

**Brainstorm Productions**  
**Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**

Brainstorm Productions acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we operate. We acknowledge and respect their contributions, experience and knowledge as First Nations people. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy was approved by Brainstorm Productions management on 22 August 2022. It demonstrates the strong commitment of management and staff to child safety and wellbeing, and how our organisation keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

<b>Policy title</b>	Brainstorm Productions Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
<b>Purpose</b>	This Policy outlines how Brainstorm Productions prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps we will take to do this.
<b>Statement of commitment to child safety</b>	<p>All children who attend a Brainstorm Productions performance have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our audiences will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm.</p> <p>We are committed to delivering content that helps children to be safe and protect their social and emotional wellbeing. We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun while enjoying a live performance.</p>
<b>Scope</b>	This policy applies to all staff, management, children and other individuals involved in our organisation. This policy applies to all activities conducted by Brainstorm Productions, including performances in schools, the post-performance discussion and any other activities that may involve contact with school staff or students (e.g. set up and pack down; school sign in).
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<p>Management has the role of ensuring Brainstorm Productions prioritises children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.</p> <p>Management will champion and model a child safe culture at Brainstorm Productions. We encourage anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern. Management will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.</p> <p>Everyone at Brainstorm Productions has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. Management will make sure that staff are</p>

The information below outlines how Brainstorm Productions will implement each of the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, as well as the additional considerations included in the revised Victorian Child Safe Standards.

**1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.**

- The welfare of children will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm;
- We are committed to delivering content that helps children to be safe in all aspects of life, including at school, at home, in the community and online. Our programs aim to empower children with the skills and confidence to care for their social and emotional wellbeing and seek help when they feel unsafe or emotionally distressed. We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun while enjoying a live performance;
- This commitment to child safety and wellbeing is modelled by Management and office staff, by placing child safety and wellbeing at the centre of the recruitment, training, induction and supervision of all employees, especially the actors who perform in schools;
- We publicly demonstrate our commitment to child safety on our website and social media, and celebrate dates and initiatives that champion child safety in the community, such as National Child Protection Week and Working with Children Week.

**2. Children and young people are informed and empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.**

- Brainstorm Productions is a child-centred organisation. We value the voices of children and respect the rights of children, and will act on safety concerns raised by children or their families.
- The primary aim of our organisation is to empower children and to educate and engage them about their rights, how to raise concerns, express their feelings and needs, and access support from formal and informal support networks if they feel unsafe. We do this in the following ways:
  - We demonstrate and describe social, emotional and help-seeking skills and provide information about children's rights through the content of our live performances in schools;
  - At the start of each performance we ask a member of school staff to remind all students of their right to feel safe and how to access support from school staff and

# Prioritizing Child Safety

There is a distinct difference in *saying* we prioritize child safety and putting effective policies in place to protect children from sexual abuse. In order to create an environment where children are safe from abuse we must face the uncomfortable reality that the people who are most likely to sexually assault a child are the people we believe we can trust with children.

# What Doesn't Work to Protect Children from Sexual Abuse

- Trusting people based solely on their reputation or authority
- Assuming schools and programs for children take comprehensive steps to protect children
- Treating 'stranger danger' education as an effective sexual abuse prevention strategy
- Not talking about sexual abuse with children to avoid scaring them

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Those that perpetrate sexual abuse do not fit into any stereotypical demographic, in fact, the most prolific predators are often very well respected and trusted by their peers and the families whose children they are trusted with. The power given to these 'elite' predators only serves to continue a steady stream of victims, discourages disclosure from victims, and deters colleagues and other protective adults from reporting.

## What Does Work

- Being open and expecting others to behave in a way that reduces opportunity for abuse
- Requesting information on screening of employees/volunteers, training for abuse prevention, policies to reduce risk and protocol for reporting
- Accepting that the greatest risk to children will come from those who they know
- Educating children to understand their bodies, and the concepts of consent and personal responsibility for one's action