are required to comply with this Code of Conduct in addition to the Code of Conduct applicable to all employees:

- Supervision must comply with all relevant state regulations on the provision of adequate employment and workplace conditions for children.
- Supervisors should always be with children (under 18 years) whilst they are in the care of our organisation. Children should not be left without direct supervision by a designated supervisor at any time.
- No employees, other than designated supervisors, should be alone with children (under 18 Years) at any time, and at no time should non-designated employees be placed in a circumstance where they are required to chaperone or supervise children. If by chance any children are found unsupervised, employees should direct and accompany children to their supervisor or relevant management immediately.
- A supervisor's only responsibility should be the safety and wellbeing of the children they have been assigned to supervise (e.g. a member of stage management that is appropriately credited and temporarily supervising children should not be undertaking any other duties while supervising).
- Supervisors must ensure the children receive breaks appropriate for their age bracket (as per NSW child employment legislation).
- Supervisors are expected to build a mutually respectful, professional relationship with all children in their care.
- Supervisors should check periodically the emotions and wellbeing of children in their care to ensure their comfort and competence for the tasks assigned. If any of the children become distressed, withdrawn or overwhelmed for whatever reason, the child should be given the opportunity to have a break, watch proceedings or compose themselves in private. Any concerns regarding the welfare of children are to be conveyed to management without delay.
- Supervisors should appropriately guide children towards positive and responsible behaviour. Children should be made clearly aware of the guidelines and rules established on appropriate behaviour in order for them to act accordingly, and supervisors should monitor adherence and appropriately reinforce limit setting.
- Supervisors should report inappropriate behaviour by any child to relevant management if the child does not respond to appropriate requests to improve behaviour. Parents/carers should be involved if behaviour continues.

Review

This Code of Conduct was approved _____ and last reviewed _____.

Acknowledgement

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times.

Signature _____

Name _____

Date _____

Signature _____

Name of Manager/Witness _____

Date _____

DRAFT

POLICY ON EXPOSURE TO ADULT THEMES

Child performers (under 18 years) will not be placed in a situation that exposes them to inappropriate behaviour or language for their age level. This includes:

- nudity (genitals, buttocks, and 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 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, this will be explained during the audition process and Melting Pot Theatre will discuss this with at least one of the child’s parents/carers and seek their consent, prior to accepting the role and commencing the rehearsal process.

All relevant details will be clearly explained to children and parents/carers, and all efforts will be made to minimise a child’s exposure to potentially upsetting material. Appropriate child safe language will be used when discussing the topic with the children. Melting Pot Theatre may also discuss strategies for minimising a child’s exposure to upsetting themes with the relevant regulatory authority for child employment.

Review

This policy was approved _____ and last reviewed _____.

POLICY ON AUDITIONS AND CASTING

Melting Pot Theatre aims to ensure the casting and audition process for child performers (under 18 years) is a safe and positive experience by:

- informing parents/carers 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 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)
- allowing children to meet supervisors and employees in a friendly and unthreatening environment
- having auditions conducted by appropriately experienced and screened employees
- allowing children and parents, carers or legal guardians adequate time to discuss and raise any concerns they may have
- avoiding the casting of children who are identified by employees as being pushed past their limits by parents, carers, legal guardians or agents
- notifying children of success or otherwise as soon as possible, and providing constructive feedback where possible
- ensuring feedback and call back information is delivered to the children and families in a child safe and considerate manner
- providing a positive audition experience for children that will build their confidence.

Review

This policy was approved _____ and last reviewed _____.

POLICY ON USING IMAGES OF CHILDREN

This Policy outlines Melting Pot Theatre's protocols for taking and publishing (in print or online) images of children and young people up to 18 years of age.

We aim to protect the safety and privacy of child performers by:

- obtaining informed consent from a parent/carer 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 and child aged 15 years or more. 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.
- informing parents/carers if Melting Pot Theatre wants to film or take photos of children for analysis purposes or to improve performances
- ensuring that if photography or filming of child performers is going to take place at a venue different from the usual rehearsal/performance venue, a parent/carer has agreed to be present or their consent has been provided for the supervisor to be present instead
- making sure professional photographers are aware that any images taken will remain the property of Melting Pot Theatre and cannot be used or sold for other purposes – any digital files must also be destroyed or handed over to Melting Pot Theatre
- making sure photographers are not left unsupervised with children or have individual access to children
- avoiding the use of images of children in minimal clothing (e.g. revealing costumes – both intentional and accidental)
- providing details to parents/carers on who to contact if they have concerns or complaints around the use of inappropriate images or inappropriate behaviour in taking or publishing images.

We aim to protect the safety and privacy of child audience members or education program participants by:

- using 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
- making parents/carers 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 has been obtained
- making sure professional photographers are aware that any images taken will remain the property of Melting Pot Theatre and cannot be used or sold for other purposes – any digital files must also be destroyed or handed over to Melting Pot Theatre

- making sure photographers are not left unsupervised with children or have individual access to children
- providing details to parent/carers about whom to contact if they have concerns or complaints regarding the use of inappropriate images or inappropriate behaviour in taking or publishing images.

Review

This policy was approved _____ and last reviewed _____.

DRAFT

CHILD SAFE REPORTING PROCEDURE

1. Purpose

Melting Pot Theatre is a Child Safe Organisation that proactively aims to create a safe and nurturing environment for all its students/child employees/workshop participants. As part of this, Melting Pot Theatre expects that all employees including staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other members of the community engaged in the organisation can raise child safeguarding concerns.

This document will assist all parties to:

- a) identify the different types of harm or neglect that children and young people may be exposed to
- b) understand their specific roles in reporting child safeguarding concerns
- c) report child safeguarding concerns in a timely fashion to all necessary internal and external parties.

2. Scope

This Procedure applies to any person (child or adult) involved with the organisation including:

- any adult (18 years or older) engaged by Melting Pot Theatre that may work with children at any time such as:

- employees (permanent and casual):

- leadership and management roles
- administration
- education instructors and youth workshop facilitators
- production and venue personnel (actors, stage management, chaperones, technical crew, ushers, etc.)

- volunteers

- contractors and sub-contractors

- tutors

- board members

- work experience students/interns/secondments

- any other individual in the organisation that may deal with children

(Note: In this Procedure, the term “employee” is used to cover all persons occupying any position listed above including volunteers)

- children (under the age of 18 years unless otherwise specified)
- parents (including carers or legal guardians).

