

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Date: 26 June 2023

Revision: 0

1. **Rationale**

Waterdale Theatre Inc. (“we” or “us”) is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation.

2. **Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to outline Waterdale’s commitment to child safety and wellbeing and to ensure appropriate standards of behaviour towards children and young people.

3. **Scope**

This policy applies to all members of Waterdale. This includes (without limitation) members of the Waterdale committee, production team, crew, cast and any other volunteers or members of the Waterdale community.

4. **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**

Waterdale is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families. Waterdale is committed to providing an environment where all children and young people are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views are respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Waterdale has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and/or harm and will take all reasonable steps to identify and manage any risks of abuse or harm to children and young people.

5. **Keeping children and young people safe from abuse and harm**

We will:

- a. Not engage in any form of child abuse or harm (including physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse, harm or neglect);
- b. Avoid any form of physical punishment or degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating treatment;
- c. Ensure that physical contact is appropriate, non-intrusive and not sexual in nature;
- d. Avoid developing relationships with children and young people that might be construed as favouritism or grooming;
- e. Use respectful language and tone when communicating with children and young people and avoid using language that is sexual, discriminatory and/or racist in nature, or which harms, discourages, frightens or humiliates children and young people; and

- f. Ensure that racism is identified, appropriately addressed and not tolerated.

6. Creating a physically and psychologically safe environment

We will:

- a. Ensure that an adult is never alone with a child or young person, and they do not seek to make contact with a child or young person that places them at risk of abuse or harm;
- b. Ensure that children and young people are appropriately supervised at all times;
- c. Use fair, respectful and developmentally appropriate strategies to guide the behaviour of children and young people in a positive manner;
- d. Ensure that photographs and/or video of children and young people are taken with the consent of parents and/or guardians;
- e. Use social media and digital communication in a manner that does not exploit or place children and young people at risk;
- f. Not consume alcohol or illicit drugs before or while engaging in the care of children and young people or being adversely affected by prescription medication;
- g. Not supply alcohol and drugs to children and young people; and
- h. Immediately notify a member of the Waterdale Committee if charged or convicted with a criminal offence.

7. Taking action to safeguard children and young people

We will:

- a. Listen to and respond to the concerns of children and young people in relation to their safety and/or wellbeing;
- b. Report any child safety concerns, reports or disclosures to relevant statutory child protection authorities (e.g. Child Protection (DHHS), Victoria Police);
- c. Empower families to participate in decisions affecting their child;
- d. Engage with families about our child safe approach;
- e. Ensure that all members of the committee, production team, crew, cast and other volunteers as appropriate, have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks;

8. Supporting cultural safety and inclusion

We will:

- a. Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people;
- b. Support the inclusion of children and young people with a disability, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, same-sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse children and young people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people; and
- c. Encourage and actively support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.

9. Promoting respectful relationships

We will:

- a. Engage in positive and respectful interactions with children and young people which uphold their rights and dignity; and
- b. Listen to and respect the views of children and young people.

10. Child safety or wellbeing concerns

The President (Fiona Adams) is the first point of contact for any child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

The President can be contacted via:

Email: 0434 822 111

Phone number: fiona.adams@waterdale.org.au

11. Communication of this Policy

This Policy will be made available on the Waterdale website - <https://www.waterdale.org.au/>

Date for review: June 2024
