Child Safe Policy

1. Purpose

1.1. The Tuggeranong Community Arts Association (TCAA) Inc (the Organisation) is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people. The Organisation strives to create and maintain an environment that is safe, supportive, and inclusive, with child and youth safety embedded across all areas of its operation.

1.2. This Policy complies with our obligations under the ACT Child Safe Standards Scheme and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations to establish policies and procedures to ensure that:

1.2.1 Child safe environments are maintained within the organisation; and

1.2.2 Conditions within the environment reduce the likelihood of harm while increasing the likelihood that any risks of harm will be identified, and

1.2.3 Any concerns, allegations or disclosures are managed under the risk of significant harm reporter requirements.

1.3. This Policy supports our workers in understanding their responsibilities, and to provide a clear framework for creating a safe environment for children and young people.

2. Definitions

2.1 For the purposes of this Policy, the terms child, children, youth, and young person refer to individuals under the age of 18.

3. Scope and Application

3.1. All persons working within the Organisation including board members, employees, volunteers, and contractors are covered by this Policy.

3.2 This Policy applies to all activities within the Organisation that involve children, or that result in, or relate to, contact with children.

3.3 This Policy focuses on the Organisation's commitment to protecting children and young people accessing its services and resources and spaces. This includes children who receive services directly from the Organisation, those whose parents or guardians engage with its services, children of workers, and any others who interact with the Organisation in any capacity

3.4 This Policy does not form part of any employment contract.

4. Relevant legislation and standards

4.1 A range of laws are relevant to this Policy including Commonwealth and the ACT, as well as international child protection instruments including, but not limited to:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- *Children and Young People Act* 2008
- *Human Rights Act 2004* (ACT)
- *Human Rights Commission Act 2005* (ACT)
- Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011

4.2 TCAA supports the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and is committed to embedding them into its practices at Tuggeranong Arts Centre. This Policy is aligned to the National Principles which define an environment that is safe for children and young people as being one where:

4.2.1 Child safety and wellbeing is consciously considered and promoted, and

4.2.2 Engagement with children and young people is genuine and valued.

4.3 The National Principles are as follows:

4.3.1 *Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.*

4.3.2 *Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*

4.3.3 *Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.*

4.3.4 *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in Policy and practice.*

4.3.5 *People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.*

4.3.6 *Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.*

4.3.7 *Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.*

4.3.8 *Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*

4.3.9 *Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.*

4.3.10 *Policies and procedures document how the Organisation is safe for children and young people.*

5. Principles

5.1 TCAA will:

5.1.1 Ensure that our Workers have the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe.

5.1.2 Ensure that Workers who engage directly with children possess the appropriate skills, experience, attributes, and qualifications to uphold this Policy and provide necessary support and supervision.

5.1.3 Ensure children who come into contact with our organisation and have concerns about their safety know where to go and who to speak to.

5.1.4 Create an environment where children feel safe and comfortable seeking help.

5.1.5 Maintain the safety and security of all facilities and environments accessed by children, including online platforms, websites, and digital spaces.

5.1.6 Promote a workplace culture which values diversity and inclusion

5.1.7 Involve children and their families in decisions that affect them, where appropriate.

5.1.8 Foster a culture of child safety across all levels in our Organisation

5.1.9 Take all allegations or complaints related to child safety seriously, responding promptly and appropriately.

5.1.10 Report any concerns or allegations to the relevant authorities when necessary or appropriate.

6. Accountability and Responsibility

6.1 Ensuring the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is the responsibility of all staff

6.2 TCAA will:

6.2.1 Annually review and TCAA's Child Safe Policy

6.2.2 Ensure physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

6.2.3 Undertake an annual risk assessment in relation to child safety activities, to identify the level of responsibility for, and contact with, children and young people, evaluate the risk of harm or abuse, and put in place appropriate strategies to manage identified risks. The results of the assessment will inform any revisions to the Child Safe Procedures and Protocols

6.2.4 Coordinate child safe training for workers and monitor compliance.

6.2.5 Maintain a record of relevant child safe complaints.

6.3 All workers will:

6.3.1 Hold a Working with Vulnerable Persons registration

6.3.2 Ensure child safety is considered when developing risk management plans for any functions that are associated with children and/or young people within their program area.