3. Related documents

This procedure should be read in conjunction with Melting Pot Theatre's other relevant policies, procedures, and documents, including:

- Child Safe Policy and Commitment to Child Safety
- Child Safe Code of Conduct - Employees
- Child Safe Code of Conduct – Supervision of Children
- Policy on Exposure to Adult Themes
- Policy on Auditions and Casting
- Policy on Using Images of Children
- Recruitment Policy and Procedure

4. Reporting & Complaints

Reporting principles

The duty to report a child safety concern to child protection authorities and/or the police applies to a reasonable belief that child abuse is either likely to occur in the future, and/or child abuse may have already happened. Belief on 'reasonable grounds' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

As long as reports are made in good faith:

- it does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics on the part of the reporter
- the reporter cannot be held legally liable in respect of the report.

Melting Pot Theatre approaches its reporting responsibilities through a child-focused lens, prioritising the rights of children. The following principles govern this approach:

- A child making a disclosure is always to be believed.
- The best interests of children are paramount.
- Melting Pot Theatre complaints handling and reporting systems are accessible and recognise the diverse needs of children and young people, and their families.
- Complaints are dealt with thoroughly and promptly.

Who can make a complaint?

Any person including employees, parents/carers and children should promptly raise their concerns or lodge a complaint about:

- inadequate working conditions for children (as per NSW employment legislation for Child Employment in Live Entertainment)
- conduct not in keeping with the organisation's child safe policies and procedures
- concern of suspected or potential child abuse or neglect.

If employees suspect or witness an incident of unacceptable behaviour towards a child, they are obliged to report the incident to the Child Safety Officer (in person and/or via the designated email: Child.Safe@bca.asn.au) or management as a matter of urgency. In addition to reporting the incident, the employee should ensure that the child is safe from any immediate risks.

Any person that believes a child is at immediate risk of abuse should call 000.

Melting Pot Theatre will provide children and parents/carers with clear information about who to contact (and how) if they have any concerns or complaints.

What type of concerns should be raised?

Any of the following should be reported to the appropriate contact promptly:

- alleged, suspected or observed incidents of abuse or neglect (as a matter of urgency)
- conduct not in keeping with Melting Pot Theatre's child safe policies and procedures
- perceived risks in the organisation's environment (e.g. inadequate working conditions)
- wellbeing concerns, including concerns around children and young people's mental health, sign of self-harm etc.

Abuse and neglect include:

- physical abuse: purposefully injuring or threatening to injure a child
- emotional abuse: an attack on a child's self-esteem e.g. through bullying, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child
- sexual abuse: any sexual act or sexual threat imposed upon a child
- neglect: harming a child by failing to provide basic physical or emotional necessities
- exposure to family violence: behaviour by a person towards a family member that may include physical violence or threats, verbal abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, financial and social abuse
- grooming: preparing a child for the act of a sexual activity.

Employees will be provided with information about how to recognise signs of potential abuse.

Who should complaints be made to?

Complaints or concerns should be lodged with Melting Pot Theatre's Child Safety

Officer or other relevant management position using any method (verbally, email, call, etc.) that the employee, parent/carers or child feels comfortable with. Urgent matters should not be conveyed by email.

If an act of criminal activity has been alleged, such as physical or sexual abuse, child protection authorities/police will be informed urgently and the child will be kept safe from any immediate risks.

How will all complaints be handled by the organisation?

Melting Pot Theatre is committed to being responsive to concerns raised by employees, children and parents/carers, and seeks to resolve issues with the welfare of children as our first priority.

The appointed Child Safety Officer or relevant management will investigate the nature of the complaint raised in a timely fashion, allowing the person against whom the complaint has been made the opportunity to respond. If a complaint has been made about the actions of another child, their parents/carers will be informed.

If appropriate and in the best interests of the child, the Child Safety Officer or relevant management will seek to resolve the complaint and rectify any issues raised to the satisfaction of all parties in the first instance.

Any complaints or concerns about perceived risks in the organisation's environment (e.g. inadequate working conditions, exposure to adult themes) will be addressed by Melting Pot Theatre and rectified promptly.

If Melting Pot Theatre becomes aware of, or has been alerted to, a risk of child abuse by someone involved with the organisation, we will act to reduce or remove the risk and protect the child as our first priority. We will promptly contact child protection authorities/the police when a child or adult alleges any criminal activity has occurred, such as physical or sexual abuse of a child.

The child (and if appropriate, parents/carers) will be informed of the steps Melting Pot Theatre is taking to address the complaint.

Melting Pot Theatre may also provide support for the child by referring and assisting children and/or parents/carers to access other appropriate services.

How will the complaint be resolved?

The convenor shall determine if:

- a person should be disciplined in accordance with the misconduct committed and within the organisation's means; or
- the matter should be referred to an appropriate authority for further investigation and action pursuant to the law.

For procedural fairness, any person involved in a complaint about unacceptable conduct towards a child is encouraged to seek support from the Melting Pot Theatre's Employee Assistance Program or any other relevant person.

All complaints about unacceptable conduct shall be documented, including:

- record of action taken
- any internal investigation conducted
- any reports made to statutory or external bodies.

In accordance with security and privacy requirements, these records will remain confidential unless otherwise requested to be released by law.

With due consideration of confidentiality and fairness regarding any person against whom a complaint is made, the risk of harm to children is our primary concern.

5. Responding to disclosures

Child safeguarding concerns may arise in a range of ways – for example, through direct disclosure, observation or information received from others. Employees should remain open and aware to the various ways concerns may arise. The types of complaints or concerning behaviours that require reporting may include:

- suspicions or beliefs that children have suffered or are at risk of suffering abuse, harm or neglect
- inappropriate relationships developing between children and adults, or between children of a significant age difference
- observations of concerning changes in behaviour
- feelings of discomfort about a relationship between a child and employee, contractor or volunteer
- disclosures of child abuse must be reported to child protection authorities.

Any other suspected or actual breach of this Child Safe Reporting Procedure, Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct, or other policy, procedure or practice related to the safety of children must be reported to the Child Safety Officer (in person and/or via the designated email: Child.Safe@bca.asn.au), management and/or committee

Melting Pot Theatre expects all employees to be alert to any potential child abuse, child harm, risk of harm and neglect in all contexts and report concerns in accordance with this document.

