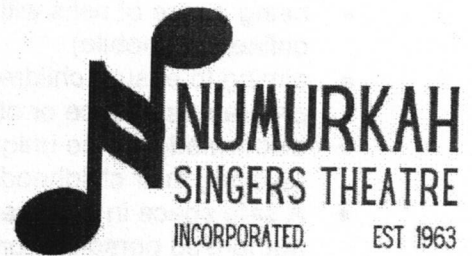


CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT



Numurkah Singers Theatre Inc. (NSTI) provides an open, safe, and friendly environment for all children. This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for adults toward children. NSTI aims to protect children and reduce any possibility that abuse or harm could occur. The Code provides guidance to all NSTI members on how best to support children and prevent or better manage difficult situations. The welfare of children entrusted to our care is a top priority and NSTI has zero tolerance for child abuse or racism.

Aim

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

- leadership and management roles
- production and venue personnel (actors, stage management, supervisors, technical crew, ushers, etc.)
- any other individual in the organisation that may deal with children

Please note: In this Code, the term "member" is used to cover all persons occupying any position listed above. A child includes children and young people up to the age of 19 (unless otherwise specified).

Your responsibilities

NSTI's members 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 parent/guardians, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know
- being aware of risks with communication and behaviour between members and children (including online and mobile)

- being aware of risks with communication and behaviour child to child (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
- A safe space in the Green Room is to be maintained with restricted access to authorised personnel only for the duration of the performance.
- if by chance any children are found unsupervised, directing and accompanying them to the Child Safety Supervisors or Child Safety Officer immediately
- reporting any breaches of these standards of behaviour to the Child Safety Officer or NSTI President promptly.

NSTI 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/guardian, and Production Manager or NSTI Secretary.
- share personal information or images of children on social media without informed consent from the child (if 15 years of age or older), parent/guardian, and Production Manager or Secretary.
- 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 Child Safety Supervisor, or approved to do so by a Supervisor or Child Safety Officer)
- allow children to be present in crew areas (e.g. side stage areas during performances) unless they are under direct supervision of a Child Safety Supervisor and are waiting to walk onto stage
- 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
- 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 producing a dramatic reaction
- develop any 'special' relationships with children outside of the professional relationship or arrange contact with children outside of NSTI 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 NSTI's Child Safe Reporting Procedure, including means to take disciplinary action if necessary.

Additional guidance on professional conduct

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

Parent/guardians are responsible for their children before and after official rehearsal and/or performance times unless prior arrangements are made in writing. All children will be expected to be signed in on the sign in sheet upon arrival at NSTI premises by a parent/guardian (children over the age of 16 may sign themselves in). This is for safety reasons and allows the Child Safety Supervisors an accurate account of who is present in the event of an emergency. Children will also be required to be signed out at the end of a rehearsal or performance.

Bathrooms/dressing room procedures

NSTI's procedures for supervising and monitoring children and young people's use of a bathroom whilst in NSTI's care include:

- Members 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 NSTI's Child Safety Supervisors.
- 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. an 8-year-old and 18-year-old).
- Require children and young people to ask permission to use the bathroom.
- Ensure members 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:

- putting on a child's makeup
- assisting a child to get dressed in costume.

Where such circumstances occur, NSTI members should:

- operate where there is a line of sight to NSTI Child Safety Supervisors, other adults and young people (e.g. keeping the door open, operating in a room with other members)
- seek guidance from NSTI's Child Safety Officer regarding the appropriateness and necessity to operate one-on-one with a child/young person.

Transporting children or young people

NSTI does not provide routine transport for children unless specifically arranged for productions or events. Any transport provided must have parent/guardian consent in writing. A minimum of two people should be present in the vehicle wherever possible. While NSTI does not encourage members 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 a NSTI member's car if:

- there is more than one child/young person in the car throughout the journey
- written (or emailed) permission has been obtained from the child/young person's parent/guardian for each journey or set of journeys
- written (or emailed) permission has been obtained from the Child Safety Officer or NSTI President for each journey or set of journeys
- the vehicle has comprehensive insurance and driver has a full unrestricted licence

Children and young people may be transported by the Child Safety supervisor (or member of the committee) in exceptional circumstances, such as a parent failing to pick up their child/young person late at night. When this occurs, the Supervisor should, obtain consent from the Child Safety Officer and child's parent/guardian prior to providing transport. When Supervisors travel in a one-on-one setting, it is advisable that the child/young person sits in the back seat of the car.

Working with Children Check

In conjunction with the Victorian *Working with Children Act 2005*, the NSTI committee has made the decision that all volunteers (e.g. ushers) and members involved in any NSTI activity, event, production and program must have a valid Working with Children's Check or equivalent (e.g. VIT). All members must provide their Working with Children Check so that a copy can be taken and must list NSTI as an organisation on their file. Sworn Police Officers and Victorian Institute of Teaching members who do not wish to provide their Police or VIT Identification, will require a Working with Children Check.

Breaches of the Code

All NSTI members are required to report any breaches of this Code to NSTI's Child Safety Officer and/or President. Members who breach this Code may be subject to disciplinary action which may result in suspension, termination of membership, or referral to authorities. Breaches will be dealt with under the Numurkah Singers Theatre Inc. Model Rules.

In instances where any suspicion, disclosure, or allegation of harm or abuse involving a child, the concern must be taken seriously and reported immediately NSTI's Child Safety Officer, the matter will be managed in accordance with NSTI's Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Reporting Procedure. No person shall attempt to investigate allegations themselves.

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 ____/____/____

Document Control

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