



Screen Industry Child Safety Code Of Conduct

We are committed to child safety and wellbeing.

PRODUCTION COMPANY _____

is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in the New Zealand screen sector.

PRODUCTION COMPANY _____

has zero tolerance for child abuse. All allegations and child safety concerns are treated seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures.

PRODUCTION COMPANY _____

is committed to providing guidance on child safe environments where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard. Particular attention is paid to the cultural safety of Māori children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability and those who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and/or intersex. Our complaints process is child-focused and responsive to the concerns of children and young people.

Every person involved in the New Zealand screen sector has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people in the screen industry is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct is intended to be made available to all production staff at the commencement of their employment and it is to be available and/or provided to staff during the course of their employment or involvement with a production. The Code forms comprehensive directions to these employees or other workers as to the expected standard of behaviour.

This Code applies to all who conduct work in the screen industry in a paid or unpaid capacity including, but not limited to: producers, managers, directors, cast, crew, students on placement, volunteers, interns, trainees, contractors and consultants.

The aim of this Code is to outline the standards of behaviour expected of all employees on a production. This Code does not attempt to provide a rigid, detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of your work. Instead, it sets out general expectations of the standards of behaviour required and gives some examples of the types of behaviour that are or are not acceptable.

If a certain behaviour or activity is not specifically prohibited by this Code, it does not follow that it is ethical or will not lead to disciplinary action or indeed to criminal prosecution.

The Code places an obligation on all employees to take responsibility for their own conduct and to work with colleagues cooperatively to achieve a consultative and collaborative workplace where children are safe and people are happy and proud to work.

PRODUCTION COMPANY _____

explicitly forbids child abuse, corporal and degrading punishment.



Definitions

A common understanding about the nature and impact of child abuse informs our response to child safety. Production companies, producers, managers, directors, cast and crew must be aware of the types and indicators of child abuse, and the impact of child abuse and neglect on the healthy development of children and young people.

The abuse of children and young people is highly complex in nature with multiple forms of abuse often co-existing. Abuse can be the following:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- sexual abuse
- sexual exploitation
- sexually harmful behaviours in children
- exposure to family violence
- grooming.

A summary of each abuse type can be found at Appendix A.

Grooming refers to actions deliberately undertaken by an adult, adolescent or child to befriend and influence a child (and in some circumstances members of the child's family) with the intention of achieving the criminal objective of sexual activity with children. Grooming is generally subtle and ambiguous. Adults therefore need to be vigilant in reporting any breach of policy, code of conduct or generalised concern to enable patterns of behaviour to be identified early and potential abuse prevented. Grooming behaviours can include the following:

- Sharing secrets with a child;
- Engaging inappropriately with a child on social media;
- Non-sexual touching such as tickling, hugging or rough play;
- Allowing the child to break the rules;
- Spending time with the child away from protective adults; and
- Favouritism toward a child through giving gifts or money.

Please refer to Understanding Grooming Behaviour at Appendix B.

Corporal punishment is any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm.

Degrading punishment is any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.

Bullying and harassment are also forms of abuse. They will not be tolerated in our production company and will be treated seriously.



Who has to comply with the Code of Conduct?

All employees of

PRODUCTION COMPANY _____

must comply with this Code. Students on placement, volunteers, interns, trainees, contractors, consultants and visitors on set are also expected to comply with this Code.

Staff, practicum students, visitors, volunteers and contractors will be held accountable for breaches of the Code.

How to Comply

You must:

- a. conduct yourself, both personally and professionally, in a manner that upholds the ethos and reputation of the production company;
- b. comply with
PRODUCTION COMPANY'S _____
policies and procedures;
- c. act ethically and responsibly; and
- d. be accountable for your actions and decisions.

If you are responsible for engaging or managing students on placement, volunteers, interns, trainees, contractors or consultants, it is your responsibility to make them aware of the expectations of conduct consistent with the Code of Conduct during the period of their engagement. They should be told that any conduct that is not consistent with the Code may result in their engagement being terminated.