Staff who notice behavioural signs of abuse are encouraged to talk with the child when they are disclosing a concern. Disclosures should be enabled through an open approach which includes:

- management establishing honest two-way communication between themselves and others
- management being respectful in all interactions with employees, contractors, volunteers and children and their families
- staff being open and honest with children and families about confidentiality limits
- staff educating and supporting personnel to understand their role and to respond to disclosures in a confident and supportive manner.

This disclosure is to be distinguished from an investigative interview process, which must follow a formal process.

How will complaints from children be handled by the first point of contact or Child Safety Officer?

Melting Pot Theatre will inform children of who to talk to if they need to raise an issue.

Melting Pot Theatre employees that receive a complaint from a child will:

- let the child talk about their concerns in their own time and words, and give the child the necessary attention, time, and space to raise their issues
- be a supportive and reassuring listener

- tell the child that raising their concerns was the right thing to do and let them know in plain language the process by which their concerns will be addressed and acted upon
- record the nature of the complaint in the child's own words
- contact the child's parents/carers, if appropriate.

Safety of children who face additional forms of discrimination (at-risk)

Melting Pot Theatre recognises the diverse circumstances of children and works in child-centred ways that celebrate the strengths and individual characteristics of children and embrace them regardless of their abilities, sex, gender identity, socioeconomic status and cultural background.

If an allegation of abuse involves an Aboriginal child, it is important to ensure a culturally appropriate response. A way to help ensure this could include engaging with parents of Aboriginal children, local Aboriginal communities or an Aboriginal elder.

Some children with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident. For example, children with hearing or cognitive impairments may need support to help them explain the incident, including through sign language interpreters.

Children who live in out-of-home care may also need additional support. Out-of-home care is defined as a temporary, medium or long-term living arrangement for children and young people who cannot live in their family home.

Out-of-home care includes foster care, kinship care, permanent care, residential care and lead tenant arrangements. Staff should report suspicions or allegations of abuse of children in statutory out-of-home care to child protection authorities as well as the convenor.

Responding to harmful sexual behaviour in children and young people

Research indicates that a significant proportion of sexual abuse that occurs in the context of organisations is perpetrated by children. Sexually harmful behaviour involves children engaging another party in sexual activity that is either unwanted or where, due to the nature of the situation, the other party is not capable of giving consent (e.g. children who are younger or who have a cognitive impairment).

Melting Pot Theatre is committed to ensuring all employees have access to education and support which prepares them to prevent and identify sexually harmful behaviours and respond to peer-to-peer abuse in a timely, child-focused and protective manner.

If a child perpetrates abuse or harm, Melting Pot Theatre has a duty of care to both the perpetrator and victim. Melting Pot Theatre recognises that a child who demonstrates sexually harmful behaviours requires therapeutic intervention. They may also have suffered abuse and therefore may require protection.

Melting Pot Theatre staff will consult the appropriate member of the Executive/Child Safe Officer to agree on the process for notifying parents/carers about the concern. In doing so, they will be guided by advice from relevant authorities (i.e. child protection authorities and the police).

Confidentiality

All employees should ensure that where concerns arise, confidentiality is maintained as far as possible.

Internal and external reporting should take place as per this reporting procedure, with internal communication about concerns occurring on a 'need to know' basis only. Only personnel directly involved in the management of the child's situation and responsible for meeting the reporting obligations are to be involved in discussions regarding the child's identity, or details of the suspected abuse. Exceptional circumstances apply, including:

- There is a reasonable belief that a child has been harmed, suffered neglect, or is at risk of harm necessitating an obligation to report to authorities, such as child protection authorities and the police.
- The child has consented to a secondary disclosure and has the capacity to consent.

Parents/carers should be informed about the allegation of abuse and the internal processes.

Where parents/carers are the alleged perpetrators of abuse, Melting Pot Theatre will seek advice from child protection authorities about how information is communicated and how to protect the child's safety.

In an alleged instance of child abuse, staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to seek advice from the Child Safety Officer/the convenor/ the BCA president regarding the dissemination of personal information.

Record keeping

Timely, clear, and effective record keeping is an important part of ensuring Melting Pot Theatre is a Child Safe Organisation. Record keeping should include details of the child safety concern, key people involved, external agencies notified if relevant and any actions taken, including corrective.

Responding to historical allegations of abuse

In all circumstances where historical abuse allegations are made which pertain to Melting Pot Theatre, the organisation will cooperate fully with child protection authorities and/or the police. Melting Pot Theatre will also review its current policies and procedures in light of any findings of historical abuse investigations to determine if there are learnings that may strengthen protective approaches.

Melting Pot Theatre's procedure for responding to historical allegations of abuse includes:

- Any allegation of historical abuse which pertains to Melting Pot Theatre should be notified to the convenor or their delegate within 24 hours of receipt.
- The convenor will be responsible for overseeing the handling of the allegation, including confirming whether it has been referred to the relevant authority (i.e. child protection authorities, the police and/or Reportable Conduct Scheme for Vic, NSW and ACT) and that all relevant information held by Melting Pot Theatre has been provided to relevant authorities.
- At the conclusion of the police investigation, the convenor will determine whether it is appropriate to undertake an internal investigation, noting that an internal investigation would generally be warranted where the employee, contractor or volunteer implicated in the allegation is still involved with Melting Pot Theatre.

- In all circumstances, Melting Pot Theatre will undertake an internal review to determine if there is a need to amend any policies, procedures, or processes. Reviews will be focused upon the identification and application of learning to minimise future risk.

Reporting principles

Once staff have formed a reasonable belief that a child is at risk or in need of protection, they will need to ‘report’.

- If a child is deemed to be at immediate risk of harm, the employee, contractor, or volunteer should contact emergency services on 000 immediately.
- All reports will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult, child, or young person.
- Where an employee or third-party provider forms a belief that a child has suffered child abuse or is at risk of harm, they must notify the Child Safety Officer within 24 hours in person and/or via the designated email: Child.Safe@bca.asn.au
- The employee, contractor, or volunteer is expected to contact the convenor and Child Safety Officer in the first instance, unless doing so would pose a potential conflict of interest or place the child at further risk (e.g. if the convenor or Child Safety Officer is the subject of the concern).
- The involved employee, contractor or volunteer will work with the convenor or their delegate to agree on the appropriate reporting avenues (i.e. child protection authorities and/or the police). It is best practice for the recipient of the disclosure to make the report.
- Should the concern relate to risk posed by a Melting Pot Theatre employee, volunteer or contractor, the convenor will have overall responsibility for dealing with the matter and follow the appropriate procedure including that of the Reportable Conduct Scheme – Vic, NSW, ACT
- Melting Pot Theatre will treat all matters confidentially, disclose critical information to relevant authorities including child protection authorities and the police, and work in the best interests of the child.
- The BCA President shall be notified of the making of any mandatory report to the Office of the Children’s Guardian by the Child Safety Officer within 24 hours of the report being made.

