

# COUNT ME IN DANCE COMPETITION

## Child Safe Policy

**Revised: 10 March 2021**

As a condition of participation in the Count Me In Dance Competition (CMIDC), dancers, their teachers, parents/guardians and spectators agree to abide by all the policies set forth by the competition organisers.

In certain circumstances, when it is in the best interest of the competition or one or more dancers, it may be necessary for the competition organisers and/or their representatives to terminate a dancers' entry. Termination is at the sole discretion of the competition organisers and/or their representatives, without notice and may be effective immediately.

Where appropriate every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation before terminating any dancer, providing reason(s) for termination.

These may include however are not limited to:

- Disruptive or dangerous behaviour by dancers or their teachers/parents/guardians
- Abuse of other children, staff, or property
- Inability of CMIDC In and/or its representatives to meet the child's needs

Any termination is not subject to appeal by Law. Upon termination refunds will not be provided for any fees paid.

CMIDC believes that we are part of community of care. While working with children to develop their skills and appreciation of dance in a positive supportive environment, we are committed to their safety and wellbeing. CMIDC representatives will treat children and young people with respect and understanding at all times.

**\*\*Policies and Procedures of CMIDC may be updated or amended from time to time without notice\*\***

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## 1. Purpose

This Policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of Count Me In Dance Competition (CMIDC) to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments.

## 2. Context

This Policy reflects our commitment to provide a safe environment where every person has the right to be treated with respect and is safe and protected from harm.

It complies with our obligations under the *Children's and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, child safe environments and Working With Children Check (WWCC) for people working with children.

It also complies with the Child safe environments: Principles of good practice and Child safe environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the WWCC of employees and volunteers who work with children issued by the Chief Executive.

## 3. Scope

This Policy, from the date of endorsement, applies to all people involved in the competition, including:

- dancers
- employees (permanent or casual)
- volunteers
- contractors
- sub-contractors
- indirect service providers
- studio teachers and/or their representatives
- any other individual involved in this organisation/competition

## 4. Definitions

In this Policy, unless stipulated to the contrary:

**at risk<sup>1</sup>** is taken to mean:

- (a) the child or young person has suffered from harm;
- (b) there is a likelihood that the child or young person will suffer harm;
- (c) there is a likelihood that the child or young person will be removed from the State for an unlawful act or procedure to be undertaken;
- (d) the parents or guardian of the child or young person are unable or unwilling to care for them;
- (e) the child or young person is of no fixed address.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 18, *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*

**Chief Executive** means the Chief Executive of the administrative unit of the Public Services specified by the Minister by notice in the Gazette.

**child or young person** means a person who is under 18 years of age (for the purpose of this Policy, a child or young person can be referenced as either child, children and/or young person);

**dancer** means any child or young person entered as a participant in the dance competition

**guardian** means the guardian or guardians of the child or young person as defined above;

**harm<sup>2</sup>** means:

- (a) Physical harm or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission) and, without limiting the generality of this subsection, includes such harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.
- (b) Psychological harm does not include emotional reactions such as distress, grief, fear or anger that are a response to the ordinary vicissitudes of life.

**parent**, of a child or young person includes:

- (a) a step-parent of the child or young person; and
- (b) a person who stands *in loco parentis* to the child or young person

**organiser** means Count Me In Dance Competition's principal organisers and/or their representatives;

**principal organisers** means the creators of CMIDC and/or their designated representatives;

**spectators** means any individual attending the competition for the purpose of watching the competition;

**teacher** means any individual employed (whether paid or volunteer) as a dance teacher, representing a competitor, dance group or studio;

**working with children check** means a working with child check under the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*.

## 5. Commitment to Child Safety

All children who participate in CMIDC have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our services and the welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all children are valued and feel safe.

## 6. Children's Participation

CMIDC encourages and respects the views of children and young people who access our services. We listen to and act upon any concerns that children, young people or their families raise with us. We teach children what they can do if they feel unsafe.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 17, *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*

We ensure that children, young people and their families and dance studios know their rights and how to access the complaints procedures available to them.

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

## **7. Recruitment Practices**

CMIDC takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We employ a range of screening measures and apply best practice standards in the screening and recruitment of employees and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all employees.

We conduct WWCC assessments for people working with children as required for anyone within our organisation that:

- has regular contact with children and is not directly supervised at all times
- works in close proximity to children on a regular basis and is not directly supervised at all times; or
- supervises or manages persons who:
  - have regular contact with children or
  - work in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or
  - has access to sensitive records relating to children or young people.

