

SOUTHERN DANCE FESTIVAL: CHILD SAFETY COMPLIANCE PACK

This comprehensive document contains the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and the Official Incident Report Form.

Ratified by the Committee to ensure full compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the Social Services Regulator 16th August 2026

PART 1: CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

1. Commitment to Child Safety

Southern Dance Festival is committed to child safety.

We will endeavour to ensure that children feel safe and always protected at our Festival.

We are committed to the active participation and empowerment of all children regardless of ability, disability, or background.

We support, respect, and value all children and have zero tolerance for discrimination, racism, or child abuse.

Southern Dance Festival is committed to identifying, managing, and eliminating factors that may put children at risk across both physical and digital/online environments.

All committee members, volunteers, and third-party suppliers must comply with this policy, which includes maintaining a validated Working with Children Check (WWCC).

- **Students:** Please tell your teacher, a volunteer, or a committee member if you feel unhappy, unsafe, or uncomfortable at any time about something someone says or does at this event.
- **Teachers & Parents:** Please immediately notify a Southern Dance Festival Committee member if you have any concerns regarding child safety or wellbeing at this event.

2. Purpose and Scope

This Policy outlines how Southern Dance Festival prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children, meets its statutory "positive duty" requirements under Victorian law, and defines the explicit steps taken to maintain a child-safe culture.

This policy applies to all Committee members, volunteers, teachers, children, spectators, third-party suppliers (including photographers and videographers), and any other individuals attending or involved with Southern Dance Festival events.

3. Definitions

- **Committee:** Means the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and all general committee members of Southern Dance Festival Inc.
- **Social Services Regulator:** The independent statutory authority responsible for overseeing and enforcing compliance with the Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme in Victoria.
- **Child Abuse:** Includes sexual offences, grooming offences under section 49M(1) of the *Crimes Act 1958*(Vic), physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, and serious neglect of a child.
- **Harm:** Damage to the health, safety, or wellbeing of a child, arising from a single act, event, or cumulative series of events over time.
- **Child/Children:** Any person under the age of 18 years.

4. Role of the Committee

The Committee will champion and model a child-safe culture, ensuring that festival volunteers are well-briefed and aware of their obligations.

The Committee will conduct an annual comprehensive review of its child-safe practices using feedback, near-miss incident logs, and event complaints to continuously improve safety frameworks.

5. Children's Empowerment and Participation

Southern Dance Festival actively seeks feedback from youth participants to shape a supportive environment.

We do not tolerate bullying, peer-on-peer abuse, or exclusionary behaviour between children, and will act immediately if such behaviour occurs.

6. Parents, Families, and Carers

We recognize that families are primary partners in child safety. Southern Dance Festival provides clear transparency by publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and our Code of Conduct on our official website and the Mycomp HQ rules infrastructure.

7. Aboriginal Cultural Safety and Diversity

In alignment with Victorian Child Safe Standard 1, Southern Dance Festival commits to establishing a culturally safe environment where the unique rights and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are respected, valued, and proactively supported.

We value equity for all children and maintain zero tolerance for racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, or cultural discrimination. We proactively support the safety and inclusion of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- Children with disabilities
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- LGBTIQ+ children and young people

8. Online and Digital Environment Safety

To manage modern risks associated with digital media at public dance events, Southern Dance Festival implements the following:

- **Authorized Media Only:** Only officially vetted third-party media suppliers with valid WWCC credentials may capture images or videos of performers on stage.
- **Dressing Room Privacy:** The use of smartphones, cameras, or recording equipment of any kind inside dressing rooms to capture photo or video is strictly prohibited.
- **Content Distribution:** Any official live-streaming or online media publication will respect privacy boundaries and respond instantly to parental take-down requests.

9. Screening and Volunteers

All Committee members, operational staff, and rostered volunteers must hold a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC).

Original physical cards or digital verifications via the **Services Victoria App** must be verified by a Committee representative before duties commence.

10. Complaints, Reporting, and Record Keeping

- **Immediate Danger:** If a child is deemed to be at immediate risk of harm, call **000** immediately.
- **Reporting Chain:** All safety complaints, disclosures, or suspicions must be brought directly to a Committee Member. The Committee is responsible for managing reportable conduct allegations and notifying the **Social Services Regulator** where required by law. Any general complaints should be immediately escalated to the Committee Executive for consultation and resolution.
- **Documentation:** All reported incidents, near misses, or disclosures will be recorded formally using the Incident Report Form (found below) and stored securely by the Committee Secretary to maintain strict confidentiality.

PART 2: CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct outlines the behavioural boundaries for all adults interacting with children at Southern Dance Festival events.

Acceptable Behaviours

All committee members, volunteers, and suppliers must:

- Ensure that another adult is present or within clear line of sight when working with a child (the "two-adult rule").
- Respect the privacy of dressing areas; always knock loudly and announce yourself before entering any dressing or changing space.
- Use encouraging, positive, and age-appropriate language when speaking with or around children.
- Listen to children, take their safety concerns seriously, and report any disclosures immediately using the festival protocol.
- Always wear official festival identification (badges or wristbands) visibly.

Unacceptable Behaviours

All committee members, volunteers, and suppliers must **NOT**:

- Engage in any form of physical, verbal, or emotional abuse, bullying, or discrimination.
- Spend time alone with a child behind closed doors or in isolated areas of the venue.
- Handle or manage a child's personal property, costumes, or clothing without explicit permission or a parent present.
- Take personal photos or videos of children on private smartphones or recording devices.
- Communicate with youth participants via private social media channels or personal phone numbers outside festival operations.
- Consume alcohol or illicit substances while on duty or present at the venue.

PART 3: CHILD SAFETY INCIDENT REPORT FORM

This form is to be completed immediately following any child safety incident, near-miss, disclosure, or complaint. Once completed, hand this directly to the Committee Secretary.

1. Administrative Details

- **Date of Report:** ____ / ____ / 20__
- **Time of Report:** ____:____ AM / PM
- **Name of Person Completing Form:** _____
- **Role at Festival (e.g., Volunteer, Teacher):** _____
- **Contact Number:** _____

2. Incident Details

- **Date of Incident:** ____ / ____ / 20__
- **Time of Incident:** ____:____ AM / PM
- **Specific Location in Venue (e.g., Main Stage Wing, Dressing Room B):** _____

3. Persons Involved

- **Child's Name (if applicable):** _____
- **Child's Age / Studio Name:** _____
- **Name of Subject of Complaint/Allegation (if applicable):** _____
- **Witness Name(s) and Contact Details:** _____

4. Description of Incident / Disclosure

Please provide a factual, objective account of what happened, what was seen, or what was disclosed. Use the child's exact words where possible. Do not include personal opinions or assumptions.

5. Immediate Action Taken

- ☐ Emergency Services contacted? (000) -> **Time called:** ____:____ AM / PM
- ☐ Parent / Guardian notified? -> **Time notified:** ____:____ AM / PM
- ☐ Involved parties separated within the venue to ensure immediate safety.
- ☐ First aid administered? (If yes, describe): _____

6. Signatures

- **Signature of Submitting Person:** _____
- **Signature of Receiving Committee Member:** _____

7. Office Use Only (Committee Follow-up)

- **Date reviewed by Executive Committee:** ____ / ____ / 20__
- **Notification required to Social Services Regulator?** ☐ Yes ☐ No
- **Action taken / Resolution notes:** _____