Reporting process

| Step | Action | Who |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>Emergencies: In case of emergency or if a child is in immediate danger contact Triple Zero (000) or the local police station.</p> <p>When the report has been made, move to the next step. All other concerns or reports start at the next step.</p> | The employee, volunteer or contractor who identified a potential child safety concern. |
| 1 | <p>Keep comprehensive notes that are dated and include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information that has led to concerns about the child's safety (e.g. physical injuries, child's behaviour, adult behaviour) • the source of the report (e.g. observation of behaviour, disclosure from child or another person) • actions taken as a result of the concerns (e.g. consultation with manager, child protection authority, police etc). | The employee, contractor or volunteer who identified a potential child safety concern. |
| 2 | <p>Discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children with the Child Safety Officer, convenor and/or the BCA president.</p> <p>For internal reporting purposes, the employee or contractor together with the convenor and/or BCA president or delegate will make a determination regarding the need for reporting and to whom the report should be made, including the child's parents/carers.</p> <p>Note: The above does not substitute for the employee or contractor's mandatory reporting obligations.</p> | The employee, volunteer or contractor who identified a potential child safety concern, and the convenor and/or BCA president. |
| 3 | <p>Gather the relevant information necessary to make the report. This should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full name, date of birth, and residential address of the child or young person • the details of the concerns and the reasons for those concerns • if involving another party within the organisation, gather details regarding the individual employee, volunteer or contractor's involvement with the child or young person • details of any other agencies who may be involved with the child or young person, if known. | The convenor and/or BCA president to be provided with information from the employee, volunteer or contractor who identified the potential child safety concern. |
| 4 | <p>Make a report to the relevant agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report concerns that are an immediate risk by calling 000 or the local police station. • Sexual offences need to be reported to the child | The convenor and/or BCA president and the employee or contractor who identified the child safety concern. |

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | <p>protection authorities and police.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report concerns about the safety of a child to the child protection authority. • Report any allegations or convictions of child abuse by employees under the Reportable Conduct Scheme requirements [VIC, NSW, ACT]. • Obtain and record the lodgement/engagement number after making the notification. | |
| 5 | <p>Log and store the information, including lodgement number, in a safe and secure location that is accessible to the convenor, BCA president and Child Safety Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a learning review of policies, procedures, and practice. • Information is provided to the board as part of the board’s periodic update on child safety. | The convenor and BCA president |

If in doubt of external reporting requirements, Melting Pot Theatre expects that staff, volunteers and contractors will contact the Child Safety Officer (in person and/or via the designated email: Child.Safe@bca.asn.au), the convenor and/or external authorities to report any concerns and seek guidance on reporting obligations and processes.

Once a report has been received and the convenor and/or BCA president has been notified, the concerns will be reviewed. There are four possible outcomes from this review:

- The concerns are unfounded.
- A crime has been allegedly committed.
- The Child Safe Code of Conduct has been breached, but no alleged crime has been committed.
- Based on the available information, it is not possible to form a conclusive view on the matter.

As per the Child Safe Reporting Procedure and Child Safe Code of Conduct:

- Alleged criminal matters will be referred to the police as soon as practicable, and typically within 24 hours.
- Where a conclusive view could not be formed but the concerns are serious, child protection authorities and/or the police will be notified as soon as practicable, and typically within 24 hours.
- The convenor will determine the course of action where the Child Safe Code of Conduct has been breached, but no alleged crime has been made. In such circumstances, Melting Pot Theatre will investigate the matter and any consequences for the alleged perpetrator will typically be proportionate to the breach, with the child’s safety being of paramount significance.

6. Responding to wellbeing concerns

While disclosures of child abuse may be made to an employee, there may also be general ‘wellbeing concerns’ that are not necessarily examples of child abuse that may be raised with employees.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing are as important to a child’s safety as their physical health. They can affect all aspects of their life including their educational attainment, relationships and physical wellbeing. Mental health can also change over time, to varying degrees of seriousness, and for different reasons.

Negative experiences, such as abuse or neglect, can adversely impact a child’s mental health. Such issues can also sometimes lead to safeguarding and child protection issues – for example if a child’s mental health begins to put them or other people at risk of harm.

It can be hard to recognise when a child needs support with their mental and emotional wellbeing and it can be difficult for young people to speak out about the challenges they are facing. It is crucial that anyone who works or volunteers with children and young people can recognise that a child might be struggling with their mental health and know how to take appropriate action to facilitate and provide support.

By being attentive to a child or young person’s mood or behaviour, employees can sometimes recognise patterns that suggest they might need support. It is important to remember that some signs of mental health may also look like normal child behaviour (for example, tantrums or frustration in younger children or teenagers keeping thoughts and feelings to themselves).

Signs of child/young person’s mental health and/or wellbeing issues include:

- sudden mood and behaviour changes
- self-harming
- unexplained physical changes (such as weight loss or gain)
- sudden poor behaviour or performance
- sleeping problems or showing signs of fatigue
- changes in social habits such as the withdrawal or avoidance of friends and family
- changes in eating habits
- reduced ability to concentrate
- changes in appearance (wearing oversized clothes, covering up).

These signs suggest that a child may be struggling, but there could be a number of explanations for them.

It is important that employees do not attempt to diagnose mental health or wellbeing issues or make assumptions about what’s happening in a child’s life.

If employees are concerned that a child may be struggling with an issue, it is important not to wait for them to talk before trying to start a conversation. Be prepared that conversations may not be easy or straightforward.

Principles to help employees discuss mental health and wellbeing sensitively

- Use the right language:
 - Use language the child understands according to their age and stage of development.
 - Avoid using technical or diagnostic language which children might find unfamiliar and confusing.
 - Reflect the terms and language the child uses back to them; this will help them feel listened to.
- Create an open environment:
 - Make sure children know and understand who they can talk to.
 - Ensure mental health and wellbeing are discussed in a day-to-day way with it being put on an equal footing with physical health.
- Promote mental health and wellbeing:
 - Encourage self-care and self-regulation techniques.
 - Maintain routines.

