



Australian Dance Council - Ausdance (ACT) Inc
 ACT Incorporated Association Number AO 1179
 Registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits
 Commission ABN36 761 984 224

This policy covers children, young people and vulnerable people

This policy should be read in conjunction with the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) which are mandatory for all organisations who are involved with children. The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations set out a nationally consistent approach to promoting a culture of child safety and wellbeing within organisations. There are a number of [resources](#) available for your organisation.

Keeping Our Kids Safe resources

The [Keeping Our Kids Safe](#) resources are available to support organisations working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and communities to implement the National Principles in a culturally safe and relevant way.

The resources include an introductory video resource, *Keeping Our Kids Safe: Understanding Cultural Safety in Child Safe Organisations*, and a practical guide, *Keeping Our Kids Safe: Cultural Safety and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*.

The National Office engaged SNAICC — National Voice for our Children (SNAICC), with support from Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA), to develop these resources. SNAICC and VACCA consulted with a wide range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities, including talking to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, when developing the resources.

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023
 Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612
 T +61 2 6188 4250
act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au

Table of Contents

This policy covers children, young people and vulnerable people

1. Scope	3
2. Children’s participation	3
3. Definitions	3
4. Applicable ACT Legislation	4
5. Quick Guide to Reporting	4
6. Ausdance ACT Contacts	5
7. Guidelines	6
8. Good Practice	6
9. Still or Moving Images	7
10. Harassment/Bullying	8
11. Communication	8
12. Recruitment	9
13. Training	9
14. What happens if allegations or suspicions are reported?	10
15. What has to be reported?	11
16. Confidentiality	11
17. Informing Parents or Guardians	11
18. Informing Alleged Abusers	11
19. Reporting Concerns about Poor Practice in Ausdance ACT	12
20. Debriefing after Child Protection Incidents or Reports	12
21. Notes to Policy and Guidelines	12
References	13

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Government



A+G
Ainslie and Gorman
Arts Centre

1. Scope

1) To Whom Our Policy Applies

This policy, from the date of endorsement, applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, children, parents, carers and other individuals involved in the organisation.

2) Commitment to child safety

All children who come to Ausdance ACT or participate in Ausdance ACT activities have a right to feel safe and secure. We are committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our services and the welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all children are valued, and feel safe and secure.

We have appointed a Member Protection and Information Officer to deal with child safety issues and to act as a first point of contact in order to provide advice and support to children, parents, employees, contractors and volunteers regarding the safety and well-being of children in our organisation.

2. Children's participation

1) How Ausdance ACT encourages the participation and involvement of children

Ausdance ACT employees, contractors, members and volunteers encourage children to express their views, and make suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect children. We actively encourage children who use our services to 'have a say' about issues that are important to them. We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

3. Definitions

Child: A person under 12 years of age.

Young Person: A person over 12 years of age but not yet an adult.

Vulnerable Person (not defined by age): Can include an aged person; a person with an intellectual or physical disability; a homeless person; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people but may not include everyone with one or more of these characteristics.

Child Abuse: Different types of maltreatment inflicted on a child including non-accidental physical injury, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse including psychological harm and exposure to domestic violence.

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Government



Ainslie and Gorman
Arts Centres

Neglect: Failure to provide the necessities of life for example: food, shelter, clothing and medical treatment, if the failure has caused, or is causing, significant harm to the wellbeing or development of a child.

Voluntary Reporter: Staff and Board members of Ausdance ACT are voluntary reporters (*mandatory reporters* are, for example: doctors, teachers, childcare workers).

Staff: Employees (for example, people working in the Ausdance ACT office or conducting classes); contractors (for example, people providing ancillary services such as stage management; lighting, filming) and volunteers (can include Board members who sometimes assist at events).

References to “child” and “children” also cover young people and vulnerable people.

4. Applicable ACT Legislation

[Children and Young People Act 2008](#)

5. Quick Guide to Reporting

A person who *believes* that a child or young person has experienced, or is experiencing, sexual abuse or non accidental physical injury **MUST** report this to the ACT Government child protection agency as required by ACT law - see below and Guidelines for how to do this. National guidelines now recommended mandatory reporting to the police.

Report Suspected Child Abuse to both Ausdance ACT and the ACT Government as soon as possible after the suspicion arises.

