

## NYT Child Protection Policy

We, the National Youth Theatre, are committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience, where the welfare of the child/young person is paramount. Our processes are consistent with Child Youth & Family and New Zealand Police Guidelines, and have been reviewed by a CYF representative, incorporating their feedback. We have implemented procedures covering:

- Codes of behaviour for all staff, contractors and volunteers (as specific documents);
- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse;
- Confidentiality;
- Recruitment and selecting staff, contractors and volunteers;
- Managing and supervising staff, contractors and volunteers;
- Involvement of primary carers;
- Allegations of misconduct or abuse by staff, contractors or volunteers;
- Complaints and comments;
- Incidents and accidents.

This policy will be reviewed on or before:      Date: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024

[Signed by Chief Executive]

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Doy", written in a cursive style.

James Doy  
11/06/2023

## **Complaints Procedure**

- Complaints or comments will be responded to within 2 weeks;
- The Programmes Manager has responsibility for directing complaints/comments to the appropriate person;
- Verbal complaints will be logged and responded to.

## **Accident & Lost Cast Member Procedure**

- NYT will maintain an up-to-date register of the contact details of all cast members involved in the organisation;
- Cast Member's details should be cross-referenced between the incident sheet and our register;
- NYT will ensure that any venue required incident reports are completed in a timely fashion, in addition to our own reporting requirements;
- First-aid boxes will be available and regularly re-stocked, including incident sheets;
- The location of the first-aid kit(s) must be made known to staff;
- For each venue:
  - A safety briefing from a venue representative will be given, if available
  - NYT will have created and made available a lost child procedure specific to that location
  - Staff will familiarise themselves with emergency procedures and risks specific to the venue, and a briefing will be given all cast & volunteers as soon as possible upon arrival on the first day.

## **Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs Policy**

National Youth Theatre has a zero-tolerance approach to the

- Use of prohibited drugs.
- Inappropriate use of controlled substances, solvents or inhalants.

No participant under the legal age may smoke, vape, or consume alcohol.

NYT and all our venues are strictly non-smoking and non-vaping.

No participant, staff member, contractor or volunteer will smoke or vape in the presence of any NYT participant at an NYT associated event.

Mature and responsible attitudes should be displayed by those wishing to consume alcohol at NYT events for adults (for example post or pre-show entertainment). Moderation and common sense must prevail at all times.

If cast members are present at an NYT event for adults, then the adults responsible for the care, safety, instruction or supervision of the cast must not consume any alcohol during the duration of the event.

## **Allergy Management**

Due to serious food allergies of some of our cast, all participants (cast, staff and volunteers) must avoid including peanuts or other tree nuts in any lunches or snacks, and not share food with others.

## **About Cast Captains/AllStars Assistants:**

In each OnStage programme we have nominated Cast Captains who are given the opportunity to extend their training by working with the staff in selected areas. The cast captains may occasionally pass messages from staff to cast in show week, and are a useful resource for questions about where people need to be. They may be required to spend more time out of their dressing room, and occasionally drop into other dressing rooms to see specific cast. They are still cast members though, and have the same expectations upon them. Cast Captains must be over the age of 16. Cast Captains are expected to abide by the NYT Staff Expectations document.

AllStars Assistants are older cast members or past cast members who act as volunteer assistants to the staff of our Holiday Programmes. Those Assistants over the age of 16 may occasionally have duty of care - during lunch breaks or supervised play time. There should always be at least 2 AllStars Assistants present at any time when they are acting as supervisors. AllStars Assistants are expected to abide by the NYT Staff Expectations document.

