



Child Safe Policies and Procedures

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Document Name:	CHILDSAFE_CUA_POLICY-001-CircUP Arts-Policies and Procedures		
Document Number:	CUA_CS_POLICY-001		
Approved By:	Aaron Loveday	Version No:	2.0
Date Approved:	12/03/2026	Review Date:	12/03/2027

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CHILD SAFE POLICY

1. Policy Statement

CircUP Arts is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all children and young people who participate in our programs, activities and events.

CircUP Arts has zero tolerance for child abuse, neglect, grooming, harassment or exploitation. The safety, wellbeing and rights of children and young people are our highest priority.

This policy aligns with the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Queensland) and supports the implementation of the Queensland Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety.

CircUP Arts recognises that children and young people have the right to:

- feel safe and protected from harm
- be respected and valued
- participate in decisions affecting them
- express their identity, culture and beliefs
- be heard when they raise concerns.

CircUP Arts promotes and maintains a culture that does not tolerate child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This policy establishes CircUP Arts' expectations of all staff and volunteers to provide a safe environment for children and sets out our approach to managing risks to children and young people arising through our day-to-day activities.

The welfare and safety of every child who has contact with employees, contractors, consultants, officials and providers engaged by CircUP Arts is our highest priority.

CircUP Arts' Child Safe Policy is guided by the following principles:

- Recognise children's rights and interests
- Build and maintain a child safe culture and environment
- Provide support and protection to staff who report incidents under this policy

2. Scope

This policy applies to all people involved in CircUP Arts, including:

- employees
- contractors
- volunteers
- trainers and instructors
- board members
- guest artists
- students and participants
- parents, carers and guardians
- visitors and external providers.

Service providers delivering services to children through CircUP Arts (including contractors and subcontractors) must comply with contractual child safety requirements and this policy. This policy must also be considered when developing, designing and managing CircUP Arts policies and programs to ensure they promote children's rights and incorporate appropriate child safety considerations.

This policy applies to all CircUP Arts activities including:

- circus classes
- aerial training
- workshops
- camps
- performances
- excursions
- events
- online environments.

3. Definitions

3.1 Child / Young Person

Any person under the age of 18 years.

3.2 Child Abuse

Includes but is not limited to:

- physical abuse
- emotional or psychological abuse
- sexual abuse
- grooming
- neglect
- exposure to family violence.

3.3 Grooming

Behaviour designed to establish trust with a child or family in order to facilitate abuse.

3.4 Reportable Conduct

Behaviour by a worker that may harm a child, including:

- sexual offences
- sexual misconduct
- ill-treatment
- neglect
- psychological harm
- significant physical violence.

3.5 Child-Related Work

Work activities where contact between a staff member and a child would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the work and is more than occasional or incidental.

Child-related work may include:

- physical contact
- face-to-face interaction
- written or electronic communication.

Child-related work also includes roles requiring a **Working With Children Check (Blue Card)** under Queensland legislation.

4. Commitment to the Child Safe Standards

CircUP Arts commits to implementing the **10 Child Safe Standards**.

4.1 Leadership and Culture

CircUP Arts leadership prioritises child safety and promotes a culture where protecting children is everyone's responsibility.

4.2 Children Are Empowered

Children and young people are supported to:

- understand their rights
- speak up about concerns
- participate in decisions affecting them.

4.3 Families and Communities Are Involved

Parents, carers and communities are encouraged to participate in creating a safe environment.

4.4 Equity Is Promoted

CircUP Arts respects diversity and ensures inclusive participation regardless of:

- disability
- culture
- language
- gender identity
- sexuality
- socioeconomic background.

4.5 People Working With Children Are Suitable

CircUP Arts recruits, screens and trains staff and volunteers to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

4.6 Complaints Processes Are Child-Focused

Children and families have access to safe and accessible complaint and reporting processes.

4.7 Staff Are Trained

Staff and volunteers receive training to recognise, prevent and respond to child abuse.

4.8 Physical and Online Environments Are Safe

CircUP Arts identifies and manages risks in both physical and online environments.

4.9 Continuous Improvement

Child safety practices are regularly reviewed and improved.

4.10 Policies and Procedures

Clear policies and procedures support child safety across all programs.

5. Universal Principle – Cultural Safety

CircUP Arts is committed to ensuring a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

We recognise and respect the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to:

- express their cultural identity
- maintain connection to land, culture and community
- participate in culturally safe environments.

CircUP Arts will actively work to ensure:

- respect for cultural identity
- culturally inclusive programs
- culturally respectful communication.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Responsibilities of CircUP Arts

CircUP Arts will:

- review and publish its Child Safe Policy annually
- undertake annual child safety risk assessments
- identify levels of responsibility and contact with children
- implement strategies to manage identified risks
- maintain a Child Safe Risk Management Plan
- maintain a register of child-safe positions
- coordinate child safety training for staff
- maintain records of relevant child safety complaints.