Principles of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct will not only help in making productions a safer environment for children, it will also reduce the risk that staff will be unjustly accused of unprofessional or abusive conduct.

As **PRODUCTION COMPANY** _____

has a duty of care to any children involved in the production, the expectation and understanding is that all staff will act in the best interests of children and young people and that the welfare and safety of children and young people will be of paramount concern. All interactions therefore should be transparent and meet the principles of the Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct is intended to provide staff with guidance as to the expected behaviours of all staff, students on placement, volunteers, interns, trainees, contractors and consultants engaged by a production company.

Staff are expected to behave in a manner which is in accord with production company expectations, professional expectations, as well as the expected norms of our community. You must be fully aware that your actions will be subject to appropriate scrutiny by other staff and you must be prepared to give an account of your behaviours to leadership when requested.

Any staff member who is unsure about appropriate boundaries in a particular circumstance or who must act contrary to either specific or implied boundaries, must consult as early as possible with their line manager to discuss the possible breaches. If a breach inadvertently occurs the staff member must bring it to the attention of senior management immediately.

Staff are responsible for their own actions and should avoid any conduct which might be construed by a reasonable person as inappropriate.

Nothing in this Code should be taken to limit the circumstances in which the production company may take disciplinary action in respect of an employee.

This Code is not intended to be contractual in nature and does not impose any contractual obligations on the production company.

What happens if I breach the Code of Conduct?

All alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct will be subject to scrutiny and if substantiated staff may be warned, suspended or have employment terminated.

Any potentially illegal activity will be reported to the Police and appropriate actions will be taken by the production company.

The consequences of inappropriate behaviour and 'breaches' of this Code will depend on the nature of the breach.

Employees are required to report all objectively observable behaviour that is not permitted by the Code to the Producer. *NB: If the prohibited behaviour is by the Producer, then it should be reported to the Police and Oranga Tamariki.*

Factors the production company may consider when deciding what action to take in response to the breach may include:

- a. the seriousness of the breach, including possible risk to others;
- b. the likelihood of the breach occurring again;
- c. whether the employee has committed the breach more than once;
- d. the risk the breach poses to employees, children and young people or any others; and whether the breach would be serious enough to warrant formal disciplinary action.



Actions that may be taken by the production company in respect of a breach of the Code include management or remedial action, training or disciplinary action ranging from a warning to termination of employment.

Professional Boundaries

Professional boundaries are invisible structures imposed by legal, ethical and professional bodies that determine the limits of a relationship between an adult employee and a child or young person and their family. Professional boundaries protect the space between the adult's power and the child's vulnerability.

Professional boundaries are demonstrated in the following ways:

- Clearly established limits that allow for safe connections between adult employees and children and young people;
- A clear understanding of the limits and responsibilities of the adult employee's role; and
- Being friendly, not friends.

Adults need to treat children and young people with courtesy and respect and provide an environment that encourages the children and young people to do the same.

As an adult on a production, you are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people. You must actively seek to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed.

While not all employees are required to manage and supervise children and young people, it is important for all employees to understand <Production Company>'s child protection policies.

An adult/child relationship is not equal. Professional boundaries are breached when you, as an adult, misuse this power imbalance in such a way that the child or young person's welfare is compromised. You must take responsibility for establishing and maintaining professional boundaries with children and young people.

Language

At all times, when speaking with children and young people, care must be taken to use appropriate language. You must always treat children and young people with respect and without favouritism. There is no place for sarcasm, derogatory remarks, inappropriate familiarity or offensive comments.



Physical Contact

When physical contact with a child or young person is necessary, you must ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. Children and young people should be informed of what contact is to be expected and their consent to the contact should be sought. In drama, the Intimacy Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the appropriateness of physical contact during scenes.

Physical contact not related to acting roles should only be child-initiated and stay within acceptable professional boundaries. You should never kiss a child or have them sit on your lap.

Makeup & Costume

Makeup and Costume departments have increased physical contact with children.

Be respectful of the child or young person's personal space and privacy as much as possible and practicable. Only adults directly involved in costume and makeup should be in the area when children and young people are getting ready.

