

COSMOPOLITAN PLAYERS

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Cosmopolitan Players recognises its duty of care to children and young people under current legislation and seeks to provide awareness, practical advice, support and procedures. The Society recognizes that the abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect. Therefore the Society is committed to best practice which as far as possible protects the children in its care from all harm. All members of the Society accept and recognize their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm or result in spurious allegations between adults and young people.

The Society believes that :

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and sexual identity. We promote an equal opportunities policy.
- All members of the Society who associate with children & young people will be informed of good Child Protection Policy working practice in rehearsal, performance and other times when social contact is made.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be reported to the Chair of the Society, who will decide whether to deal with the matter in General Committee or call an Extra-ordinary meeting to deal with the matter. In theatre performance, if a child/adult confides in another person, the matter should be raised with the stage manager, who will contact the Chair at the earliest opportunity. The matter may then be raised with relevant statutory authorities and agencies.

Our Child Protection Practice:

- At the onset of any production which involves children, the Society will ensure that a Risk Assessment is carried out and documented. We will monitor risk throughout the production process
- We will designate persons who are responsible and suitable for supervision of the children. This duty of care will involve parents and directors in rehearsal, stage managers and chaperones for dressing rooms and back stage areas in performance. The Society will hold a register of every child involved with the Society and will retain a contact name and telephone number for use in case of emergencies.
- The Society will endeavour to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children and where possible will follow typical Child Protection procedure and have two adults present. Good practice involves avoiding the use of areas closed off from general view
- Physical contact is an issue in Performance Arts and it is good practice to seek a person's consent prior to any physical contact and especially for a child to have clearly explained the purpose of the contact by the adult/director.
- The Society strives to ensure personal confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information. In the case of children the permission must be sought of the parents/guardians for the use of photographic images in promotional material.
- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident must be recorded in the Society's records, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency. While the details of an incident are being investigated any individuals involved will be suspended from the Societies activities and all reports and actions will remain in confidence until a conclusion can be drawn. (Data Protection Act 1988) The release of information could compromise any criminal investigation which may take place.
- By law, chaperones are expected to exercise the care which a good parent might reasonably be expected to give a child and the maximum number shall not exceed 12 children at any one time. The recruitment and training of chaperones in Child Protection Policy involves meeting the Child Protection Officer and signing a declaration or obtaining an Enhanced Disclosure CRD check.
- The Society promotes good practice beyond activities in theatre-work areas, regards non-public association and contact between adults and young persons/children.

The Society has a dedicated voluntary Child Protection Officer who is in charge of ensuring that the Society's Child Protection Policy & procedures are in keeping with current legislation and policies for the protection of children. The

Officer is responsible for supporting the Chair in obtaining any further information or contact with local authorities and agencies. Further information and advice is available to any member of the Society from the Officer.

This policy document will be regularly monitored by Cosmopolitan Players Committee and subject to annual review.

Chairman's Signature: _____

Adopted on: _____

Reviewed date: _____