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Government



Ausdance ACT
Ainslie and Gorman
Arts Centres

6. Ausdance ACT Contacts

We have appointed a Member Protection and Information Officer, to deal with child safety issues and act as a first point of contact to provide advice and support to children, parents, employees, contractors and volunteers regarding the safety and well-being of children in our organisation.

Responsible Staff in the Ausdance ACT Office

Director: Cathy Adamek

Contact: 0418809430 or director.act@ausdance.org.au

Protection and Information Officer: Debora Di Centa

Contact: debora.act@ausdance.org.au

Responsible Board Member: Cheryl Diggins

Contact: Phone: 0402 091 161 or cheryldiggins@yahoo.com.au

Reporting Child Abuse to the ACT Government

WHO TO CALL

Police by dialling 000

for urgent assistance if you believe a child or young person is in immediate danger or a life threatening situation or the victim of sexual abuse

and/or

**Care and Protection Services ACT
Government**

**1300 556 729 (24 hours)
(voluntary reporters/general public)**

Website – Care and Protection Services

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/children/child-and-youth-protection-services>

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Government



A+G
Arts and Gorman
Arts Centre

7. Guidelines

1) Who in Ausdance ACT must know about and have read this policy and guidelines?

- Employees
- Contractors
- Volunteers
- Parents/Carers
- Board Members
- Others in or associated with Ausdance ACT coming into contact with children, young people and other vulnerable people.

2) These guidelines provide:

- Guidance for staff and volunteers on good practices and what to avoid
- Procedures for reporting suspected child abuse carried out by Ausdance ACT staff or Board members
- Procedures for reporting suspected child abuse occurring outside Ausdance ACT, for example, by family members of children attending AusdanceACT events
- Actions aimed at avoiding harm to children by people not closely connected with Ausdance ACT (for example, volunteers) or not connected with Ausdance ACT at all (for example, someone accessing photographs on the website)

8. Good Practice

Children's participation

1) Describe how your organisation encourages the participation and involvement of children

Ausdance ACT employees, contractors, members and volunteers encourage children to express their views, and make suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect children. We actively encourage children who use our services to 'have a say' about issues that are important to them. We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

- Always work in an open environment where you can be observed; communicate openly with no secrets
- If manual/physical support for body positioning is required, provide it openly and seek agreement first

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Australian Dance Council



Ainslie and Gorman
Arts Centres

- When children need to be transported, ensure there is more than one child, and preferably, more than one adult, in the vehicle; in an emergency, for example an injured child needs to go to hospital, contact the Ausdance ACT office first or the child's parents
- Keep up to date with qualifications eg. Skill Set, legal requirements and insurance
- Make allegations of child abuse through established processes and reporting lines
- If in doubt, report and/or seek advice

2) Actions to be Avoided

- Being alone with a child, for example in dressing or first aid rooms and when working one-on-one
- Forming a special relationship with a child that could be interpreted as favouritism, such as giving gifts or special treatment.

3) Practices Never Sanctioned

- Allowing or engaging in horseplay, physical or sexually provocative games
- Allowing or engaging in any type of inappropriate touching
- Making sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control
- Doing things of a personal nature, such as changing clothes, that children can do for themselves

Failing to act on and record any allegations made by a child.

4) Incidents that MUST be reported/documentated

- If you accidentally hurt a child
- If a child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done
- If a child is unusually distressed and you have any suspicions or concerns about possible abuse.

[Here is the Incident Report Template](#)

9. Still or Moving Images

- Images of solo performers will not be identified
- If necessary, Ausdance ACT will seek the written permission of parents or guardians for use of still and/or moving images
- Only appropriate images (tasteful, unrevealing, non-exploitative) will be used in Ausdance

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Council



Ainslie and Gorman
Arts Centres

ACT's hardcopy materials and on the internet

- Anyone with complaints about images used by Ausdance ACT should raise their objections with staffing the Ausdance ACT office
- Parents and spectators taking photographs or recording at Ausdance ACT events are to avoid inappropriate and/or intrusive filming.
- Teachers should consider appropriate boundaries when engaging with students on social media and consider for example accepting friendship requests from children that they teach.

10. Harassment/Bullying

1) Describe your organisation's policy on harassment and bullying

Ausdance ACT opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. We take this issue seriously and encourage anyone who believes that they, or another person, has been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise this issue with the Membership Protection Information Officer or management.