It is important to verbally communicate your actions to a child or young person and let them move their own body as much as possible. For example, "I am going to put some pins in down the side of the shirt now. Can you please lift your arms up?"

Change rooms and toileting

Children and young people have a right to privacy in change rooms and toilets. You should not be alone in a toilet or change room with a child or young person. For young children, this may mean it is appropriate to leave a door open for observational supervision.

For young children, you should not do anything for them that they can do themselves eg pull up or down their clothing or underwear.

Romantic or Sexual Conduct

You must not engage in any act or conduct directed towards a child or young person, of a romantic or sexual nature. This includes obscene language or gestures of a sexual nature, suggestive remarks or actions or jokes, or humour of a sexual nature.

You must not have a romantic or sexual relationship with a child or young person in the production. It is irrelevant whether the relationship is homosexual or heterosexual, consensual or non-consensual, or condoned by parents or caregivers.

If you consider that a child or young person is being overly familiar, seeking to establish a personal relationship with you or has developed a 'crush' on you, you should report your concerns to the Producer as soon as possible so that a plan can be developed to manage the situation effectively and sensitively.



Electronic Communication & Social Media

The unmonitored environment of social media is often used to groom children and young people for abuse and exploitation.

You should exercise good judgement when using electronic communication, following the principles of ethical behaviour and use of appropriate language in messages. You must not send messages that are harassing, discriminatory, defamatory, threatening, abusive or coercive.

You should not invite children or young people to your personal social media or accept requests to connect from the children and young people.

You should report any situations where you become aware of the inappropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites to the Producer (or to the Police and Oranga Tamariki if the inappropriate use is by the Producer).

Images of Children & Young People

You must not take photographs or videos of children and young people on set without the permission of their parent/guardian and without clearly outlining the purpose of using the image, how it is going to be used and for how long. This includes images and video taken with a mobile phone.

You must not share or disseminate any images of children and young people in a way contrary to the purpose for which permission was given.

Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco

You must not attend work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed and/or restricted substances.

Do not consume alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed and/or restricted substances in the course of your work.

Do not give children or young people or other employees illegal drugs or restricted substances, or encourage or condone their use.

You must not purchase alcohol for, or give alcohol to, any person under the age of 18 years, or encourage or condone the use of alcohol by children and young people during production activities.

You must not purchase tobacco or tobacco products for, or give tobacco or tobacco products to, any person under the age of 18 years.

Transport

You should not transport a child or young person in a private vehicle without the child's chaperone or parentally approved alternative.

In circumstances where this is not possible, you should contact the Child Performers Coordinator or Producer and inform them of the purpose of the travel, how long you expect to take and what your expected time of arrival is. You must also confirm your arrival with the Child Performers Coordinator. In such situations, it is recommended to ensure there are others also travelling in the vehicle (ideally another vetted production member).



Chaperones & House Parents

Chaperones and House Parents have additional responsibilities for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people involved in a production. They also have the opportunity to develop close relationships with children and young people, and as such professional boundaries are especially important.

You must ensure you consider the following professional boundaries when dealing with children and young people:

- emotional boundaries;
- relationship boundaries;
- power boundaries;
- communication boundaries; and
- physical boundaries.

Chaperones and House Parents are explicitly forbidden to use any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment with the children and young people in their care.

You should treat children and young people fairly, without treating any individuals as “favourites”.

Assessing a child or young person who is injured or ill may necessitate touching the child or young person. Always advise them of what you intend doing and, if they are conscious, seek their consent.



Appendix B

Understanding Grooming Behaviour

Child grooming is a premeditated behaviour intended to secure the trust and cooperation of children prior to engaging in sexual conduct, is a process that commences with sexual predators choosing a location or target area likely to be attractive to children. A process of grooming then commences during which offenders take a particular interest in their child victim to make them feel special with the intention of gaining their trust. As trust is developed between the child victim and the offender, offenders then seek to desensitise child victims to sexual conduct by introducing a sexual element into the relationship.