If a child is not able to engage in a conversation about their mental health and wellbeing, employees must still consider what support can be put in place for them.

If employees identify a safeguarding or child safety issue, you must follow Melting Pot Theatre reporting procedures.

Managing situations of concern

Whilst it is not possible to provide examples to cover all eventualities or issues, the following are some guidelines for common situations that may arise.

Children getting dressed/undressed in communal areas whilst changing clothes

Getting changed can cause anxiety for some children and/or make them feel vulnerable.

Where possible, use designated single-gender changing rooms or areas. If this is not possible, think about using furniture or screens to provide separate areas and allocating time slots of when people are getting changed/using the facilities. Ensure adequate and sensitive arrangements for getting dressed. Also take into account the needs of children and young people with disabilities and children from different religions, beliefs and cultural backgrounds or gender identity.

Adults should change privately and never in the same space as children and young people. As far as possible, members of staff should only supervise/assist children of the same gender.

Managing a disclosure of suicidal ideation/risk

Employees must always ensure they understand and know of their duty of care and reporting obligations.

If employees feel the child is in immediate danger call 000 and stay with them until they are safe.

If a child is having thoughts of suicide and discloses these, it may feel overwhelming but there are ways you can support them.

- Take warning signs and disclosures seriously.
- Listen without judgement and show that you care and that they are not alone.
- Be open to talking about their suicidal thoughts.
- Be aware of confidentiality and the limitations of this.
- Follow Melting Pot Theatre's reporting policy and procedure.
- Raise the issue with the Child Safety Officer (in person and/or via the designated email: Child.Safe@bca.asn.au) and the convenor.
- Ensure the young person remains with a supportive adult whilst a safety plan can be developed.

Managing incidents of self-harm (through observation or disclosure)

Discovering a child has been self-harming either through disclosure, observation of historic injuries or presentation of an immediate injury, can be difficult and upsetting.

Self-harm is any act of intentional self-injury or self-poisoning. Examples include:

- taking an overdose
- swallowing objects or poisons
- cutting, hitting or bruising
- self-strangulation with ligatures
- burning.

Children and young people self-harm for several reasons which may include:

- to manage emotional upset
- to reduce tension
- to provide a feeling of physical pain to distract from emotional pain
- to express emotions such as hurt, anger or frustration
- a form of escape
- an effort to regain control over feelings or problems
- to elicit care from others
- to identify with a peer group.

Managing the immediate effects of self-harm

- Management of physical injuries:
 - Keep calm and follow first aid guidelines for cuts, wounds or burns.

- If employees have immediate concerns about the effect of an overdose or serious physical injuries are present - call 000.
- Ask the child if they are in pain - they may have needed to feel physical pain at the point of self-harm but this doesn't mean they want to feel pain afterwards.
- Helping the child/young person:
 - Identify a staff member to whom the child is willing to speak and who can provide a listening, non-judgemental ear.
 - Acknowledge the distress and offer to help the child find the support they need.
 - Reassure the child that you understand that self-harm is helping them to cope at the moment.
 - Remind them there are less harmful ways of coping.
 - Mention sources of support (Kids Helpline, Youth Beyond Blue, talking to family member etc).

If you identify a safeguarding or child safety issue you must follow Melting Pot Theatre's reporting procedures.

Review

This reporting procedure was approved _____ and last reviewed _____.

COMPLAINT FORM

This form is a way to let us know if something is bothering you or making you upset. We're here to listen and help fix the problem.

You can ask a family member or someone from Melting Pot Theatre to help you fill this out. Once it's ready, please give it to our Child Safe Officer.

Your name and contact details

It's okay if you don't want to tell us your name, but it might be easier for us to help if we can talk to you.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| First name: | |
| Family name: | |
| Phone: | |
| Email: | |
| Address: | |
| I would like to be contacted by: (tick any) <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> In writing | |

WHAT'S MAKING YOU FEEL UPSET?

Is something happening that makes you or someone else feel unhappy, scared, or angry? Tell us about it.

You can write about it, draw a picture, or do both.

Write or draw here:

HOW CAN WE MAKE THINGS BETTER?

What do you think will help fix this problem? Let us know below.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We will work together to figure out what to do next. An adult from Melting Pot Theatre will help you with this part.

(Leave this part for us to fill out together later)

Your signature _____

STAFF MEMBER HELPING YOU

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Staff member: | |
| Position: | |
| Phone: | |
| Email: | |
| Format received: | |
| Date received: | |

THANK YOU

Thanks for telling us about what’s going on. We know it can be hard to speak up. Someone from Melting Pot Theatre will get in touch soon to talk more and help figure things out with you and your parent/carer, or someone else to support you.

We’re here to help.

COMPLAINT RECORD

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date: | |
| Your name: | |
| Your position: | |
| Complaint assigned to: | |
| How was the complaint received? | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> In person <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify |

Key parties

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Name of reporter: | |
| Name of child/young person involved in the complaint: | |
| Name of person making the complaint (if different to above): | |
| Details of the person the complaint was made about: | |

Reporter contact details:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Address: | |
| Phone number: | |
| Email: | |
| Preferred contact method: | |

Details relating to the child or young person:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Age: | |
| Gender: | <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| Do they identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| Are they from a culturally and linguistically diverse background? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please specify: |
| Are they in out-of-home care? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Do they have a disability? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please provide relevant details: |
| Do they have communication support needs? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes: |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the complainant offered an interpreter? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No • Was the complainant offered a communication assistant? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No • Other. Please provide relevant details: |
| Provide any relevant information relating to the complainant's preferred communication methods, support needs, and desire for involvement in the complaint-handling process: | |

Nature of the complaint

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Complaint description (accurately record the issues, concerns, details of any witnesses, as far as possible in the child/young person's own words): | |
| What outcome to the complaint is the complainant seeking? | |

Immediate risk considerations

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Details of any injuries and if the child/young person or others received medical attention: | |
| Does the complaint indicate the possibility of criminal conduct? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| Is a mandatory or voluntary child protection report required? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Does the complaint involve a reportable allegation/incident? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure |
| Is any immediate risk management action required? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Next steps: | |
| Signed (person completing form): | |
| Name: | |
| Date: | |

RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Scope

This document outlines the policy and process for screening applicants and candidates being considered for a role with Melting Pot Theatre.

These roles may include:

- employees (permanent and casual):
 - leadership and management roles
 - administration
 - education instructors and youth workshop facilitators
 - production and venue personnel (actors, stage management, chaperones, technical crew, ushers, etc.)
- volunteers
- contractors and sub-contractors
- tutors
- work experience students/interns/secondments
- any other individual in the organisation that may engage with children
- board members.

