



Western Edge Youth Arts (WEYA) are committed to the safety of all young people participating in our workshops and programs. This document is intended to provide information about the digital safety precautions we are undertaking as we transition our programs into an online environment, as well as our obligations to the young people we engage with and our community partners. This document will also provide resources to find additional information about online safety for young people and those who work with them.

WEYA recognises that social connection during times of physical isolation is of vital importance to maintaining social and emotional health. As such, from April 2020, all of WEYA's programs will continue to operate in a digital/online format until the restrictions imposed as a result of COVID-19 are lifted.

All staff and contractors will continue to adhere to our existing WEYA Child and Young Person Protection Policy, which can be found on our website

<http://westernedge.org.au/about/key-documents>

Online Safety:

WEYA prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all young people in our programs. WEYA understands that online environments, like physical environments, should minimise the possibility of young people experiencing harm, and will be employing the following risk mitigation strategies:

- Utilising the existing safety features of web-based video conferencing tools (Zoom, Microsoft Teams), including meeting passwords, waiting rooms, and disabling private chat functions.
- Setting and enforcing online safety behavioural expectations for both staff and participants.
- All staff will be trained in child safety, and will know when and how to report breaches of child safety, and/or concerns for a child or young person's wellbeing.
- Linking to other support services.

Web-based video conferencing safety features:

1. Young People will not be allowed to join meetings without a Lead Artist (Host) present, therefore eliminating unsupervised online communications.
2. WEYA digital workshops will be invite-only (Teams) or password protected (Zoom), to ensure that outside parties are not able to join the meeting.
3. WEYA will disable the 'private chat' function to ensure that young people are not able to communicate / share online content without supervision.
4. WEYA staff will ensure that only content appropriate for young people is shared via screen-sharing, videos or other external content.



5. WEYA will not share recordings or images from the workshops without appropriate consent from participants (and guardians where appropriate).

LET US ALL PRACTICE:

Patience: This a new way that we're all working, technology and data connection can be unpredictable if the workshop is disrupted be patient WEYA Lead and Support Artists will be trying their best to fix it.

Awareness: There are many different ways of communicating via on-line platforms (audio, video, emojis , and chat box etc) be mindful of the multiple ways people are engaging in your workshop to make sure everyone's voice is heard.

Respect: WEYA embraces everyone for who they are and what they bring, performing on-line maybe a new experience for some people let's be respectful and supportive by encouraging each other to creatively express freely.

Accountability: WEYA encourages everyone to listen to where they are at and choose how they want to engage in the workshop to make sure everyone feels safe and comfortable. If something makes you feel uncomfortable during the workshop here are a few strategies:

- If you don't want others to see your room / where you are, use the background feature in Zoom (this will be explained in the first session)
- If you have a concern, use the raise your hand emoji so that Lead and Support Artists and they will respond to you immediately
- If you're feeling uncomfortable and need to have some time away from the group, use the chat box and text brb (you might also want to stop video and mute yourself until you return to the workshop)
- Use the leave meeting function and a Lead or Support Artist will be in touch immediately

Lead artists will use the framework outlined on [esafety.gov.au](https://www.esafety.gov.au) for responding to online incidents and will participate in a facilitated training session with WEYA core staff about best practice when engaging with young people online.

Participants will have an understanding of clear reporting pathways should any incidents occur, outlined in the online safety for parents and participants document.

WEYA reserves the right to mute or restrict access to participants who repeatedly disregard these expectations, but will aim to liaise with them to address any issues, to identify the cause of the issues, restore their access to the program and that they are supported and connected to external support networks if required.

Additional Resources about online safety and young people:

Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner
Investigates complaints about cyber-bullying against children
Ph: 1800 880 176



Kids Helpline

A free and confidential counselling service for young people age 5-25
Ph: 1800 551 800

Lifeline

Crisis support and suicide prevention service
Ph: 13 11 14

Safe and Supportive School Communities

Bullying. No Way! – Take a stand together has useful information and interactive activities for students, teachers and parents: www.takeastandtogether.gov.au

Cybersmart

Cybersmart is a national cybersafety and cybersecurity education program managed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority: www.cybersmart.gov.au

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Bully Stoppers supports students, parents, teachers and principals to reduce the incidence of bullying: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/default.aspx>

Bullying online or at school: <http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/discrimination-harassment-and-bullying/bullying-online-or-school>

Victoria Legal Aid

Free legal help over the phone, Monday to Friday, 8.45 am to 5.15 pm.
Tel: 1300 792 387
Website: www.legalaid.vic.gov.au

Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)

You can contact a CASA 24 hours a day, seven days a week for crisis counselling, support, information and advocacy. Your call will be directed to the CASA in your region.
Tel: 1800 806 292
Website: www.casa.org.au

Westjustice Community Legal Centre

Free legal advice and representation
Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm
9749 7720

West Division Intake - metropolitan only - 1300 664 977

West Division Metro area reports are managed by North Division Intake located at DHHS Preston for the following areas and LGAs: Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley, Wyndham.

International callers can ring West Division Intake on 61352264540

After-hours Child Protection Emergency Service - 13 12 78



If you have significant concern for the wellbeing of a child, but do not believe they are at risk of significant harm, and where the immediate safety of the child will not be compromised, a referral to Child FIRST or The Orange Door may be appropriate.

Brimbank	1300 138 180
Melton	1300 138 180
Wyndham	1300 775 160
Moonee Valley	1300 775 160
Maribyrnong	1300 775 160