Grooming in a child protection context refers to deliberate actions undertaken to engage in sexual activity with a child. It differs from sexual abuse in that it is primarily a preparatory activity occurring before abuse occurs, but is continued during and after the abuse to ensure the safety of the groomer.

Grooming is a subtle, gradual, and escalating process of building trust with a child and those around the child, both children and adults, with the express purpose of the sexual gratification of the perpetrator, this generally involves engaging in sexual activity with the child. It is deliberate and purposeful and occurs both before and after the abuse. Abusers may groom children and supporting adults for weeks, months, or even years before any sexual abuse actually takes place. The grooming may occur in person, via cyber media and/or other forms of communication.

A committed offender will employ grooming behaviour from an early stage and because it is so subtle and gradual the child may not even be aware that the actual abuse when it occurs, is wrong or harmful. The grooming occurs with the child but also with those supporting networks around the child which might normally act as a deterrent or protective element. The perpetrator will invest significant energy and patience to minimise the risk of detection and exposure.

The groomer will employ manipulation, guilt, shame, bribery, coercion or exploit low self-esteem to psychologically manipulate the child. As a result, the child becomes increasingly dependent on the groomer and increasingly alienated from protective elements including possible sources to disclose to. This is a deliberate strategy employed to maintain the secrecy of the abuse and to ensure the silence of the child.

The groomer will exploit any vulnerabilities of the protective elements around the child, including parent and family circumstances and school systemic weaknesses. Groomers are very adept at identifying anomalies, boundary ambiguities and any lack of systemic awareness, and then using them to deflect attention from their own actions and intentions.

While distinguishing between appropriate intent and inappropriate intent is often difficult, particularly for a child, it is essential that organisations have very clear expectations and boundaries around employee behaviours so that there can be rigorous accountability when dealing with staff.

Organisations must work to improve their knowledge and understanding in this area so they are able to challenge existing practice, recognise unprofessional behaviour and build a shared understanding of what a child safe organisation is.



Appendix B

Understanding Grooming Behaviour

Grooming behaviour with children may include, but is not limited to:

- Selecting and befriending a child and gaining his or her trust and then exploiting the child's vulnerabilities.
- Testing a child's boundaries through telling inappropriate jokes, roughhousing, backrubs, tickling, or sexual games.
- Moving from non-sexual touching to "accidental" sexual touching. This typically happens during play so the child may not even identify it as purposeful, inappropriate touching. It is often done slowly so the child is gradually desensitised to the touch.
- Manipulating the child to not tell anyone about what is happening. The abuser may use a child's fear, embarrassment, or guilt about what has happened. Sometimes, the abuser uses bribery, threats, or coercion.
- Causing the child to feel responsible for the abuse. Children may not notice or may become confused as the contact becomes increasingly intimate and sexual.

Grooming behaviour with adolescents may include additional strategies, such as:

- Identifying with the adolescent. The abuser may appear to be the only one who understands him/her.
- Displaying common interests in sports, music, movies, video games, television shows, etc.
- Recognising and filling the adolescent's need for affection and attention.
- Giving gifts or special privileges to the adolescent.
- Allowing or encouraging the adolescent to break rules (e.g.; smoking, drinking, using drugs, viewing pornography).
- Communicating with the adolescent outside of the person's role (e.g.; teacher or coach). This could include, for example, texting or emailing the teen without the parents' knowledge.

In addition to grooming the child, the groomer will use deflection strategies to remain unchallenged. Some of these strategies may include where the perpetrator:

- promotes self and creates a reputation as caring, child-loving, competent, available, trustworthy, truthful;
- raise doubts about the motives, mental health, reliability of the child or anyone else who might approach support services with allegations;
- fosters dependency as someone the family can rely on;
- positively represents the child to others so as to be perceived as someone who would never harm the child.

Holding all staff members accountable to the Code of Conduct and challenging boundary crossings and violations is one of the most effective strategies to combating grooming behaviour.



Acknowledgement

By signing this Acknowledgement, I am agreeing to abide by the Child Safety Code of Conduct and understand that breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and could result in the termination of my employment.

I _____

have read, understood and agree to comply with the terms of the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

_____ Employee Signature

_____ Dated