

Tiptree Amateur Dramatic Society

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Tiptree Amateur Dramatic Society recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

The society recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The society is committed to a practice which protects children from harm. The society accepts and recognises its responsibility to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

THE SOCIETY

We believe that:

- a. the welfare of the child is paramount
- b. all children have the right to protection from abuse
- c. all suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- d. The society should be clear on how to respond appropriately

We will endeavour to ensure that:

- a. all children be treated equally and with respect and dignity
- b. the welfare of each child is paramount
- c. a balanced relationship based upon mutual trust will be built
- d. enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism
- e. bullying will not be accepted or condoned
- f. all adult members of the society provide a positive role model for dealing with other people
- g. action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- h. it will keep up to date with health and safety legislation
- i. it will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and update this policy as required
- j. it will hold a register of every child involved with the society and will retain a contact name and number in case of emergencies

The society has child protection procedures which accompany this policy. This policy should also be read in conjunction with our Health and Safety Policy.

The society has a dedicated "Junior Group Contact", who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to, or secondly our Chairperson:

Junior Group Contact: Alex Berriman		Chairperson: Roger Lyons
Telephone: 01621 819629		Telephone: 01621 817251
E-mail: lexi_b@hotmail.com		E-mail: roger@rallyons.plus.com
Contact information updated: May 2007		

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CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

The Responsibilities of the Society

Before any production and throughout rehearsals and workshops the society will endeavour to:

- a. Identify the person/s designated as "chaperone" who will take responsibility for the duration of the performance / rehearsal period
- b. Ensure that children are supervised at all times
- c. Ensure knowledge of local services and contact numbers in the case of an emergency

Un-supervised Contact

- a. Ensure that two adult members are present at all rehearsals and adequate chaperones during performances
- b. Wherever possible no adult will have unsupervised contact, if this is unavoidable then it will be carried out in a public area or designated room with a door open (where required adequate personal checks will be carried out)

Physical Contact

- a. Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear

Sensitive Information / Material

- a. Any photographs taken of children will be stored safely and the society will not undertake to publish details that would reveal the identity / address / school etc of the children
- b. Written consent will be gained-from parents prior to taking any photographs-of children-for promotional or other purposes
- c. Parents will be informed of any sensitive material in any play in which their child is involved
- d. The society's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use
- e. The society will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as personal checks

The Responsibilities of the Parents

- a. To read and respond to any newsletters, consent requests etc where appropriate
- b. To work as a partnership with the society to share responsibility for the children
- c. To ensure safe delivery of their child into the premises and collection from the premises

Note: 1. If only one member of the society is on the premises, parents must stay with their child until a second member is present

Note: 2. No child will be allowed to leave unaccompanied by the parent responsible, the society will only accept responsibility for the child whilst on the premises (once a child reaches 15 years of age parents may sign a waiver if they wish their child to leave the premises unaccompanied to make their own way home)

- d. To support all productions and help with requests to supply costumes

All parents are welcome at rehearsals

The Responsibilities of the Juniors

- a. To treat junior and adult members with respect

Suspicion of Abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of the society, please make this known to the Junior Group Contact or the Chairperson
- Make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of the society, the society undertakes to contact the police immediately

Disclosure of Abuse

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- a. Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action
- b. Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer
- c. Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for child protection. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help
- d. Reassure the child that "they did the right thing" in telling someone
- e. Tell the child what you are going to do next
- f. Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child protection. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities
- g. As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time and any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Recording

- In all situations, whether or not shared with a child protection agency, the details of allegation or reported incident will be recorded
- Accurate notes of time, dates, incident or disclosure, parties involved, what was said and done and by whom, action taken to investigate, further action taken e.g. suspension of individual and if relevant: reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, name of person reporting and to whom it was reported
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know

Rights and Confidentiality

- The society recognises both alleged abuser and the child who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998

Chaperones

- a. To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be notified of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of appropriate clothing and footwear requirements
- b. If a child is injured while in the care of the society, the child will be made as comfortable as possible until emergency services arrive. In all instances first-aid will be administered and the injury will be recorded in an accident book which will be counter-signed by the Junior Group Contact
- c. If a child joins the production with an obvious injury then this will be recorded in the accident book and counter-signed by the Junior Group Contact as an injury not sustained whilst under the care of the society
- d. Chaperones are expected to exercise the care that would be expected of a good parent
- e. The maximum number of children under a chaperones care is 12
- f. Potential chaperones will be persons known to the society

Chaperones . . .

- g. Chaperones will be made aware of the society's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Health and Safety for Children
- h. If the chaperone is not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the director
- i. If the chaperone considers that the child is unwell or too tired to continue, they should bring this to the attention of the director
- j. No chaperone should allow the children to carry out anything dangerous to their person
- k. Children will be kept together at all times unless separated for changing or washroom arrangements
- l. Chaperones should be aware of where the children are at all times
- m. Children must either be accompanied to the toilet by either a chaperone or another child, staying together at all times
- n. During performances, chaperones will be responsible for keeping a list of those present in their care
- o. Children are not to leave the theatre unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents and arrangements for children's' collection should be known to the chaperone, children should be signed out when leaving
- p. If a parent has not collected the child, the chaperone to stay with the child or make arrangements for a member of the society to take them home

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