



WORKING WITH CHILDREN POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to demonstrate the Bay Theatre Players Inc.'s commitment to the protection of children and maintaining a child-safe environment. Young people are the core of our theatre and we are proud to be able to engage young people by taking part in productions and workshops with the assurance that their safety is our highest priority.

SCOPE

This policy relates to all BTP committee members, workshop tutors, assistant tutors, technical crew and creatives, as well as all members.

LEGISLATION

The relevant legislation is the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 No 157 (the Children and Young Persons Act) and the Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 No. 51 (the Child Protection Act) and subsequent Regulations.

It is the intention of this policy to comply with the ten Child Safe Standards outlined in the Child Safe Standards Guide referred to by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (see - Appendix 1).

[Guide to the Child Safe Standards \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://nsw.gov.au)

THE NSW WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

As per Part 2, Division 2, Section 9 of the Child Protection Act all members in roles where they may work or be involved with children are required to hold a current NSW Working with Children Check (WWC Check) or an application number for an appropriate clearance.

CHILD-RELATED WORK

The following roles within BTP are child-related roles and require a WWC Check under the Child Protection Act:

- Workshop tutors, assistant tutors and mentors of performers under 18 years of age.

- Performers over 18 years of age involved in BTP productions which have children as part of the cast.
- All creative and technical crew.

The following roles are not child-related roles or fall under an exemption and do not require a WWC Check:

- Committee Members.
- Casual Front of House volunteers.
- Cleaning and other maintenance contractors.

However, in the interest of best-practice governance and leadership, and to ensure the highest possible child safety standards, BTP requires all Committee members to also hold a valid WWC Check. Where a member in a child-related role is responsible for a child or a group of children their behaviour is governed by BTP's Code of Conduct to ensure children are treated with care and respect and that all reasonable action is taken to protect them against harm.

Prior to commencing rehearsal, each performer or member of technical crew involved in a BTP production which also involves children will receive a copy of this Working with Children Policy and the Code of Conduct to inform them of their rights and responsibilities with regard to complying with this Policy.

RECORDING, MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

BTP is committed to protecting the privacy of children involved in our activities. BTP does not record, share or publish image, video or any other media depicting children engaged in BTP activities on any platform without written consent from appropriate parents / guardians in the form of a media release form. This ensures that images are not recorded of children who may be involved in child protection, Family Court or criminal proceedings. Where BTP does share or publish media depicting children involved in BTP activities it is solely for the promotion of BTP, its productions, its workshops and activities.

ALLEGATIONS, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

BTP culture aims for all cast and production team members, volunteers and committee members in addition to parents / carers and children to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.

BTP work to ensure all children, families, cast and production team members, volunteers and committee members know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse, are a victim, or notice inappropriate behaviour.

BTP take all allegations seriously and will investigate any thoroughly and quickly.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.

All BTP members have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

REPORTING

BTP will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

Where an adult BTP member or volunteer becomes aware of any form of child abuse – or has reason to believe a child has been or is being abused or neglected – they must report it to a nominated contact person (see below) to refer to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services Child Protection Helpline (132 111) as soon as is practicable. Where required, BTP will also make a report directly to the Police.

Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- A child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves).
- Behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed.
- Someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it.
- Observing suspicious behaviour.

All allegation of abuse and safety concerns will be recorded using our incident reporting form including investigation updates. All records will be securely stored.

NOMINATED CONTACT PEOPLE

These key contact people are responsible for referring reports of child abuse made by members or volunteers to the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian and will be contacted in the event a member becomes barred from child-related activities.

- BTP President
- BTP Vice President

The current information relating to the above roles will be displayed both on the Front of House Notice Board and in the Green Room.

RECORD KEEPING

BTP collects the following information for the purposes of verifying WWC Checks, and retains this information for 7 years:

- Full name of person being checked.
- Date of birth of person being checked.
- WWC Check number or current application number for an appropriate clearance.
- WWC Check expiry date.

BARRED WORKERS

If BTP becomes aware that a member or volunteer in a child-related role has received a bar or interim bar from working with children they will be immediately relieved of all child related duties.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

All new members are to receive a copy of this policy. This policy is freely available to all BTP members and is also available for public viewing at www.baytheatreplayers.com. BTP is committed to ensuring members and volunteers in child-related roles understand and practice the concepts outlined in this Policy.

As part of the Directors Pack, directors of productions that include children are required to sign off on this Policy to accept their responsibility to adopt child safe practices. They are also required to undertake a training module in child safe standards, online or in person. Such training can be accessed at <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/events>.

BTP will update this and other child-related policies in line with revisions of the Act and ensure members are kept informed of any such revisions.

KEY DATES RELATING TO THIS POLICY

Approval date: 27 June 2024

Review date: 27 June 2026

APPENDIX 1

NSW OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN – CHILD SAFE STANDARDS, JUNE 2024

Child Safe Standards



[Guide to the Child Safe Standards \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://nsw.gov.au)