2. Introduction

Melting Pot Theatre's position is that a skilled, knowledgeable and experienced workforce is vital to the protection of children. It recognises that children are at an increased risk of harm and that rigorous recruitment processes will minimise risks to child safety.

Melting Pot Theatre is committed to prioritising child safety in all its recruitment and selection activities.

Even if a position does not involve working directly with children, Melting Pot Theatre will consider the access to any child that a position may provide. All personnel within Melting Pot Theatre are responsible for ensuring a culture of child safety and preventing any form of child abuse.

Melting Pot Theatre takes a zero-tolerance stance to all forms of child abuse and harm.

The following outlines the steps that Melting Pot Theatre will take to ensure that it recruits appropriate and qualified employees.

3. Job Description & Advertisement

Melting Pot Theatre will develop a job description that outlines the role, responsibilities, reporting lines and expectations. As part of this, the job description will include:

- the organisation's statement of commitment to child safety
- legislative and regulatory requirements such as Working With Children Checks, professional registration or qualification
- promotion that the organisation is a Child Safe Organisation including links to the organisation's Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct.

4. Key Selection Criteria

Melting Pot Theatre will develop key selection criteria to assess applicant's capacity to work with children.

The key selection criteria will vary depending on the role.

5. Interviewing Applicants

Melting Pot Theatre will seek child safety related information as part of ensuring that it recruits appropriate applicants, including the applicant's:

- motivation to work with children
- understanding of a child's physical and emotional needs and their rights
- experience and understanding of professional boundaries.

As part of this focus, Melting Pot Theatre will develop interview questions and/or conduct a follow-up (informal) interview to gain better insight into the applicant's background, experience and motivation to apply for the position.

6. Reference checks

Melting Pot Theatre is committed to ascertaining an accurate insight into the applicant's background and experience. As part of this, Melting Pot Theatre should:

- conduct at least two verbal reference checks with at least one referee from the applicant's current or most recent employer
- conduct a reference check with a referee who has personally observed the applicant's work or engagement with children.

The person conducting the reference check will have the requisite qualifications, skill level and experience to do so on the organisation's behalf. Anyone with responsibility for conducting reference checks should be confident, assertive and probing in their approach, have an ability to identify and explore 'red flag' answers, record responses accurately and escalate if required.

Some 'red flags' during a reference checking process include:

- referees who describe their relationship with the applicant differently to that portrayed by the applicant
- referees who do not know the applicant well or cannot comment on recent performance

- referees refusing to answer questions or withholding information
- information that differs from the applicant's account
- evasive or vague responses
- referees who cannot be contacted or wish to not be interviewed
- referees who were not informed or are unaware they would be required to provide a reference
- referees who hesitate or are reluctant to provide answers
- referees who would not re-hire the applicant (and may or may not provide a reason).

Where there are concerns with the applicant from a child safeguarding perspective, a panel will be convened that includes a member of the organisation's executive, convenor and a third employee of the organisation. The panel will outline whether the applicant should be offered a position and document the reasons.

7. International Police Checks

Melting Pot Theatre will conduct international police checks on individuals who have resided overseas for six months or more in the past five years (provided they were above 18 years of age at this time). This will enable Melting Pot Theatre to verify an applicant's criminal history as part of the screening process.

Melting Pot Theatre considers that international Police Checks are an important component of child-safe recruitment and selection where candidates have spent significant time outside of Australia, as other checks may not adequately identify concerning behaviour.

8. Review

This policy was approved _____ and last reviewed _____.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Melting Pot Theatre's Child Safe policies, procedures and documents have been developed in consultation with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian [Guide to the Child Safe Standards](#), [The Child Safe National Principles](#) and [Live Performance Australia's Guide to Child Safety in the Live Performance Industry](#).

USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

1. HUMAN RIGHTS

Commonwealth- This Act articulates the Australian Human Rights Commission's role and responsibilities. It gives effect to Australia's obligations including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as others.

[Australian Human Right Commission Act 1986 \(Cth\)](#)

2. CHILD SAFETY COMMISSIONERS AND GUARDIANS

Commonwealth

The [National Children's Commissioner](#) is an independent statutory office within the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The [Office of the e-Safety Commissioner](#) is an independent statutory office within the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

[Australian Human Rights Commission Amendment \(National Children's Commissioner\) Act 2012 \(Cth\)](#)

New South Wales

The [NSW Advocate for Children and Young People](#) is an independent statutory office reporting directly to the NSW Parliament.

The NSW Children's Guardian is an independent statutory office within the [NSW Office of the Children's Guardian](#) and reports directly to the Minister for Family and Community Services and to the NSW Parliament.

[Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014 \(NSW\)](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998 \(NSW\)](#)

3. DUTY OF CARE AND ORGANISATIONAL LIABILITY

New South Wales

An Act to amend the Civil Liability Act 2002 to make organisations liable in certain circumstances for child abuse perpetrated by persons associated with the organisation and vicariously liable for child abuse perpetrated by employees and persons akin to employees and to permit plaintiffs to bring civil child abuse proceedings against unincorporated organisations.

[Civil Liability Act 2002 \(Amendments 2018\) \(NSW\)](#)

4. CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

New South Wales

The Child Safe Scheme commenced in NSW on 1 February 2022. It means that certain child-related organisations must implement Child Safe Standards. The Child Safe Standards provide a framework for creating child safe organisations. They are designed to drive cultural change to create, maintain and improve child safe practices. When organisations implement the Standards, they build a culture where abuse of children is prevented, responded to and reported. [More information](#)

[Children's Guardian Act 2019 \(NSW\)](#)

5. FAILURE TO REPORT/FAILURE TO DISCLOSE

Commonwealth

Failing to protect child at risk of child sexual abuse offence applies to Commonwealth officers who know there is a substantial risk to a child (U18) by another person who has care or supervision responsibilities that would constitute a child sexual abuse offence and the Commonwealth officer fails to reduce or remove that risk.

Failing to report child sexual abuse offence applies to Commonwealth officers who have a reasonable suspicion or know of information to believe that a child (U18) has been engaged in conduct by another person who has care or supervision responsibilities that would constitute child sexual abuse and fails to disclose the information to authorities.

