

## Western Edge Youth Arts Inc.

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The logo for Western Edge Youth Arts is a red, stylized shape resembling a speech bubble or a cluster of overlapping shapes. It contains the text "WESTERN EDGE YOUTH ARTS" in white, bold, uppercase letters, arranged in three lines.

# Children and Young Persons Protection Policy

## Scope

Western Edge Youth Arts Inc **Children and Young Persons Protection Policy** covers board members, employees, emerging artists, participants and volunteers.

## Definitions

The following definitions apply to this policy

### **WEYA Member**

All registered WEYA personnel (board members, employees, interns and volunteers)

### **Participants**

This terms is under to describe any person/s aged between 0 and 25 years of age who take part in our programs.

### **Child Protection**

*Child Protection* is the term used to describe the responsibilities and actions organisations and individuals take to prevent or stop *Children and Young Persons* being harmed or abused.

### **Child Abuse**

*Child Abuse* is the intentional harm or failure to prevent harm of *Children and Young Persons*. *Child Abuse* can be physical, emotional and/or sexual, and may include neglect and harassing behaviours like bullying. (Refer to guidelines for a more comprehensive description of each).

## Policy Statement

Western Edge Youth Arts has a legal and moral responsibility to create an environment where *Children and Young Persons* can participate in a variety of formal and informal arts based activities and be safe from any form of abuse.

Having a *Child Protection* policy enables *Children and Young Persons* to participate safely in the programs, activities and events that are WEYA.

- The policy aims to ensure a safe and protective environment for all Participants whilst in the care of our organisation.
- This policy provides for measures to protect Children and Young Persons from harm caused by sexual abuse or misconduct, physical abuse, emotional abuse, bullying or neglect.
- This policy provides for measures to recommend actions to family and carers if there is suspected harm outside the organisation.

## Policy Objective

1. To raise organisation awareness of the issue of *Child Abuse* and minimise the risks to the safety of *Children and Young Persons*.
2. To provide clear guidelines and support as required for WEYA Members so that they are able to recognise and respond appropriately to *Child Abuse*.
3. To enable WEYA Members to feel safe and empowered to prevent the abuse of *Children and Young Persons*.
4. To protect participants, and be committed to ensuring that all allegations of abuse are handled promptly and confidentially with emphasis on fairness, justice and equity for all.
5. Through the adoption of this policy WEYA is indicating to the community that it is taking a proactive approach in the prevention of *Child Abuse*.
6. The policy aims to make WEYA's responsibility less complex and achievable and assist in meeting our obligations in a positive and effective manner
7. WEYA is committed to ensuring that the most appropriate people are employed by putting in place stringent screening and selection procedures.
8. WEYA is committed to providing suitable education and adequate support whilst in the position.

## Implementation

### 1. Education/Information

- 1.1 WEYA will ensure that Participants and their Parents/Guardians are aware of the risks, preventions and reporting procedures by developing communications as required.
- 1.2 WEYA will provide WEYA Members with education and/or information about Child Protection guidelines and responding to complaints, allegations and disclosures.
- 1.3 All WEYA Members will be required to undertake Child Protection training.

### 2. Code of Conduct

- 2.1 The WEYA Code of Conduct describes the appropriate behaviours and boundaries for all persons involved in WEYA be they participants, participant parents (including carers or legal guardians) and WEYA members.
- 2.2 All WEYA Members will be expected to adhere to the Code.
- 2.3 All WEYA Members working with participants will be expected to sign a Personal Commitment to Child Safety.

### 3. Recruitment and Selection of WEYA Members

- 3.1 The recruitment of all WEYA Member must be in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection processes outlined in the Child Protection guidelines.

- 3.2 All applicants for positions as WEYA Members will be provided with access to the organisation's child-safe policy and code of conduct.
- 3.3 All WEYA Members working with participants will be required to have some form of mandatory checking and vetting performed prior to being offered a role with WEYA as outlined in the HR Policy and as contained within the role description.
- 3.4 All successful applicants will be required to sign on to the WEYA Code of Conduct and undertake regular Child Protection Training.

#### 4. Responding to Child Abuse/Reporting process

- 4.1 The reporting of and responding to allegations of known or suspected Child Abuse will be made in accordance with the Victorian Child Protection Policy.
- 4.2 WEYA will provide information and/or guidelines to all WEYA Members in relation to the reporting of suspected or known Child Abuse.
- 4.3 WEYA will ensure that all concerns, disclosures or allegations of suspected or known Child Abuse will be acted upon promptly, treated seriously and dealt with in a sensitive manner with regards to the law and privacy.
- 4.4 Throughout the reporting process WEYA, will ensure that confidentiality will be maintained for all parties involved and information will only be shared on a 'need to know basis' or when required by law.

#### 5. Monitoring of policy

- 5.1 The implementation of the WEYA Children and Young Persons Protection Policy will be monitored by the policy owner and reported to the Board.

#### **Other Links and References**

1. Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, Article 1)
2. The Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
3. Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment Act 2015 (Vic)
4. Crimes Act (Vic)
5. DFAT Child Protection Policy 2017
6. Information Privacy Act 2000
7. WEYA HR Policy
8. WEYA Code of Conduct

**Policy Owner:** General Manager



**Date drafted: 04/06/2017**