Exemptions from this requirement may apply in some circumstances.

We ensure that WWCC information is dealt with in accordance with the Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the WWCC of employees and volunteers who work with children, issued pursuant to *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*.

## **8. Support for Employees and Volunteers**

CMIDC seeks to attract and retain the best employees and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We ensure that employees/volunteers who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their capacity is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment.

Strategies we have implemented include:

- All new employees undergo induction and receive a copy of our Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct.
- All employees receive regular supervision sessions that include a focus on ongoing learning about child protection and other matters that affect children and young people.
- Continual guidance and updated information in regards to dance training.

## **9. Reporting and Responding to Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

CMIDC will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

All employees and volunteers understand their obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child is at risk of harm.

- Child Safe Environment: Guidelines for mandated notifiers and information for organisations (available to view or download from <https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse/mandated-notifiers-and-their-role>)
- Department for Child Protection reporting child abuse: <https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse/report-child-abuse-or-neglect>
- Trauma Responsive Practice in Education course provided by the Australian Childhood Foundation: [www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

We ensure that support is also available for the employee making the report, particularly where an ongoing service is provided to the child, young person and their family.

### **9.1 Supporting children, young people and their families**

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. CMIDC recognises that even where a report is made, we may still have a role in supporting the child or young person. This support may include:

- Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
- Displaying information about services that can assist children and their families (such as the Kids Helpline and Youth Healthline) in areas accessed by children and their families.

### **9.2 Dealing with reports or concerns relating to the actions of an employee or volunteer of our organisation**

In addition to making a report to the Child Abuse Report Line, employees and volunteers must also report to CMIDC principal organisers if reasonable suspicion is formed that a child is at risk of harm by any individual attending or participating in our dance competition.

In response to any report concerning a member, employee or volunteer of this organisation, organisers may determine to take disciplinary action.

Other protective actions may also be introduced to ensure the safety of children and young people within our organisation.

## **10. Strategies to Minimise Risk**

- **Behaviour & Back Stage**  
All backstage helpers are required to have a current Working With Children Check. CMIDC will ask to see these clearances before entering dressing rooms or back stage areas. If a current WWCC cannot be produced, individuals will be unable to go back stage on the day of competitions.

Due to limited back stage areas, we ask dancers only have 1 teacher or assistant side stage with them.

- **Checking In**  
It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to ensure that individual children are checked in at least 1 hour before scheduled dance times.

It is the teachers responsibility to ensure Troupes are also checked in 1 hour before the session is due to start.

Children are only allowed to go home with a nominated person for whom permission has been given to collect the child/children.

- **Taking images of children**  
Due to child protection laws and privacy issues, there is strictly NO PHOTOGRAPHY or VIDEOING of any kind allowed in the theatre. Any evidence of individuals taking photos or videos of children whilst dancing will result in competitors being disqualified.

CMIDC will have an approved photographer at each event. Photos of the dancers during performances may be used for advertising and or social media – if parents/guardians have consented to such.

#### **Supervision of children**

Children MUST be fully supervised at all times by either a parent/guardian, dance teacher or other dance group/studio representative, in all areas whilst in attendance at any competition, both inside and outside of the competition location.

- **Protecting privacy and confidentiality**  
Information pertaining to dancers and/or their studios/families, whether financial, personal, or confidential, is never to be discussed with anyone other than competition principal organisers. As a condition of employment, staff must and hereby do agree that all such information is the exclusive property of CMIDC and that they will not at any time disclose to anyone any such information, whether or not it has been specifically designated as "confidential." If they are ever unsure of their obligations regarding this Policy, it is their responsibility to consult with the organisers for clarification.
- **Procedures for dealing with situations where a member is being investigated for, or is charged with, a serious criminal offence**  
See Code of Conduct below.

### **11. Harassment/bullying**

CMIDC opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination, exclusion and bullying. We take this issue very seriously and encourage anyone who believes that they, or another person or dancer, has been harassed, discriminated against, excluded intentionally or bullied to raise this issue with principal organisers.

### **12. Communication**

CMIDC will ensure that everyone to whom this Policy applies has access to read the policy.

By entering into CMIDC it is taken that parents/guardians and dance groups/studios/teachers have read and will abide by our Child Safe Policy.

