

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Dance Habit is a child safe organisation. We are committed to ensuring all young people in our community are heard, valued, protected and empowered.

This policy applies to all staff, contractors, students, parents (including carers or legal guardians), volunteers and extended friends and family members.

We recognise that all children are vulnerable, but some children are at greater risk, including aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability.

We are committed to:

- the safety of children;
- inclusion and equality;
- a zero tolerance of abuse, harm or discrimination;
- welcoming families from all backgrounds;
- respecting, embracing and supporting cultural and gender diversity;
- empowering children because we understand that when they are heard and valued, they are more likely to speak up if they feel unsafe.

Any person connected with Dance Habit must abide by our *Code of Conduct*.

A breach may result in a written warning, cancellation of enrolment or immediate dismissal.

Our robust recruitment process commits to screen potential staff for suitability to work with children. All staff, contractors and volunteers must hold a Working with Children Check.

New staff, contractors and volunteers will be given a child safety induction and must sign our Code of Conduct prior to commencing any work with us.

Reporting of Child Abuse:

It is mandatory for any person connected with Dance Habit to report abuse or suspected abuse of a child. If you feel uncomfortable or concerned, we encourage you to speak up.

Children – if you feel unsafe, come and speak to any member of the Dance Habit Team or let a trusted adult know.

Any person that believes a child is at immediate risk of abuse should call 000.

What should you report?

- Any suspicion or observation of child abuse – physical, emotional or sexual.
- If a child discloses to you that they have experienced abuse or harm of any kind.
- A breach of our Code of Conduct by any person connected with Dance Habit.
- Any perceived risks in Dance Habit’s environment.

How should you report?

Reports should be lodged with our Child Safety Manager and Studio Director, Megan Jessop using any method that the adult or child feels comfortable with.

P: (03) 9078 6525

E: info@dancehabit.com.au

Reports relating to our Child Safety Manager should be lodged with our Operations Manager, Cassie Pugh or Customer Services Representative, Melissa Dixon, both of whom are appointed Child Safety Officers and will refer the matter to the Commission for Children and Young People if required.

Any suspected physical or sexual abuse of a child should be reported to the Police or the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 as soon as possible.

How will complaints be handled?

All complaints and concerns will be taken seriously and appropriately acted on, including accurate record-keeping securely stored on our server.

- In non-criminal matters, Dance Habit will first seek to reduce or remove any risk to protect the child as a priority. If appropriate and in the best interests of the child, we will then seek to resolve the complaint and rectify any issues raised to the satisfaction of all parties involved.
- Any alleged criminal activity, such as physical or sexual abuse of a child will be immediately referred to the Police.
- Any complaints or concerns about perceived risks in Dance Habit’s environment will be kept confidential, addressed by Dance Habit and rectified promptly.

If Dance Habit believes a child is unsafe in their family unit, we may make a report under the *Reportable Conduct Scheme* to the Commission for Children and Young People.

The safety of children is everyone’s responsibility.