

Fearless Theatre Child Safe Policy



Our commitment to child safety

Fearless Theatre is committed to child safety, as well as creating a safe environment for children and young people.

Staff and volunteers refers to the many people who work at/with Fearless Theatre. These can include, but are not limited to Production Team staff, Actors, members of management, and any other volunteers that Fearless Theatre work with.

We want children to be safe, happy, and empowered.

We support and respect all children, adults, staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation, and empowerment of all.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse.

All allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are concerned about a child's safety.

Fearless Theatre is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks.

Fearless Theatre is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies and procedures in place that support our staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If you believe a child is at risk, phone 000 immediately.

Our children

This policy is intended to empower children. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and acceptance at Fearless Theatre, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. We:

- promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

Our staff and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children at Fearless Theatre.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

Training and supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone at Fearless Theatre understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our organisational culture aims for all, staff, volunteers, families and children to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New staff and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand Fearless Theatre's commitment to child safety.

This will include checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to Fearless Theatre's code of conduct for information about appropriate behaviour).

Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. Fearless Theatre understands that when recruiting, staff, and volunteers, we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal people, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

All people who are engaged in child-related work and who are not exempt, including volunteers, are required to hold a current Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this check to management staff.

For more information, please refer to the [Working with Children website](#)

Fair procedures for staff and volunteers

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and reasonable to all staff and volunteers. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form. All records are securely stored. If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and actions we as an organisation take.

Privacy

All personal information that is recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, families, or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it and who will have access to it. This is intended to protect reporters and to ensure that all members of Fearless Theatre are comfortable to disclose any allegations or concerns in relation to child safety without repercussions.

Legislative responsibilities

Fearless Theatre takes its legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- Failure to disclose:

All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16, have an obligation to report that information to Victoria Police.

- Mandatory reporting:

Any staff or volunteers who are mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses including midwives, teachers, principals, and police officers) must comply with their duties.

- Failure to protect:

People of authority in our organisation, will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

- Reportable conduct:

The head of our organisation must be made aware of any allegations of physical and/or sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, significant emotional or psychological harm, significant neglect by a staff member or volunteer towards a child.

We are also legally required to notify the Commission for Children and Young People of any allegations.

- Duty of care:

If a child is abused by an individual associated with our organisation, our organisation is presumed to have breached its duty of care, unless it can prove that it took 'reasonable precautions' to prevent the abuse in question.

For more information, please refer to the [new organisational duty of care to prevent child abuse page](#) on the Department of Justice and Regulation's website.

Risk management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified.

In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage any risks of abuse to children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks which include risks posed by physical environments and online environments.

Allegations, concerns, and complaints

Fearless Theatre takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff, and volunteers know what to do and who to report to if they observe abuse or are a victim, or if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

All reports can be made to a member of management, or through our compliance department. compliance@flst.cc

If you believe a child is at risk, phone 000 immediately.

We all have responsibility to report any allegations of abuse if we believe that an incident has taken place. If anyone believes that an incident has occurred, then they must report the incident.

Possible factors for reporting may include:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- observing suspicious behaviour.

Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur.

Next Review: January 2025