**13. Related Policies and Procedures**

- CMIDC Staff and volunteer recruitment procedures, including those relating to conducting Working With Children Checks (Appendix 1)
- CMIDC Child Protection guidelines for employees and volunteers (Appendix 2)
- CMIDC Risk Register (Appendix 3)
- CMIDC COVID 19 Safety Plans, Procedures & Policies (Appendix 4)



## **Appendix 1: Conducting Working With Children Assessments**

### **Conducting Working with Children Checks**

#### **Assessments required for prescribed positions**

All employees and volunteers of CMIDC who occupy a prescribed position (as set out under *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*) are required to undergo an assessment known as a Working With Children Check (WWCC) once every five years<sup>3</sup>.

WWCC are also required prior to the appointment of new employees or members to prescribed positions.

Exemptions from this requirement may apply in some circumstances (see below). However, CMIDC retains the discretion to decide on a case-by-case basis whether any relevant exemptions will be exercised.

This requirement applies to all employees who regularly work with or around children or young persons in an unsupervised capacity or have access to prescribed records relating to children.

#### **Procedure for conducting a WWCC**

A current Letter of Clearance (WWCC) from the Department for Human Services (DHS) Screening Unit is a precondition of engagement of employees and volunteers who work in a prescribed position at CMIDC. The cost of obtaining a Letter of Clearance will be negotiated between CMIDC and the employee or volunteer.

You can use your current, valid DHS/DCSI child-related employment screening until it expires (three year validity). When it is time to renew, (within up to six months before your current screening expiry) you must apply for a Working with Children Check with a five year validity.

Prior to the appointment of a new employee/volunteer and then at five yearly intervals, CMIDC will direct the employee/volunteer to obtain a Letter of Clearance from the Screening Unit as evidence that the applicant does not pose an increased risk of harm to children. Letters of Clearance are obtained for all current employees/volunteers who are working with children once every five years.

Information relating to a person's WWCC process is managed securely and confidentially and in accordance with the Child Safe Environments: Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteers who work with children issued pursuant to *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*.

#### **Other evidence**

Where appropriate, CMIDC may utilise a number of forms of evidence (obtained within the last three years) to assess a person's suitability to work with children.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- A Letter of Clearance to work with children from the DHS Screening Unit formerly known as a DCSI Clearance until it expires

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<sup>3</sup> *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*

- A Letter of Clearance to work with children from the DCSI Screening Unit now known as a Working with Children Check
- A valid and current interstate Working with Children Check.

Acceptance of other forms of evidence is at the discretion of CMIDC and is subject to the person completing a 100-point check to confirm the true identity of the applicant.

CMIDC may also at its discretion seek a statutory declaration for any employee(s) or volunteer(s) who have been citizens or permanent residents of a country other than Australia since turning 18 years of age.

### **Exemptions**

The following organisations, persons and positions are exempt.

- a) an organisation that provides equipment, food or venues for children's parties or events and does not provide any other services;
- b) a person who undertakes work on a voluntary basis to provide a service in his or her capacity as a parent or guardian of a child who is ordinarily provided with the service;
- c) a person who undertakes work on a voluntary basis to provide a service and who is under 18 years of age;
- d) a person who undertakes work in the course of, or for the purposes of, an event or activity that takes place over a period of not more than 10 consecutive days or not more than 1 day in any month;
- e) a person appointed as a police officer;
- f) a person who is a registered teacher (within the meaning of the Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004);
- g) a person who undertakes, or a position that only involves, work that is not for the exclusive benefit of children and is not provided to any child on an individual basis;
- h) a position that only involves prescribed functions because children are employed or engaged to work as volunteers by the person occupying the position or by that person's employer;
- i) a position in which all work involving children is undertaken in the presence of the children's parents or guardians and in which there is ordinarily no physical contact with the children.

**Appendix 2:**  
**Child Protection Guidelines for Employees and Volunteers**

**Child Protection guidelines for employees and volunteers of CMIDC**

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for employees and volunteers of this organisation.

All employees and volunteers of this organisation are responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of children and young people by:

- Ensuring the safety and welfare of the child or young person is paramount at all times.
- Treating all children and young people with dignity, equality and respect.
- Adhering to this organisation's Child Safe Policy at all times.
- Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people within the organisation.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people within the organisation.
- Ensuring children and young people understand their rights and explaining to the child in age-appropriate language what they can expect when participating in a service, activity or program offered by the organisation.
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian.
- Notifying the **Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78** as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child or young person is at risk of harm.

Employees/volunteers will not:

- Take part in any unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person.
- Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.
- Develop any 'special' relationships with children or young people outside of the professional relationship.

### Appendix 3: Risk Register

Child abuse affects the whole community, not just the child and family involved.

Child abuse is anything which individuals, institutions or processes do (or fail to do) which directly or indirectly harms children in the 'here and now' and /or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development into adulthood.

