

Child Protection for Festivals and Events: Document 2

SCDA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This is a summary document. For the full Policy, please look at the website under What We do, in the section labelled "Child Protection Policy" or contact SCDA National Office for a hard copy.

It is the policy of Scottish Community Drama Association to ensure that all participants in workshops, festivals and drama productions are safeguarded from physical, sexual and emotional harm while taking part.

SCDA requires that all tutors, workshop leaders or helpers, production staff and other paid or voluntary helpers working with children and young people follow the Code of Conduct set out below. There are particular rules for Festivals, which are available separately.

CODE OF CONDUCT

As an adult working with children and young people as part of an SCDA activity, **you should:**

- Treat all children and young people with respect
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour
- Plan activities which involve more than one person being present, or ensure that other adults are within sight or hearing wherever possible
- Respect everyone's right to personal privacy
- Be available to listen to the concerns of young participants, and to refer them to other sources of help where appropriate
- Encourage young participants to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues and recognise that caution is required when discussing such issues
- Be aware that even caring physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted

You should not:

- Permit abusive behaviour such as bullying, taunting, racist behaviour
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- Drink alcohol while in a child care role, or offer alcohol to under 18's while in a child care role.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour such as crushes or tantrums
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Exaggerate or trivialise any child abuse issues
- Make suggestive remarks or actions, even in jest
- Deliberately place yourself or others in a potentially compromising situation
- Believe that "it could never happen to me"

Administration of an Event

All SCDA event organisers must follow the following good practice

- Carry out a risk assessment of the event, and ensure that risk is minimised
- Appoint a designated Child Protection Officer, to whom any allegations or incidents are reported. They should have received Child Protection Training.
- Ensure that all staff or volunteers who will be in a child care role have obtained an Enhanced Disclosure Scotland Certificate
- Ensure that staff or volunteers who have not been checked through Disclosure Scotland are **never** alone in charge of children at any time

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- Ensure that all participants – parents, helpers, volunteers, drama team etc – are fully aware of their responsibilities under the law.

More detailed guidance for Child Protection at events and Festivals is available separately from your local SCDA Festival organiser or from Fiona Rogan at SCDA national office (telephone 0131 558 8464)

What to do if something goes wrong

If you have any reason to suspect that a child or young person is being abused:

- Inform the Club Youth Contact or SCDA Youth contact immediately of your suspicions
- Make a written record of all details of the facts known to you, and give a copy to the most appropriate Youth Contact.

If a child or young person tells you about abuse by someone else:

- Stay calm, do not be shocked, and try to act normally
- Allow the individual to speak freely, without interruption, but do not question them or attempt to investigate yourself
- Offer support and reassurance, assure them that you believe what they say. Explain that you cannot keep it a secret, and that you will speak to a designated person about it
- Report the matter as detailed above.

If you receive an allegation of abuse about any other Leader, or about yourself,

- Immediately inform the SCDA Child Protection Officer, and keep a written record of all the facts as you know them.
- Try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could lead to further compromise
- Fill in an incident report form which you can get from the Festival Child Protection Officer or download from our website

Please note that the term “abuse” does not only relate to physical or sexual abuse, but any failure to care for young people according to our policy. This includes inappropriate jokes or gestures, use of alcohol or other actions that could lead young people into harm.

In all cases, but particularly more serious concerns, you must refer the matter to a designated contact person, who has been trained in Child Protection Issues – do not try to deal with any possible cases of abuse on your own. At all SCDA run events, a named Youth Contact will be on hand at all times.

For further information and advice, contact Fiona Rogan at SCDA Headquarters, 5 York Place, Edinburgh EH1 3EB tel 0131 558 8464

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