Ausdance ACT has [Safe Dance Guidelines](#) which outline protocols for best behaviour when working with young people.

11. Communication

1) Describe how your organisation communicates its child safe policy. You may wish to ask employees, volunteers and parents (where appropriate) to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and will abide by the policy.

Ausdance ACT will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of and has had an opportunity to read the policy.

We also ask employees, contractors, volunteers and parents (where appropriate) to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and will abide by our child-safe policy. We retain a copy of all signed statements.

Note: Tutors and coaches can use filming as a teaching aid.

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Council



Ainslie and Gorman
Arts Centres

12. Recruitment

Support for employees and volunteers

1) Describe how your organisation supports and supervises its staff and volunteers.

Ausdance ACT seeks to attract and retain the best employees, contractors and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment.

- All staff and Board members will be vetted including police record checks. Evidence of identity must be provided and all those who come in contact with children and vulnerable people must have a WWVP card. A record of this is kept in our database
- All jobs/tasks will be assessed for child safety risk:

High risk – sole control over or responsibility for children and young people, for example may be the only adult in the room or may enter dressing rooms being used by children

Medium risk – may have a position of authority with access to children, for example volunteer or Board member

Low risk – all other jobs/tasks

- Ausdance staff will discuss the risk attaching to jobs/tasks in Ausdance ACT at the time of engagement or commencement of an event or activity
- Ausdance ACT will publish this policy and guidelines on its website and make them known to all staff; hardcopy will be provided if requested. Staff working with ACT and NSW teachers and/or working on school premises will also be referred to or provided with a copy of the State/Territory Education Department's Child Protection Policy.

All staff working in the Ausdance ACT office, volunteers and Board members will wear an identifying badge when attending Ausdance ACT events where children are present.

13. Training

- Ausdance ACT is required to make education and training available for staff
- This will be discussed at the time of engagement or commencement
- Those people wishing to be trained will be referred to courses and materials provided by the ACT Government
- Ausdance ACT will fund the training.

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Government



A+G
Arts and Gorman
Arts Centre

14. What happens if allegations or suspicions are reported?

Reporting and responding to suspected child abuse and neglect

Information about making appropriate reports of abuse or neglect is available from the [Department for Families and Communities' website](#)

Ausdance ACT will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

All employees, contractors and volunteers understand their obligations to notify the Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected by a member of their family.

We ensure that employees, contractors and volunteers are aware of how to make appropriate reports of abuse or neglect. We also provide opportunities for employees and volunteers to attend Child Safe Environments Training and information sessions on mandatory reporting.

Employees and volunteers must also report to the Project Manager or the Director any reasonable suspicion that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected by another member, employee, or volunteer.

Ausdance ACT may resolve to take protective action to keep the child and others safe.

- There may be three types of investigation: a criminal investigation; a child protection investigation or assessment; or an internal investigation that could be a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.
- All reports of child abuse involving Ausdance ACT staff will be considered by the Executive. The first meeting of the committee should take place within 24 hours to ensure that correct reporting procedures have been followed and all relevant authorities have been informed
- If a report is made against a staff member, Board member or parent/guardian, the Executive will decide whether to temporarily suspend employment; membership; withdraw volunteer status as appropriate.
- If there is no criminal ACT Government investigation, the Executive will determine whether the

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Government



Ainslie and Gorman
Arts Centres

allegation, on the basis of probability and all available evidence, is true and what action should be taken. Natural Justice will apply to all the parties involved.

15. What has to be reported?

- Report exactly what was seen or heard
- Be clear about what is hearsay or if you have made any assumptions
- Staff working in the Ausdance ACT office or the Board member responsible can provide a list of details and information required by the Police and the ACT Government child protection agency.

16. Confidentiality

- Store any records on file marked Confidential
- Confidential files are to be kept:
 - i) in soft storage: as password-protected electronic copies, and/or in hard copy: in a locked cabinet to which access is controlled
 - ii) Keep a copy of all information provided to the Police or ACT Government in an Ausdance ACT file.