Stopping child abuse starts with us. Everyone including parents and guardians, professionals, neighbours, workmates, families and friends, are needed to protect children and young people in our communities.

If you have any concerns about the Child Protection Policy and Risk Management Strategy please contact the competition organiser, Emmalee Jones on 0424 828 622

Evaluation of these strategies and the development of additional strategies to minimise and control risks to children and young people occur as part of our ongoing risk management process.

Any reference to the term 'parent' in this risk register is to be taken as meaning a parent, guardian or individual *in loco parentis* to the child(ren) or young person(s).

Risks	Likelihood	Consequences	Level of Risk	Treatment to Prevent or Reduce Harm
Parent/guardian does not arrive to pick child up	Possible	Moderate	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The child's dance studio teachers and/or representatives will be responsible for the child under a parent/guardian arrives</li> <li>Child to be in sight at all times until parent arrives</li> </ul>
Child says that he/she does not want to go home with parent	Unlikely	Major	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask child for reason</li> <li>If answer suggests harm to child from someone at home, report to relevant authorities</li> <li>If not, discuss issue with parent</li> </ul>
Child discloses that he/she is being physically harmed by parent/sibling	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depending on information given either report or discuss with parent and/or studio teachers</li> <li>Ring Department for Child Protection to clarify if unsure and to report disclosure</li> </ul>
Child discloses that he/she is being sexually abused by someone outside the family	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to police</li> <li>Provide support to child and notify parents</li> </ul>
Child discloses that he/she is being sexually abused by parent or family member	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to Department for Child Protection</li> <li>Provide support to child through Crisis Care if necessary</li> </ul>

Child presents with depression, sadness and some talk of self-harm	Possible	Major	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report behaviour to Department for Child Protection immediately</li> </ul>
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Approved By: Emmalee Jones	_____	Dated: 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 _____ Updated: _____ Reviewed: _____
Approved By: Katie Pringle	_____	Dated: 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 _____ Updated: _____ Reviewed: _____

**Appendix 4:**  
**COVID 19 Important Information and Procedures**  
**(current as at 10 March 2021)**

**COVID 19 IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

How we plan to help Protect Your Children:

Disinfecting of all surfaces will be conducted in the theatre as per theatre cleaning policies.

We will have hand sanitiser available where we can, and this should be used on arrival and throughout the day/evening – HAND WASHING IS STILL THE BEST WAY and will also be encouraged.

Please DO NOT send your children to the competition if they are unwell. If a child or individual, attends CMIDC with any of the symptoms or is suspected to be feeling unwell, CMIDC has the discretion to not allow entry into the facility or allow a dancer to compete. This is a precautionary measure to ensure safety for all.

All people entering the Theatre who have a mobile phone, will be required to scan our QR code in compliance with the South Australian Government's COVID Safe Check-In requirements. Parents/guardians dropping a child or young person off can scan in and that will be sufficient to say the child is there. There will be hard copy contact tracing sheets for anyone who doesn't have a phone or are unable to scan the QR code provided.

**How you can help Protect others**

Please maintain social distancing at all times, where possible whilst in attendance at the competition. Spectators are asked to respect social distancing whilst seated in the theatre.

Coughing or sneezing makes many people nervous. However, if you have to merely clear your throat, please practice cough etiquette by coughing well into the inside of your elbow (not on your hands which may then go and touch a door handle) or into a tissue which is then discarded.

- When using the bathroom please wash hands thoroughly with soap for a period of 20 seconds (or sing happy birthday whilst doing so).
- Hand Sanitiser will be available to you upon arrival and insist you apply or to those allergic we will ask them to wash their hands.
- If unwell please stay away.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth unless you have just washed or sanitised your hands. And better still, just do not touch these areas with your hands.
- Be aware that, if you've used sanitiser, that whenever you go on to touch a door handle, a book or any other surface, your germ free hands can no longer be guaranteed, so re-sanitise your hands regularly, or use clothing for example on door handles to open them, helping to keep your hands germ free.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet.
- Cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and use alcohol-based hand sanitiser, and if unwell, avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people) or stay home. Further advice from Government Health Authorities
- Any teacher, child, or family member who has travelled overseas or interstate must follow the current Government regulations.
- Any confirmed case of COVID-19 will be excluded from the competition.

**Important to Remember**

While coronavirus is of concern, it is important to remember that most people displaying symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or tiredness are likely suffering with a cold or other respiratory illness—not coronavirus.

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au). Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.

The phone number of your state or territory public health agency is available at [www.health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts](http://www.health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts). If you have concerns about your health, speak to your doctor.