

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Drafted by	Michelle Forbes	Approved by Board on	13/8/18
Responsible person	Michelle Forbes	Scheduled review date	TBC (within 3 years)

INTRODUCTION

Tasmanian Youth Orchestra (TYO) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all its participants with a special commitment to Participants aged under 18 in recognition of the moral and legal responsibility it has for young people involved in its programs.

PURPOSE

This Policy is designed to protect all young people at TYO, particularly children aged under 18 years of age, from harm in relation to TYO activities. We aim to provide and cultivate a safe and supportive culture at TYO and this document serves as an outline of responsibilities and expectations relating to interaction with children and identifies appropriate course of action to protect children in danger.

The purpose of this Policy is:

1. To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within TYO.
2. To work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
3. To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse, and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse when it occurs.
4. To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation.
5. To provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/contractors forbidding any such abuse.
6. To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

DEFINITIONS

“**Staff**” refers to all TYO staff, paid and unpaid, including but not limited to administrative staff, conductors, tutors, contractors, volunteers and Board members. “**Parents**” includes parents and guardians of participants. “**Child**” refers to enrolled participants of TYO programs and under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child.

Child Abuse includes:

1. Any act committed against a child involving:
 - a. A sexual offence; or
 - b. An offence under section 498(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and
2. The infliction on a child of:
 - a. Physical violence; or
 - b. Serious emotional or psychological harm; and
3. Serious neglect of a child.

POLICY

1. TYO is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children involved in its programs.
2. Child protection is a shared responsibility between TYO, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, volunteers, and members of the TYO community.
3. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.
4. TYO has zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working at TYO is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.
5. TYO will consider the opinions of children to develop child protection policies.

6. TYO supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers. TYO is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.
7. If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.
8. Any staff member, volunteer or contractor who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the appropriate child protection service or the police. They should also advise the General Manager about their concern.

CULTURE OF SAFETY

TYO works to create and embed a child-safe culture by:

1. Taking a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Implementing child safety policies and procedures that support ongoing assessment and mitigation of risk;
3. Valuing and empowering children to participate in decisions that affect their lives;
4. Fostering a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children;
5. Respecting diversity in cultures and child-rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
6. Providing written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards and between children;
7. Engaging only the most suitable people to work with children, and having high-quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
8. Ensuring children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
9. Reporting suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
10. Sharing information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
11. Valuing the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of TYO has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Protection Code of Conduct are in place. As part of TYO's culture, the Board will prioritise the safety of children as the primary consideration in the operations of the organisation.

1. The General Manager of TYO is responsible for:
 - Ensuring all Children understand that they are respected and should feel safe at TYO activities, including opportunities to report any abuse – perceived, observed, or received.
 - Ensuring that reports of child abuse are appropriately dealt with and investigated;
 - Undertaking appropriate checks and screening when considering the appointment of any staff, contractor, volunteer, Board member, or other person who interacts with TYO participants.
 - Ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
 - Ensuring that all adults within the TYO community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;
 - Ensuring that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
 - Providing support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.
 - Ensuring that an appropriate behavioural code of conduct is clearly outlined and adopted by all participants to prevent participant-on-participant abuse.

2. All staff must ensure that they:
 - Promote child safety at all times;
 - Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate/minimise any risk to the extent possible;
 - Educate direct reports, contractors and volunteers about the prevention and detection of child abuse; and
 - Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.
 - Are familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.
3. All staff/volunteers/contractors share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:
 - Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and TYO's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
 - Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and/or the state-based child protection service) and fulfil any individual mandatory reporting obligations;
 - Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to the General Manager and, if it is the General Manager involved in the suspicion, to a member of the TYO Board);
 - Follow up with the TYO Board if they feel that the matter has not been handled appropriately by the General Manager; and
 - Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.
4. All TYO Participants share in the responsibility for maintaining their own safety, in accordance with the culture and safeguards TYO provides, and must:
 - Accept and abide by the code of conduct as a participant of any TYO program; and
 - Respect their fellow participants, TYO staff and personnel; and
 - Abide by all reasonable requests from TYO representatives to ensure they do not put themselves in a position of risk during TYO activities; and
 - Utilise reporting procedures wherever they feel the need.