[Combatting Child Sexual Exploitation Legislation Amendment Act 2019 \(Cth\)](#)

273B.4 Failing to protect child at risk of child sexual abuse offence

273B.5 Failing to report child sexual abuse offence

New South Wales

An offence will be committed by an adult in NSW if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child has been abused i.e. sexual abuse, serious physical abuse and extreme neglect. A person will be deemed to have a reasonable excuse for not where:

- the victim is now an adult and does not want the offence reported
- the offence has already been reported to the Child Protection Helpline
- the person fears for their own safety or the safety of another person if they report.

[More information.](#)

[Criminal Legislation Amendment \(Child Sex Abuse\) Act 2018 \(NSW\)](#)

6. FAILURE TO PROTECT

New South Wales

Any adult working in an organisation doing child-related work will commit an offence if they know another adult working at the organisation poses a serious risk of abusing a child and they have the power to reduce or remove the risk and fail to do so. [More information.](#)

[Criminal Legislation Amendment \(Child Sex Abuse\) Act 2018 \(NSW\)](#)

7. VOLUNTARY REPORTING AND MANDATORY REPORTING

New South Wales

This legislation provides for voluntary reporting to an authoritative body if a child is being maltreated or requires care. If a person believing on reasonable grounds that a child is at risk of harm, may notify the Director-General of the Department of Community Services.

Mandatory reporting is the legislative requirement for selected classes of people to report suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities.

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998 \(NSW\)](#)

8. REPORTABLE CONDUCT

New South Wales

The scheme monitors how certain organisations ('relevant entities') investigate and report on types of conduct ('reportable allegations' or 'reportable convictions') made against their employees, volunteers or certain contractors who provide services to children. More information.

[Children's Guardian Act 2019 \(NSW\)](#)

9. GROOMING

Commonwealth

Under the Commonwealth Criminal Code, it is an offence for an adult to use a carriage service to procure sexual activity with a person who they believe to be under 16 (Section 464.26). Importantly, this offence does not require any sexual activity to actually occur, nor does it require the person communicated with to actually be under the age of 16.

Online grooming is the activity of adults making contact with young people online with the intention of initiating sexual contact with them in real life.

[Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995 \(Cth\)](#)

New South Wales

A broader grooming offence now covers any adult who offers a child material or financial benefit with the intention of making it easier to access the child for unlawful sexual activity.

A new offence of grooming an adult has been introduced to cover situations where a person provides material or financial benefit to an adult with the intention of making it easier to access a child for unlawful sexual activity. [More information](#).

[Criminal Legislation Amendment \(Child Sexual Abuse\) Act 2019 \(NSW\)](#)

10. AGE OF CONSENT

In NSW, the age of consent for sexual interactions is 16 years. [More information](#).

[Crimes Act 1900 \(NSW\) \(Section 66C\)](#)

11. Working With Children Checks

New South Wales

The Working With Children Check (WWCC) is a requirement for anyone who works or volunteers in child-related work in NSW. It involves a National Police Check (criminal history record check) and a review of reportable workplace misconduct. [More information](#).

[Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012 \(NSW\)](#)

12. INFORMATION SHARING

New South Wales

Chapter 16A of the Act prioritises the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of a child or young person over an individual's right to privacy. It allows government agencies and nongovernment organisations who are prescribed bodies to exchange information that relates to a child's or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing. This is whether or not the child or young person is known to the Department of Family and Community Services, and whether or not the person to whom the information relates give consents to the information exchange. It also requires prescribed bodies to take reasonable steps to coordinate decision making and the delivery of services regarding children and young people. [More information](#).

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998 \(NSW\)](#)

13. PRIVACY

Commonwealth

The Privacy Act 1988 was introduced to promote and protect the privacy of individuals and to regulate how Australian Government agencies and organisations with an annual turnover of more than \$3 million, and [some other organisations](#), handle [personal information](#). The Privacy Act includes 13 [Australian Privacy Principles](#) (APPs), which apply to some private sector organisations, as well as most Australian Government agencies. These are collectively referred to as 'APP entities'. [More information](#).

[Privacy Act 1998 \(Cth\)](#)

New South Wales

All jurisdictions must comply with the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 and relevant State and Territory Privacy Legislation. [More information.](#)

[Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998 \(NSW\)](#)

14. HOURS OF WORK FOR CHILDREN

New South Wales

In New South Wales, the maximum hours and hours during which children can work will vary depending on age and employment type. These hours must not impact compulsory schooling. For live performances, children under 6 years may only work for 4 hours per day between 9am-6pm. Children aged 6-8 may work up to 6 hours per day from 6am-10pm. Children aged 8-15 may work 8 hours a day between 6am-11pm. Rest breaks are also regulated. [More information.](#)

[Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection – Child Employment\) Regulation 2015 \(NSW\)](#)

DRAFT

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR MELTING POT THEATRE Page 1 of 7

| Interaction Settings | Identified Risks | Risk Likelihood | Risk Consequences | Risk Rating | Protective Strategies | Regular Review Actions |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AUDITIONS | | | | | | |
| Audition venues, Toilets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Inadequate supervision leading to bullying, harassment, or abuse. * Unattended children. * Unfamiliar venue increasing risks of children getting lost. * Unauthorised photography or filming of children. | Moderate-Frequent in-person activities increase risks. | Severe-Potential for emotional or physical harm. | High Likelihood = Moderate Consequence = Severe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Mandatory Working With Children Checks (WWCC). * Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers. * All children signed in and out by parents/guardians. * "Two Adult Rule": ensure visibility of all activities to at least two adults. * Photography and filming strictly prohibited without explicit parental consent. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Schedule regular reviews of strategies. * Update policies and procedures as laws or practices evolve. * Review incidents to improve responses. |

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR MELTING POT THEATRE Page 2 of 7

| Interaction Settings | Identified Risks | Risk Likelihood | Risk Consequences | Risk Rating | Protective Strategies | Regular Review Actions |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| REHEARSALS | | | | | | |
| Rehearsal spaces, Toilets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Inadequate supervision leading to bullying, harassment, or abuse. * Unattended children before, during or after rehearsals. * Invasion of privacy in dressing rooms. * Unsafe handling of props or costumes. * Unauthorised photography or filming of children. | Moderate-Frequent in-person activities increase risks. | Severe-Potential for emotional or physical harm. | High Likelihood = Moderate Consequence = Severe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Mandatory Working With Children Checks (WWCC). * Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers. * All children signed in and out by parents/guardians. * "Two Adult Rule": ensure visibility of all activities to at least two adults. * Photography and filming strictly prohibited without explicit parental consent. * Install privacy screens or designated spaces in dressing rooms for trying on costumes and dress rehearsals. * Locked storage for personal belongings. * Supervisors ensure all rehearsal spaces are safe and free of hazards. * Regular checks and maintenance of props and equipment. * Supervisors trained in conflict resolution and child-safe practices. * Second Last Parent Strategy to ensure children are supervised until pick-up. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Schedule regular reviews of strategies. * Update policies and procedures as laws or practices evolve. * Review incidents to improve responses. |