6.3.3 Ensure child safety in the design of programs and policies that impact upon children.

6.3.4 Complete Child Safety training as directed.

6.3.5 Appropriately report potential risk to child safety including any breaches of this Policy.

6.3.6 Comply with the appropriate legislative requirements of the jurisdiction, including reporting a change in circumstances and mandatory reporting requirements.

7. Child Safe Professional Behaviours

7.1 Workers working with children, or who come in contact with children in the workplace must:

7.1.1 Comply with this Policy and TCAA's Child Safe Protocols

7.1.2 Comply with relevant legislation including WWVP and mandatory reporting requirements.

7.1.3 Wherever possible, ensure another adult is present when working with or near children.

7.1.4 Before photographing or filming a child or using children's image for work related purposes, obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child.]

7.1.5 Ensure the TCAA's communications present children in a dignified and respectful manner and do not reveal identifying information about a child

7.1.6 Not use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media to exploit or harass children, or access child exploitation material through any medium.

7.1.7 Not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, physically or emotionally abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.

7.1.8 Not have contact with children outside of the work environment if that contact has arisen in the course of their duties.

7.1.9 Immediately report to their TCAA's Key Child Safety Personnel concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and any failure to comply with this Policy.

7.1.10 Immediately disclose to the Organisation all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relate to child exploitation and abuse, including those that occurred before or during association with the Organisation.

8. Children's Empowerment and Participation

8.1. TCAA encourages and respects the views of children and young people who access our services. The Organisation involves children and young people in decision making and listens and acts upon any feedback or complaints that children, young people or their families/carers raise.

8.2. The Organisation provides clear, age-appropriate (or developmentally appropriate) explanations to children and young people including their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern to any worker or ask their parent/guardian to do this on their behalf.

9. Confidentiality and Privacy of Children and Young People

9.1. Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of children and young people who participate in TCAA's services is paramount in ensuring their safety and wellbeing. Any issues relating to children and young people is highly sensitive and must be treated in such a way.

9.2. All records, personal information and images are held and stored in accordance with the Organisation's Privacy Policy. The release of images of, or other personal information of a child or young person to the public has the potential to adversely impact their safety and well-being. We will obtain permission from a child or young person where possible, and their parent/guardian before taking an image of the child or using personal information supplied.

9.3. When gaining consent, the child or young person and their parent/guardian are to be informed about the nature of the use of the image as well as how the image will be stored and how the image can be accessed by the parent/guardian.

10. Recruitment Practices

10.1. TCAA ensures that it engages the most suitable and appropriate persons to work with children and young people through a comprehensive selection and checking process to safeguard children and young people in accordance with the Organisation's Recruitment Policy and Procedures.

10.2 All employees are required to hold a current Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) registration.

10.3 Employees are obligated to notify the CEO if there are any circumstances which arise which may affect their ability to hold or renew their WWVP

11. Support, Development & Supervision

11.1. We promote a child safe environment through the provision of employee development programs that ensure mandated notifiers are equipped and supported to enhance and maintain a child safe environment. All employees who are mandated notifiers attend continuing training and updates on their mandatory reporting obligations.

11.2. All employees and volunteers who work with children and young people are provided with supervision, support and training to ensure they can maintain a child safe environment. This can include regular supervision sessions that include a focus on child safety and wellbeing

11.3 Child safety is included as a standing item on weekly staff meeting agendas

11.4 All staff have access to EAP (Employee Assistance Program) in the event external support is required.

11.5 All staff have access to Child Safe Resources at https://www.hrc.act.gov.au/childrenyoungpeople/act-child-safe-standards/resources-training-and-support

12. Reporting suspicions of child abuse or harm

12.1 Mandatory reporting is the legislative requirement for the specified individuals to report suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities.