Every effort should be made to ensure that *confidentiality is maintained for all concerned*. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

17. Informing Parents or Guardians

- It is important to consider whether telling a parent or guardian about making a report will place the child at further risk.
- Sometimes there are safety issues for the reporter
- Seek advice from Ausdance ACT Director and the ACT Government child protection agency before taking any action

Note: not all reports will result in the ACT Government child protection agency contacting the family. Where allegations are serious and of a criminal nature, contacting parents/guardians may contaminate evidence that will be used in court.

18. Informing Alleged Abusers

**Seek advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents, if the alleged abuser is a child)*

- There may be safety issues for the reporter
- Seek advice from Ausdance ACT Director and the ACT Government (Care and Protection Services) before taking any action
- Note: Where allegations are serious and of a criminal nature, approaching an alleged abuser may contaminate evidence that will be used in court.
- Ausdance ACT Executive will inform staff of allegations made against them as soon as possible and decide the appropriate status for that person while investigations take place.

19. Reporting Concerns about Poor Practice in Ausdance ACT

- Poor practices that reduce the safety of children, even if not reportable incidents of child abuse, should be reported to staff in the Ausdance ACT office or the responsible Board member
- Reports about poor practice will be investigated by the Executive which will decide necessary action and remediation as soon as possible.

20. Debriefing after Child Protection Incidents or Reports

- You should seek debriefing if involved in a child protection/abuse reporting matter
- Ausdance ACT offers stress leave and will pay for counselling.

21. Notes to Policy and Guidelines

- Ausdance ACT, the peak body for dance in the ACT. It is not a dance studio or a dance school. Several times a year, Ausdance ACT conducts events or classes led by a tutor or coach.
- Children participating in some Ausdance ACT events will be under the direct supervision of teachers. When that occurs, they will also be subject to their school's child protection policy, their State or Territory Government's applicable policies and the child protection and/or safety policies of associated organisations and venues.
- Ausdance ACT keeps membership and participation records about children.
- Abuse of children in dance includes anorexia, inappropriate sexualisation, inappropriate images, bullying and the actions of abusive parents as spectators.
- Staff and Board members of Ausdance ACT are not trained to, nor are they expected to, deal directly with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred. When suspected cases are reported to Ausdance ACT, external assistance will be sought.

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Government



Ausdance ACT
Ausdance ACT Inc.

References

Ausdance ACT keeps copies of child protection materials for staff and Board members, available on request, including:

“The Ausdance Skill Set for Teaching Dance” (2010 as adapted for use in the ACT) - Part SRCCRO007B page 54 (Touch) and pages 107-109 (Dance Ethics)
[https://ausdance.org.au/products/details/the-ausdance-skill set-for-teaching-dance](https://ausdance.org.au/products/details/the-ausdance-skill-set-for-teaching-dance)

“Keeping Children and Young People Safe – A Shared Community Responsibility” (December 2022), Child and Youth Protection Services, ACT Government

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/keeping-children-and-young-people-safe>

Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT); also at

<https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2008-19/> Child Protection and Reporting Child Abuse

and Neglect in ACT Public Schools

https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate

[policies/wellbeing/child-protection/child-protection-and-reporting-child-abuse- and](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate/policies/wellbeing/child-protection/child-protection-and-reporting-child-abuse-and)

[neglect-policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate/policies/wellbeing/child-protection/child-protection-and-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect-policy)

Online training for Keeping children and young people safe

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/keeping-children-and-young-people-safe>

Example of A Child Protection Policy (2011), UK National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children – list of information/details to provide to the Police on Page 8. [https:// learning.nspcc.org.uk/research resources/templates/example-safeguarding-policy-statement](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/templates/example-safeguarding-policy-statement)

LPA: Child Safety in the Live Performance Industry

<https://liveperformance.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/LPA-Guide-Child-Safety-in-the-Live-Performance-Industry.pdf>

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612
 T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
 Government



Ainslie and Gorman
 Arts Centres

These materials are also for the use of dance teachers.

Policy and Guidelines Review

Ratified by Ausdance ACT Board By 31 December 2022 Cyclical
From 2023 onwards

Version History 2011, updated for August 2023

Australian Dance Council – Ausdance ACT Inc. Gorman Arts Centre, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon ACT 2612

T +61 2 6188 4250

act@ausdance.org.au www.ausdanceact.org.au



ACT
Government



Ainslie and Gorman
Arts Centre