



BPA Theatre School

Conduct With Minors Policy

Updated May 2022

I. Policy Statement

Bainbridge Performing Arts Theatre School (hereby referred to as BPATS) is an educational theatre program that works with children. In accordance with our organizational values, providing our youth participants with a safe and nurturing environment is of paramount importance. All responsible adults associated with BPATS, whether employees, independent contractors, volunteers or visitors, have a duty of care to prevent harm to, and ensure the safety of, all minors in our care.

This Policy establishes:

- Standards of conduct guidelines for interacting with minors in BPA and BPATS activities and programs.
- Obligations and procedures for reporting suspicions of abuse or neglect of minors.
- Background screening requirements for individuals working in activities and programs with minors.

II. Definitions

Minors: A minor is anyone under the age of 18. Individuals who are 18 years of age but are enrolled in K-12 education and are participating as a student in BPATS programs are included in this policy.

Activities and Programs with Minors: Any event, class, camp, performance, rehearsal or endeavor operated, conducted, sponsored, organized or permitted by BPA or BPATS that includes minors, and during which parents or guardians are not expected to be responsible for the care, custody or control of the minors.

Child Abuse or Neglect: Endangerment of a Minor's physical or mental health due to injury, act or omission, including but not limited to:

- Engaging in any sexual activity, as defined under section 26.44.020 of the RCW, with a child where such activity would constitute an offense under that chapter.
- Endangering a child as defined in section 26.44.020 of the RCW.
- Denying to a child, as a means of punishment, proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care or other care necessary to a child for the child's health.
- Using restraint that causes a child pain or injury.
- Use of force, as defined under section 9A.16.100 of the RCW, with a child where such activity would constitute an offense under that chapter.
- Administering prescription drugs or psychotropic medication to a child without the written approval and ongoing supervision of a licensed physician;
- Providing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances to a child.
- Committing of any act, other than by accidental means or by actions taken in self-defense or under similar justifiable circumstances, that results in any injury or death to a child or commission of any act by accidental means that results in any injury or death to a child and that is at variance with the history given of the injury or death.
- Inflicting by any individual of physical or mental injury that threatens to harm a child's health or welfare.

One-on-One Contact: An intentional or purposeful interaction when one individual to whom the Policy applies is alone with one minor.

Responsible Adult: An individual, age 18 and older, paid or unpaid, who participates in an activity or program where the individual may have one-on-one contact with a Minor, or contact with a group of Minors. This includes but is not limited to: teaching artists, teaching assistants, volunteers, directors, facilitators and chaperones.

Volunteer: Any individual working in an unpaid capacity in an activity or program with minors.

III. Scope and Applicability

The scope and applicability of this policy are as follows:

- BPATS faculty, staff, teaching artists, interns, independent contractors, volunteers and non-BPATS organizations, affiliates and entities that work in activities and programs with minors fall within scope of this policy.
- All activities and programs with minors that BPATS operate are within the scope of this Policy. This includes, but is not limited to: classes, camps, workshops, events, rehearsals and performances.

IV. Standards of Conduct

Those persons entrusted with the care of Minors devote much attention to planning and executing activities which are beneficial to the growth and development of the Minors. At the same time, these Responsible Adults must be vigilant to guard against actual or potential situations that could create the risk of harm or injury, or which even give rise to suspicions of potential abuse. All members of the BPATS community, contractors, volunteers and Responsible Adults participating in a Program must demonstrate good judgment and discretion, professionalism and maturity, and must abide by the following standards of conduct when interacting in activities and programs with minors:

DOs

- Abide by all rules, requirements, and procedures set forth in this Conduct with Minors Policy.
- Do not allow a Minor to participate in a program without the express written consent of the Minor's parent or guardian. In addition, the Minor's parent or guardian must allow for emergency medical care as warranted by the program.
- Accept supervision and support from professional staff while involved in the activity/program.
- Accept the responsibility to professionally represent the activity/program and BPATS.
- Maintain conduct in a courteous and respectful manner and be a positive role model for minors.
- Respect, adhere to and enforce the rules, policies and guidelines established by BPATS for the activity or program.
- Ensure all forms of touch are appropriate, consensual and in response to the Minor's needs, for a purpose that is consistent with the Program's mission and culture, or for a clear educational, developmental, or health related purpose.
- Refrain from engaging in any criminal conduct.
- Perform duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Self-disclose felony or misdemeanor convictions that occur within three (3) days of pleading guilty/no contest or being convicted.
- Endeavor to provide a safe and healthy experience for all participants.
- Comply with all BPATS policies and procedures.
- Report any child abuse or neglect in accordance with the Washington State Department of Children Youth and Families guidelines (<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/safety/report-abuse>)