12.2 The failure to protect a child at risk of child sexual abuse offences and/or failure to report child sexual abuse is an offence under section 273B of the *Schedule to the Criminal Code Act 1995.*

13. Professional Protection and Support for Reporters

13.1. Protection under various Legislation provides that reporters of abuse or neglect will not be held legally liable for the report, or any investigation of the report, if a report is made in good faith and does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics.

13.2. Mandated notifiers are also protected from threats, intimidation, damage, loss or disadvantage because they have reported or propose to report suspected abuse or neglect of a child or young person.

13.3. We ensure that support is also available for employees and volunteers making notifications.

14. Communication

14.1 This Policy is available on TAC Sharepoint and on the TAC website for public access. If you have any questions in relation to the Policy, please contact CEO, Tuggeranong Arts Centre

15. Implementation and review

15.1 The CEO is responsible for implementing, reviewing, and circulating this Policy to all relevant board members, employees, volunteers.

Child Safety Procedures

1. Information

1.1. All files related to Child Safety are on the shared drive: \Shared\CHILD SAFETY DOCS

1.2. Staff should familiarise themselves with the following documents: *Child Safety infographic*, *Keeping Children and Young People Safe and TAC Child Safety Protocols*

1.3. Child Safety is a standing item on the weekly staff agenda.

1.4. Child Safety updates will be given to TAC staff at least every 6 months, or when required.

1.5. All tutors across all programs need to be given a Child Safety update each semester, or more frequently if required.

2. Oversight and Responsibility for Child Safety

2.1. The management and oversight of all child safeguarding matters is allocated to the following key child safety personnel (the Responsible Persons): Caroline Downer (CEO), Roger Jillard (Messengers Manager), Caroline Wall (Fresh Funk Director).

2.2 The Responsible Persons hold overall responsibility for ensuring the safety, suitability, and appropriateness of all activities involving children, and may appoint delegates to carry out specific duties.

2.3 All individuals covered by this Policy share responsibility for maintaining the safety and wellbeing of children at all times, regardless of any delegated roles.

3. Management of Child-Safe Activities

3.1 Tuggeranong Arts Centre delivers a range of activities involving children and young people, including annual programs, projects, productions, weekly classes, one off workshops, and occasional interstate or international engagements.

3.2 TCAA strives to create an environment where children and young people's diverse needs and circumstances are recognised and all children feel safe, welcome and included. To this end:

3.2.1 Families are encouraged to communicate any access needs during program registration, with an access form available to outline specific requirements.

3.2.2 Each program begins with one or more introductory sessions in which staff outline class parameters and expectations, fostering respectful, inclusive, and safe participation.

3.3 Written consent from a parent or guardian is required for any activity where children attend without their responsible adult present.

3.3.1 Consent forms—completed online or in writing—must include emergency contact details and any specific safety requirements for the child.

3.3.2 All consent forms must be securely stored in accordance with Tuggeranong Arts Centre's data protection and privacy Policy.

3.4 Communication young people or with parents needs to be in consultation with senior staff. No communication (email/phone/text) to be sent without approval from the key Child Safety Personnel.

4. Site awareness

4.1. All staff must remain aware of who is in the building at all times. We each share responsibility for ensuring the safety of children, and given the number of classes we run for young people, it is essential that we maintain a heightened awareness of any visitors on site. When in doubt, it is always better to err on the side of caution.

4.2. Staff are to monitor the Teams Channel TAC ALERTS for any notifications.

4.3. *Visitors to the building after hours*: Any person not known to staff and obviously not part of an event at TAC, needs to be approached by a TAC staff member onsite and asked why they are in the Centre

4.4. Hirers

4.4.1. Initial email to hirer will include information about shared space arrangements, and the importance of security, and how the doors are locked after hours.

4.4.2. Information on the door schedule will be entered into the bookings calendar.

4.5. *Tutors:* Tutors need to be aware when a child leaves the classroom and to be attentive to when they return.