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR MELTING POT THEATRE Page 3 of 7

| Interaction Settings | Identified Risks | Risk Likelihood | Risk Consequences | Risk Rating | Protective Strategies | Regular Review Actions |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PERFORMANCES | | | | | | |
| Backstage areas, Dressing rooms, Performance venues, Toilets, Storage areas for props and costumes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Inadequate supervision leading to bullying, harassment, or abuse. * Unattended children. * Invasion of privacy in dressing rooms. * Unsafe handling of props or costumes. * Accidents in transport or on stage. * Unauthorised photography or filming of children. * Crowds increasing risk of lost children and unauthorised people in backstage areas. | Moderate-Frequent in-person activities increase risks. | Severe-Potential for emotional or physical harm. | High Likelihood = Moderate Consequence = Severe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Mandatory Working With Children Checks (WWCC). * Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers. * "Two Adult Rule": ensure visibility of all activities to at least two adults. * Photography and filming strictly prohibited without explicit parental consent. * Install privacy screens or designated spaces in dressing rooms. * Locked storage for personal belongings. * Supervisors ensure all performance spaces and backstage spaces are safe and free of hazards. * Regular checks and maintenance of props and equipment. * Supervisors trained in conflict resolution and child-safe practices. * Children wear "base costumes" to avoid dressing room privacy concerns. * Two adults accompany any child leaving the backstage area (e.g., toilet trips). * Emergency plans in place for evacuations or accidents. * Secure backstage entry with monitored access. * Second Last Parent Strategy to ensure children are supervised until pick-up. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Schedule regular reviews of strategies. * Update policies and procedures as laws or practices evolve. * Review incidents to improve responses. |

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR MELTING POT THEATRE Page 4 of 7

| Interaction Settings | Identified Risks | Risk Likelihood | Risk Consequences | Risk Rating | Protective Strategies | Regular Review Actions |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AFTER SHOW PARTY | | | | | | |
| Party Venue, Toilets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Inadequate supervision leading to bullying, harassment, or abuse. * Unattended children. * Unauthorised photography or filming of children. * Inadequate supervision of children during celebrations. * Unauthorised individuals accessing the venue. | Moderate-Frequent in-person activities increase risks. | Severe-Potential for emotional or physical harm. | High Likelihood = Moderate Consequence = Severe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Mandatory Working With Children Checks (WWCC). * Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers. * All children signed in and out by parents/guardians. * "Two Adult Rule": ensure visibility of all activities to at least two adults. * Photography and filming strictly prohibited without explicit parental consent. * Second Last Parent Strategy to ensure children are supervised until pick-up. * Clear boundaries and designated areas for children and families. * Sign-in and sign-out procedures for all children. * Alcohol-free areas to prioritise child safety. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Schedule regular reviews of strategies. * Update policies and procedures as laws or practices evolve. * Review incidents to improve responses. |

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR MELTING POT THEATRE Page 5 of 7

| Interaction Settings | Identified Risks | Risk Likelihood | Risk Consequences | Risk Rating | Protective Strategies | Regular Review Actions |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ONLINE | | | | | | |
| Organisation’s website, Social media pages, Online communication platforms (e.g., Zoom, email, messaging apps) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Inappropriate communication between adults and children. * Sharing identifiable personal information. * Cyberbullying. * Data breaches (website, social media, online registration). | High- Online communication is integral to operations. | Severe- Risks include reputational damage, privacy breaches, or psychological harm. | Critical Likelihood = High Consequence = Severe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Clear policies on photo/video permissions. * Regular online platform risk assessments. * Cyber safety education for staff, volunteers, and children. * Use of child-safe platforms for online communication. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Conduct annual risk management reviews. * Maintain detailed risk registers. * Regular communication with families about policies and responses. |

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| <p>SPECIFIC PROCEDURES</p> |
| <p>Drop-offs and Pick-ups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/guardians must: * Drop off children on time for each event and sign them in. * Collect children promptly at the end of each event and sign them out. * Ensure repeated late drop-offs or pick-ups do not occur (may result in child being dropped from the cast or role reassigned). • The Second Last Parent Strategy: * The second last parent to pick up a child must stay with the two supervising adults until the last child is collected. |
| <p>Toilet Etiquette</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two adults are required to accompany any child needing to use the toilet. • Supervisors stand outside the toilet area to ensure privacy and safety. |
| <p>Dressing Room Etiquette</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All performers must arrive in a "base costume." • No dressing or undressing in the rehearsal or performance space. • Supervisors may assist with character costumes but must follow child-safe practices. • Dressing rooms have designated supervisors to monitor and enforce rules. |
| <p>Makeup/Hair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makeup artists/Hair stylists and assistants must hold current WWCC. • At least two adults must be present in the makeup/hair area at all times. • Parents must provide prior consent for makeup application. |
| <p>Supper Room Exit Door</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During rehearsals and performances the Supper Room exit door is to be locked from the outside, with signage applied to the outside "No Entry" and on the inside another sign "Unless, in an Emergency Situation, This door is not to be opened". All parents/guardians and volunteers are to be orientated on this policy as are all cast members. • An adult should be stationed inside the outer door of the Supper Room when the Supper Room is in use to ensure it remains closed. |
| <p>Supervision During Performances</p> <p>When not on stage, children must remain in supervised groups at all times, under the supervision of at least 2 (two) adults who must have a Working With Children Clearance.</p> |

REGULAR REVIEW PROCESS

- The Child Safety Officer (or Melting Pot Theatre convenor) will report on compliance to the Policies, Procedures and Documents at the completion of each production and if requested by the BCA Committee.
- Policies and procedures will be reviewed annually by Melting Pot Theatre executive team and child supervisors.
- Review meetings will:
 - * Incorporate feedback from parents, supervisors, and participants.
 - * Address any incidents that occurred to improve responses and strategies.
 - * Ensure compliance with the 10 NSW Child Safe Standards.

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