

# **COMMUNITY PLAYERS OF CONCORD, NH POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS**

## **1. PURPOSE**

The Community Players of Concord, NH (“CPC”) is an organization committed to providing a safe environment for adults and children. The following Policies and Procedures (collectively referred to as “this Policy”) are adopted to support CPC in meeting its commitment to protect the minors who participate in its activities.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

“Minor” - a person under the age of 18 years

“CPC Youth Program” – shows and camps offered by CPC’s youth division, The Children’s Theatre Project (“CTP”). CPC Mainstage shows and other adult theatre programs that happen to include minors in the cast or crew are NOT “CPC Youth Programs.”

CPC Youth Program “Manager” – the show director of the CTP show or camp shall be presumed to be the Manager unless CPC’s board of directors appoints a different person to serve as Manager for that particular CTP show or camp.

CPC Youth Program “Staff” – shall be presumed to include the director, music director, choreographer, stage manager, lead costumer, and official camp assistants. Other volunteers assisting those individuals are presumed not to be CPC Youth Program Staff.

“Authorized Adult” - a person age 18 or over working in a CPC Youth Program who has successfully completed a criminal background check and a CPC Protection of Minors Training.

## **3. BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR CPC YOUTH PROGRAMS**

CPC will conduct annual criminal background checks on all CPC Youth Program Managers and CPC Youth Program Staff over the age of 18 who might occasionally be called upon to be alone with minors. This will usually include only the director, stage manager and lead costumer, who will therefore usually be the only Authorized Adults working on that CTP project. If additional Authorized Adults are needed or desired to work on a particular CTP show or camp, a special request should be made to the board of directors to authorize the needed additional background check(s) and training for those additional individuals.

The background checks for CPC Youth Programs described above shall conform to requirements for Youth Skills Camps under NH RSA 170-E56, II and He-C 4004.03. This means, in part, that a person shall be ineligible to serve in their proposed function if said background check shows

any convictions involving (1) causing or threatening to cause direct physical injury to any individual; (2) causing or threatening harm of any nature to any child or children; or (3) any sex offense.

#### **4. CPC PROTECTION OF MINORS TRAINING**

All CPC Youth Program Staff shall undergo CPC Protection of Minors Training, which will include an organized review of this Policy and of any other training materials or videos devised by the CPC board of directors from time to time.

For Mainstage shows or other adult theatre programs that happen to include participants who are minors, the show's director, stage manager and lead costumer shall also undergo CPC Protection of Minors Training. The director shall be responsible for 1) providing a copy of this Policy to the show's music director and choreographer; and 2) including discussion of this Policy during an early production team meeting and as part of the first all-cast meeting, which usually happens at the first read-through.

#### **5. WORKING DIRECTLY WITH CHILDREN**

In CPC Youth Programs, only Authorized Adults are allowed to be left alone with minors. Other adults may work directly with minors only if an Authorized Adult is present. Note: while Authorized Adults are permitted to be alone with two or more children, they remain bound by the policy prohibiting one-on-one contact with a single child as described below in section 6.

In Mainstage shows or other adult theatre programs where minors happen to be involved, adults may work directly with minors only when at least two adults are present. It is preferred practice that minors remain in groups of two or more while working in the presence of adults.

#### **6. ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS PROHIBITED**

The following safety practices are to be observed for both the protection of minors and to protect adults from unwarranted suspicion.

CPC Youth Program Staff, and adults working with minors during Mainstage shows or other CPC programs, shall avoid one-on-one, private interactions with minors.

Work with minors should be conducted in an open environment in plain view of others.

Riding in private vehicles with minors must be avoided.

Adults shall not initiate one-on-one contact with any minor outside of the program. This includes in-person meetings and virtual communications such as texting, video chats or social media contact. Group communications necessary for the operation of the program – such as group

emails regarding rehearsal schedules or reminders – are permitted. If communicating with a single minor outside the program is required for program purposes, (e.g., to ask the minor about a matter that pertains only to them) the minor’s parent or guardian must be present, or in the case of virtual communications, included on the communication.

If there is an existing relationship between an adult and a minor outside of the program, such as existing friendships or family relationships, the involved adult must disclose this to the CPC Youth Program Manager, to the Mainstage show director, or to the leader of the other CPC program, who will confirm with the minor’s parent or legal guardian that their child is allowed to have outside contact with that adult.

## **7. BATHROOM AND DRESSING ROOM POLICY; PHYSICAL CONTACT POLICY**

As an extension of the one-on-one prohibition outlined above, an adult should never be alone with a minor in a bathroom or dressing room with the door closed, nor inside of a closed stall with a child in a public bathroom. Depending on their age and abilities, children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible in such situations.

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for an adult participating in CPC programs to have physical contact with minors. Such contact should be in response to the child’s immediate need, of limited duration, and appropriate to their age and stage of development. If a minor does require adult assistance, such as with putting on a costume or a microphone pack, the adult will ensure this is done in a space permitting them to be observed by other adults and/or children. If an open space or group changing area is not available or appropriate, leaving the door ajar is a sufficient precaution that also provides some privacy to the child.

## **8. REPORTING INCIDENTS OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

NH law requires that **any person** who has any reason to suspect that a child under age 18 has been abused or neglected must report that suspicion immediately to the NH Division for Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Definitions of what constitutes child abuse or neglect may be found at N.H. RSA 169-C:3.

To report child abuse or neglect, call the NH Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) at (800) 894-5533 (within NH) or (603) 271-6562 (out of state). The lines are open and staffed 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays.

## **9. CODE OF CONDUCT**

The following are inappropriate behaviors that are not permitted during CPC Youth Programs or in any program offered by CPC, by either minors or adults:

- Bullying, verbal abuse, violence, or threatening harm

- Use of profanity or telling of sexually explicit stories/ jokes
- Discipline involving abusive, humiliating or frightening language
- Engaging in any type of sexual activity, including between consenting adults or between minors
- Use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs

An adult or minor participant in a CPC Youth Program may be dismissed from the Program for demonstrating the above behaviors at the discretion of the Manager.

## **10. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY**

Clear or suspected violations of this Policy, including the Code of Conduct, should be reported to the CPC Youth Program Manager, or the Mainstage show director or stage manager, who shall in turn report the same to the CPC board of directors using the CPC Incident Report Form. Copies of the Incident Report Form are stored in a folder hanging near the Studio bulletin board.

If the CPC Youth Program Manager or Mainstage director or stage manager is the person whose behavior is in question, the incident may be reported directly to the CPC board of directors.

[Approved by the Board of Directors — February 5, 2025]