5. Risk management

5.1. The location for any events or activities which are held by the Tuggeranong Arts Centre shall be risk assessed properly in reference to the suitability and safety for children. Fire and safety procedures and precautions shall be made clear to all those involved.

5.2. Any accident or injury involving a child, including situations where an ambulance is called, must be reported to the nearest first aider and then formally reported to a Key Child Safety Person.

5.3. Where necessary, TAC will develop a tailored Risk Assessment and Management Protocol (RAAMP) for any individual whose risk level exceeds what can be safely managed under standard child-safe procedures. This protocol will outline specific risks and the required management strategies, and relevant staff will be briefed on their responsibilities. RAAMPs are primarily used in situations involving self-harm risk or potential disclosures, particularly where a young person has previously made a disclosure.

5.4. An additional risk assessment will be undertaken by TAC for any interstate or international travel.

6. Reporting

6.1. It is mandatory to report any incidents where it is suspected that a child is at risk of abuse or neglect.

6.2. TAC Staff should follow the following steps:

6.2.1. Fill out the incident report (with tutor if applicable)

6.2.2. Discuss the issue with Roger Jillard, Messengers Manager. If Roger is not available, please discuss with Belle Nicol (Messengers Support) or Caroline Downer (CEO)

6.2.3. Tutors within TAC programs should immediately notify their program manager (Messengers, Visual Arts, Fresh Funk)

6.3. Roger Jillard (Messengers Manager) will make the decision on whether it is necessary to escalate the issue, and make a report to CYPS as per the information below:

6.3.1. When to make a report

- If you suspect a child is at risk of abuse or neglect by a **family member or guardian**, use the online form to provide information to CYPS, call 1300 556 729 or email childprotection@act.gov.au
- If your concerns relate to abuse **outside** of a family context, contact ACT Policing on 131 444 to make your report.
- If you believe a child is in **immediate danger**, contact the Police now by calling 000.
- It is an offence for anyone in Canberra over 18 years old who reasonably believes a sexual offence has been committed against a child to not make a report to Police.
- If there is an **immediate risk of harm**, call 000, otherwise call ACT Policing on 131 444 to make a **report**.
- If you are a mandated reporter, you only have to have a report to Child and Youth Protection Services. You **do not** have to *additionally* report to the Police.
- For more information go to the ACT Government's webpage on new laws to improve reporting of child abuse

6.4. Roger Jillard will notify CEO of any actions taken.

7. General Complaints or Feedback

7.1. TCAA aims to provide accessible and responsive complaints management processes that are focused on the needs of children and young people.

7.2. TCAA has formal grievance and dispute procedures which include numerous options available to suit the particular circumstances of each individual situation. Children, young people and their families are informed that they can provide feedback or make a complaint when they join any services provided by TCAA

8. Image consent

8.1 On some occasions, we may take photographs featuring children. We recognise that photography of children carries risks, such as:

8.1.1 the potential for images to be re-used, shared or adapted in a damaging or inappropriate manner

8.1.2 the general risk of sharing images and the impact this could have on child's public image as they grow older

8.2 In view of these risks, we will:

8.2.1 always ask for written permission from a child and their parent/guardian before taking and sharing any image of them

8.2.2 always ensure that a child and their parent/guardian are properly informed how an image will be used and shared

8.2.3 always ensure that a child's identity is protected as far as is possible within any published material

8.2.4 ask that parents, guardians, children and any other person connected to them who may wish to share any of our published images which features other children to refrain from doing so unless they have the permission of the other children and their parent/guardian

8.2.5 always store photos in accordance with our data protection Policy.

Version control

Approved By	The TCAA Board
Effective From	11 February 2026
Implementation Responsibility	CEO
Scheduled Review Date	February 2027
Version	2

Related documents

Legislation	Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT) Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT)
National Standards	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
TAC Documents	Code of Conduct Privacy Policy Recruitment Policy and Procedures TAC Child Safety Policy Messengers Child Safe Procedures Reporting Template : Child Safety and Neglect
Guidelines	*Child Safety infographic* *Keeping Children and Young People Safe.*