### **Confidentiality Statement**

We in the National Youth Theatre are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

- Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child/young person;
- Giving such information to others for the protection of a child or young person is not a breach of confidentiality;
- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child or young person are at risk;

Images of a child/young person will only be used for the direct promotional purposes of NYT or as part of a record of the performance or programme;

## **Recruitment Policy**

We will ensure that staff are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job (paid or voluntary);
- Posts will be advertised widely;
- We undertake to select the most suitably qualified personnel;
- Candidates will be required to complete an application form;
- Candidates will be asked to sign a declaration form;
- At least two written references that are recent, relevant, independent and verbally confirmed will be necessary;
- Staff will be selected by a panel of at least two (or more) representatives through an interview process;
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed;
- Some of the exclusions would include:
  - any child-related convictions;
  - refusal to sign application form and declaration form;
  - insufficient documentary evidence of identification;
  - concealing information on one's suitability to working with children;
- There will (where practicable) be a relevant probationary period;
- All staff will be required to consent to police checks, and where available, these will be sought. (NYT is approved to request police checks)

## **Staff Management Policy**

To protect both staff (paid and voluntary) and children/young people, we undertake that:

New staff and tutors will:

- Take part in a mandatory induction training session;
- Be made aware of the organisation's code of conduct, child protection procedures, and the identity and role of who has been designated to deal with issues of concern;
- Undergo a probationary or trial period.

All staff and tutors will:

- Receive an adequate level of supervision and review of their work practices;
- Be expected to have read and signed the Child Protection Policy Statement;
- Be given the opportunity to receive professional development in the area of child protection

## **Policy statement on the involvement of primary carers**

We are committed to being open with all primary carers.

We undertake to:

- Advise primary carers of our child protection policy;
- Inform primary carers and schools of all activities and potential activities;
- Issue contact/consent forms where relevant;
- Comply with health and safety practices;
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice;
- Adhere to our recruitment guidelines;
- Ensure as far as possible that our activities are age-appropriate;
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parent(s), carer(s) or responsible adult(s), where appropriate.

If we have concerns about the welfare of the child/young person, we will:

- Respond to the needs of the child or young person;
- Inform the primary carers on an on-going basis unless this action puts the child or young person at further risk;
- Where there are child protection and welfare concerns we are obliged to pass these on to CYF (who run a 24/7 advice line, **0508 FAMILY**) and, in an emergency, the NZ Police;
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff, we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform primary carers as appropriate. The staff member will be stood down while the complaint is investigated.

As a child-centred organisation, we are committed to putting the interest of the child/young person first. To that end we will:

- Contact CYF and the NZ Police where there is a child protection welfare concern;
- Encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by our organisation to ensure the safety of their children;
- Have a designated contact person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or young person's welfare.

## **Dealing with Allegations against Staff, Contractors or Volunteers**

Two separate procedures must be followed:

1. In respect of the child/young person, the Programmes Manager will deal with issues related to the child/young person.
2. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made, a nominated NYT Board Member will deal with issues related to the staff member or volunteer.

- The first priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk;
- If allegations are made against the Designated Person, then the Chief Executive should be contacted;
- NYT's reporting procedures should be followed. Both the primary carers and child/young person should be informed of actions planned and taken. The child/young person should be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner;
- The staff member or volunteer will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and should be given the opportunity to respond;
- The Chief Executive will be informed as soon as possible;

- Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee or volunteer should be taken in consultation with CYF and the NZ Police;
- After consultation, the Chief Executive should advise the person accused and agreed procedures will be followed.

### **Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse**

If you are in a position of providing duty of care to cast members, we recommend you familiarise yourself with the CYF document “Working together to keep children and young people safe”, which covers the signs of abuse, and how best to respond should you suspect abuse, or have it disclosed to you. NYT have copies available, or you can access it directly from

<http://www.cyf.govt.nz/working-with-others/working-together-to-keep-children-and-young-people-safe.html>

Our first point of contact for all of these issues is our Programmes Manager. In the event the Programmes Manager is unavailable, or it isn't appropriate to contact them about this issue, you should then contact the Chief Executive. There will be an organisational chart provided with this document detailing the names and contact details of the people who currently hold these roles.

### **Recording Procedures**

All suspected or disclosed incidents of abuse will be recorded in a folder, including date, time, and the people involved. To ensure confidentiality, the record will make use of the cast members ID number (as assigned by our website) rather than their name. The folder is maintained off site by the Programmes Manager, and access restricted as per our confidentiality statement.

Once a report of suspected or disclosed abuse has been received by the Programmes Manager, they will make the call as to the best way to proceed, normally in conjunction with the Chief Executive, or alternatively with the Chair of the NYT Board.