

How Women's Circus Actions its Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Women's Circus actions its Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy by embedding child safety into leadership, governance and culture. The following actions provide a practical, organisation-wide approach to keeping children safe, included, heard, and supported.

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy applies to all Women's Circus personnel (including permanent, casual and contract employees, volunteers and board members) involved in the organisation. This policy applies in all environments where Women's Circus provides services, including but not limited to classes, workshops, performances, and events.

Child Participation and Empowerment

Trainers hold regular discussions with children, including child-led conversations about what makes them feel safe or unsafe. Children are consulted about significant changes to spaces, programs, policies and procedures, and their views are provided to management for consideration.

Involving families and communities

Women's Circus provides information to families by:

- Publishing the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child Safety Reporting Process and other key organisational policies on our website
- Providing information for children about body safety and what to do if you feel unsafe in the entry area.
- Providing avenues for feedback, such as annual member surveys.

Cultural Safety for First Nations Children

Women's Circus supports cultural safety through Acknowledgement of Country, visible recognition of Aboriginal culture, celebration of significant dates, staff and volunteer training, and feedback from Aboriginal children, families and communities about their experience and sense of safety.

Equity and Diversity

Women's Circus welcomes and supports participation by all children, including children with disability, children of colour, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTQIA+ children, First Nations children and their families. This is supported through inclusive enrolment processes, diverse representation, accessible environments and zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination.

Staff Recruiting & Training

Recruitment requires a valid Working with Children Check, referee checks and behavioural interview questions about working with children.

Relevant personnel complete child safety training before unsupervised contact with children, and complete refresher training every two years. This training will support the creation of culturally safe environments, how to disclose harm, recognising indicators of harm as well as how to implement our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Risk Management

Women's Circus is committed to identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse at Women's Circus. Child safety and wellbeing is a part of Women's Circus overall Risk Management approach.

Personnel who may work with children, supervise children or have access to children's personal information are required to read, sign and comply with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child Safety Reporting Process.

As per the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, people visiting Women's Circus for less than one day, and/or contractors who have no contact with children do not need to sign the policy, but they must be made aware of the above documents and supervised by Women's Circus staff when children are present.

Reviewing and improving practice

Women's Circus reviews child safe practices and procedures every 12 months and reviews the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy every two years. Reviews are also undertaken after incidents or near misses, with findings used to strengthen future practice.

Child Safety Reporting Process

The Women's Circus Child Safety Reporting Process is accessible via the Women's Circus website, and simple, easy to follow steps are outlined for children in the entry area and regularly communicated to children by the Trainers.

If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call 000

All concerns, allegations, disclosures or observations of child abuse, misconduct, exploitation, or breaches of this policy must be reported as soon as possible. Any report made to Women's Circus staff of this nature should not be questioned and must be reported as soon as possible.

The outcome of any report findings will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Women's Circus leadership team and will align with relevant legislative requirements. Possible outcomes could include a formal warning or exclusion from specific Women's Circus activities or places of operation.

You can report to Women's Circus Executive Director (execdirector@womenscircus.org.au) The Chair of the Women's Circus board (boardchair@womenscircus.org.au) or you can talk to any Women's Circus Staff including Trainers.