6.2 Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must:

- ensure child safety is considered when developing risk plans
- ensure child safety is included in program design
- complete required child safety training
- report risks or breaches of this policy
- comply with Blue Card and mandatory reporting legislation.

7. Code of Conduct for Working With Children

People working with children at CircUP Arts must:

- treat children with dignity and respect
- maintain professional boundaries
- provide safe instruction and supervision
- follow organisational policies
- listen to children and respond appropriately to concerns
- report any suspected abuse or unsafe behaviour.

Staff and volunteers must not:

- engage in sexual or inappropriate relationships with children
- favour particular children
- communicate privately with children outside approved channels
- use harsh, humiliating or degrading discipline
- consume alcohol or drugs while supervising children.

8. Recruitment and Screening

CircUP Arts implements safe recruitment processes including:

- clear position descriptions
- interviews assessing child-safe values
- reference checks
- verification of qualifications
- Blue Card compliance
- criminal history checks where appropriate.

No person may work with children at CircUP Arts without meeting the required legal screening requirements.

9. Training and Awareness

CircUP Arts ensures staff and volunteers receive training in:

- Child Safe Standards
- recognising and responding to child abuse
- professional boundaries
- safeguarding in physical activity environments
- reporting obligations.

10. Risk Management

CircUP Arts identifies and manages risks to children in all activities including:

- aerial and physical activities
- changing areas
- travel and transport
- overnight activities
- online communication.

Risk assessments are conducted regularly.

11. Reporting Suspicions of Child Abuse or Harm (Queensland)

All staff, volunteers, contractors, and board members must **report any concerns about child safety immediately**. This includes suspected abuse, neglect, grooming, or inappropriate behaviour by staff or other adults.

11.1 Immediate Safety

1. **Ensure the child is safe** – remove the child from immediate danger if possible.
2. **Provide support** – reassure the child and avoid making promises about outcomes.

11.2 Who Must Be Reported To

In Queensland, reporting depends on the type of concern and your role:

a) Mandatory Reporting to Child Safety Services (Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs)

- **Mandatory reporters:** teachers, doctors, nurses, police officers, early childhood workers, and certain regulated professionals.
- **What to report:** if a child (under 18) is **at risk of significant harm** due to abuse or neglect.
- **How to report:**
 - Call **1800 811 810** (Child Safety After Hours: 24/7)
 - Submit an **online report** via the Queensland Government Child Safety website: <https://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/>

b) Reportable Conduct Scheme

- Applies to **employees and volunteers** in regulated entities (like schools, clubs, and arts organisations).
- **What to report:** alleged sexual offences, sexual misconduct, ill-treatment, neglect, or significant harm by a worker.
- **How to report:**
 - Notify your **organisation's Child Safety Officer / manager / CEO** immediately.
 - Report to **Queensland Ombudsman** if the allegation involves an employee or volunteer:
 - Online: <https://www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/>
 - Phone: **07 3005 7000**

c) Police

- **When to report:**
 - Suspected **criminal offences**, including sexual abuse, grooming, or assault.
- **How to report:**
 - Call **000** if urgent
 - Otherwise, contact **local Queensland Police station**.

d) Internal Reporting (CircUP Arts)

- Immediately report all concerns to:
 1. **Head of Programs and Engagement**
 2. **Artistic Director**
- Complete an **internal Incident Report Form** detailing:
 - What you observed
 - Who was involved
 - When and where it happened

11.3 Confidentiality

- Maintain confidentiality; only share information with those who **need to know** to protect the child.
- Do not investigate the allegation yourself; focus on reporting and keeping the child safe.

11.4 Notes for Staff

- **Mandatory reporters** must comply with legislative obligations; failing to report can lead to criminal or disciplinary consequences.
- Even if you are **not a mandatory reporter**, you must **report internally** and escalate concerns.
- Reports should be **documented in writing** as soon as possible.

12. Managing Complaints

All complaints involving children will be investigated in accordance with CircUP Arts safeguarding and complaints policies.

Complaints may be escalated to relevant authorities where required.

13. Reportable Conduct Scheme

CircUP Arts will comply with the Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Allegations involving employees or volunteers will be:

- reported where required
- investigated appropriately
- managed to ensure children remain safe.

14. Confidentiality and Privacy

CircUP Arts manages child safety reports sensitively and confidentially while meeting legal reporting obligations.

Information will only be shared with those who need to know to protect children.

15. Sanctions for Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment or engagement.

Breaches of child protection legislation may also result in legal penalties or criminal charges.

16. Review

This policy will be:

- reviewed annually
- updated when legislation or organisational practices change.

17. Policy Responsibility

Responsibility for implementing this policy rests with:

- Artistic Director
- Head of Programs and Engagement
- staff and volunteers.

All members of the organisation share responsibility for protecting children.