



hey dee ho

Child Safety Policy



Australian Institute of
Music & Childhood
Development



hey dee ho's commitment to child safety

hey dee ho is committed to the safety, participation, equity, and empowerment of all children. The welfare of children will always be our priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. We empower children to build self-confidence and develop social and physical skills through our music, yoga, fitness & drama programs. We aim to create a fun and safe environment where children feel safe, happy, respected, and heard. Hey dee ho values diversity and welcomes and supports the participation of all children, including children with disability and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team and staff to achieve this commitment.

hey dee ho's commitment to the cultural safety of First Nations children

hey dee ho educational services are committed to creating physical and online environments where First Nations culture is celebrated, respected, and valued. We embed indigenous perspectives and welcome First Nations children, families and communities with dignity, safety, equity, and respect. Our educational programs and resources embed cultural safety opportunities that empower First Nations children to enjoy and express their culture. We have zero tolerance to racism.

Definitions

Child abuse means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under relevant criminal/child safety legislation, such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual, and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative.

Child/children means a person who is under the age of 18.

Responsibilities

The directors, managers, and franchisees of hey dee ho have the ultimate responsibility to champion and model a child safety culture, prioritise child safety, and take appropriate action if a child safety concern is raised. They will ensure all employees have completed our child safety training.

The directors of hey dee ho are responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies, procedures, and a Code of Conduct are in place. The directors will conduct an annual review of how effectively we are upholding our commitment to child safety and our child safety policies. This includes identifying and managing/eradicating risks of child abuse and harm.

The child safety officer is responsible for responding to any child safety related complaints or concerns concerning a hey dee ho employee or franchisee. We encourage anyone involved in our organisation to report a child safety concern.

All hey dee ho employees and franchisees share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse and harm. Everyone must familiarise themselves with the relevant child safety laws and our child safety policies and comply with all requirements. We all have a responsibility to uphold our commitment to the safety, participation, equity, and empowerment of all children.

Our organisational culture aims for all staff (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

Empowerment and participation

hey dee ho values the unique insights, talents, and experiences of children. We aim to create a safe environment for children to develop self-confidence, resilience and to speak up if they feel unsafe. We train our staff to value the views of children and equip them with the skills to empower children in age-appropriate ways.

Our presenters create a safe space for all children to participate, where they feel comfortable, energised, and ready to have fun. We aim to help children to fully participate in our programs and to create a physically and emotionally safe environment that is inclusive to all. We do this by:

- warmly welcoming children at the beginning of our sessions
- acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land
- speaking to and observing children to identify their needs, providing appropriate activities, and adapting practices that support them
- showing interest in children's ideas and insights
- encouraging children to choose and lead interactions
- supporting and encouraging friendships
- recognising that children of different ages and stages will be able to do different things and interact in different ways
- having a variety of gender-inclusive props, songs, and activities
- providing gentle guidance on how to interact in the space and with others
- celebrating diversity and culture
- encouraging children to speak up if they feel unsafe

Families and communities

hey dee ho believes that protecting children from abuse and harm requires commitment and effort from the whole community. Parents, families, and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time through our contact email address and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us. We also ask for feedback from families and community via our stakeholder feedback surveys.

The hey dee ho website provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices.

Culturally safe environments for all First Nations children and their families

hey dee ho is committed to creating environments where First Nations children, families and community members are welcome and included. We seek input from First Nations children, families, and community members to help shape our programs. Our programs embed indigenous perspectives and provide culturally safe opportunities for First Nations children to express, explore, share, and enjoy their culture.

An Acknowledgment of Country is done at the beginning of each of our sessions. By acknowledging, respecting, and celebrating First Nations communities, cultures, and values we aim to create an inclusive

and welcoming environment.

hey dee ho celebrates First Nations cultural events such as NAIDOC week and acknowledges other significant days such as National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week.

We have zero tolerance for racism.

Valuing diversity

We are committed to the safety, cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of all children irrespective of their circumstances and background. In doing this we:

- welcome and support participation of children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ+ children and First Nations children and their families.
- adapt our programs to ensure all children can participate, have fun, and interact with our sessions.
- train all franchisees and employees in understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety in the delivery of our programs
- expect our presenter's attitudes and behaviours to always be inclusive and respectful
- encourage children to celebrate diversity and provide age-appropriate opportunities for them to explore their own culture and identity through songs, dance, drama, and movement.
- acknowledge and celebrate important cultural dates in our sessions
- ensure our props, images and activities represent the diversity in the community. We also strive to reflect diversity through representation in our staff.
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and act when discrimination or exclusion is identified.

Recruiting, supporting, and training staff

hey dee ho is committed to child safe recruitment, selection, and human resource management practices.

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled and appropriate people to work with children, as outlined in our recruitment and screening policy. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety. Our organisation understands that when recruiting staff, we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

All employees are required to hold a valid Working with Children Check, Working with Vulnerable People registration, Police Check, Ochre Card, or Blue Card and to provide evidence of this Check. We carry out reference checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people.

All third parties, advisors, and content creators who provide information, content or guidance in child related matters are required to hold a valid Working with Children Check, Working with Vulnerable People registration, Police Check, Ochre Card, or Blue Card and to provide evidence of this Check. This also extends to third parties who may have incidental contact with children or could be perceived by members of the public as being connected with or to hey dee ho.

Hey dee ho is committed to ensuring that all franchisees and employees receive annual training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and support their engagement with children. A record of completion for each individual will be kept in their personnel file.

Issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct, Child Safety Complaints Handling policy and Disciplinary policy.

Code of conduct

Hey dee ho has a Code of Conduct that all employees and franchisees must always comply with. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including and up to termination of employment.

All third-party contractors are also expected to abide by the Code of Conduct, and where they are engaging with children will have to sign an agreement to comply with the code, prior to delivering any services.

Complaints and reporting

Hey dee ho aims to create an open and aware environment where concerns for the safety and wellbeing of a child can be raised and managed in a fair and just manner. All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or child.

We have a Child Safety Complaints Handling policy that includes information and guidance for reporting a child safety concern or complaint and how a complain/concern will be responded to. An easy-to-understand flow-chart of our complaint handling process is available on our website.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose below). If a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, then franchisees and employees must report it in accordance with our Child Safety Complaints Handling policy. Franchisees and employees are required to prioritise children's safety in any response and to report all potentially criminal conduct to the Police.

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred, then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves).
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed.
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it.
- observing suspicious behaviour.

Our organisation takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.
- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

If there is a concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

Risk Management

Hey dee ho is committed to identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environment in which we operate. We recognise that we are exposed to child safety risks due to the nature of our services and programs. Therefore, we will proactively assess and manage child safety risks, including conducting regular risks assessments and developing a risk management plan. We will use information and feedback received from staff, franchisees, children, families, carers and the community to inform our risk management plan. Hey dee ho will review and update our risk management plan at least

annually to ensure it has been implemented, and to monitor its effectiveness. We review our risk management plan after a safety incident or if a child safety concern occurs.

Record keeping

Hey dee ho is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns. All child safety complaints, concerns and near misses will be confidentially recorded and stored on our IT network. Records will be stored securely and kept by hey dee ho for at least 45 years.

Breach of this policy and/or the Code of Conduct

Any breach of this policy and/or the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment.

Biennial Review or After Incident Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following any significant incidents if they occur.