DON'Ts

- Spend time alone, either on or off BPATS locations, with a Minor away from others. Unobserved or unsupervised one-on-one contact between a minor and any Responsible Adult is prohibited unless authorized by the Director of Education (or designee). Approved one-on-one interactions may only take place in open, well-illuminated spaces or rooms observable by other individuals from the activity or program with minors. Otherwise, at least two adults must be present for any activity involving Minors. In the situation where it is required for any Responsible Adult to have one-on-one interactions with a minor (for example, private coaching sessions) an Exemption Request form must be completed and approved by the Director of Education.
- Engage in any sexual activity, actions, make sexual comments, tell sexual jokes, or share or view sexually explicit material with or within the vicinity of Minors.
- Invite individual Minors to your home or other private locations. Any exceptions require authorization by the Director of Education and written authorization by a parent/guardian.
- Provide gifts to Minors or their families independent of items provided by the Program.
- Administer prescription drugs or psychotropic medication to a minor without the written approval from the parent/guardian and ongoing supervision of a licensed physician.

- Touch Minors in a sexual manner or in any manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate. Touching should generally only be in the open and in response to the Minor's needs, for a purpose that is consistent with the Program's mission and culture, or for a clear educational, developmental, or health related purpose.
- Restrain a Minor except as required to protect a Minor or others from harm. All incidents involving such conduct, whether or not required to protect a Minor or others from harm, must be documented and disclosed promptly to the Director of Education and the Minor's parent/guardian
- Shower, bathe, or undress with or in the presence of a Minor.
- Photograph or video any Minors without the express prior written consent of their parents.
- Engage in any abusive conduct of any kind toward, or in the presence of, a Minor, including but not limited to cursing, verbal abuse, corporal punishment, hitting, punching, poking, inappropriate touching, bullying, hazing, or horseplay.
- Provide alcohol or illegal drugs to a Minor.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on duty or when responsible for a Minor's welfare. Presence or consumption of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs around Minors is strictly prohibited.
- Possess firearms or weapons of any kind in the presence of Minors.
- Make plans to meet with Minors outside of established times for Program activities.
- Engage or converse with Minors through email, text messages, social networking websites, or other forms of social media at any time except and unless there is an educational or programmatic purpose and the content of the communications is consistent with the mission, scope and purpose of the Program and BPATS's organizational values.
- When transporting Minors in a Program, more than one adult from the Program must be present in the vehicle, except when multiple Minors will be in the vehicle at all times through the transportation.
- Tell children "this is just between the two of us" or use similar language that encourages Minors to keep secrets from their parent/guardians.
- Under any circumstances, physically, sexually, verbally, or emotionally abuse or fail to provide the basic necessities of care applicable to the activity/program, such as food, water or shelter, to participants.

V. Ratio of Minors to Staff

Program staff should make every effort to ensure all activities and programs involving minors are supervised by at least two Responsible Adults. Some of the factors to be considered in determining requirements for supervision are the number and age of participants, the activity and program involved, the location available, and age and experience of staff members. It is acceptable for an individual program staff member to provide program services to a group of participants (e.g., classroom instruction) if the activity is conducted in an open or public area where the group is visible to others outside the group. This includes rehearsal studio or theatre spaces where open doors or windows allow for access and/or a clear line of sight.

The ratio of program staff to program participants should, at a minimum, meet the following:

- A. One Responsible Adult for every six participants ages 4 and 5
- B. One Responsible Adult for every eight participants ages 6 to 8
- C. One Responsible Adult for every ten participants ages 9 to 14
- D. One Responsible Adult for every twelve participants ages 15 to 17

VI. Activity and Program Rules

Each program and activity is required to develop and consistently apply rules to ensure responsible, smooth, and safe program administration. These program rules must take into consideration the program's nature, duration, location, as well as the age and maturity of minor participants. Program rules should also be communicated to parents/guardians and minors in advance of the program or activity. Program rules should take into consideration the following topics:

- Coming/Going of Minor Participants: Programs and activities serving minors must ensure that they have appropriate rules and procedures established relating to the coming and going of minors to a program site or location. These rules must identify at which point minors are under the care and custody of program/activity staff and when minors are no longer under the care and custody of program/activity staff.

- Behavior Management: Programs and activities serving minors must ensure that they clearly communicate behavior expectations for minors, in accordance with the BPATS Classroom Management policy, the consequences of non-compliance with a program rule or expectation, and the process for determining and communicating those consequences.
- Accommodations for Minors with Disabilities: BPATS complies with laws that protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). Programs and activities serving minors have a responsibility to ensure compliance with these laws, and must provide: (1) a process for a parent/guardian (or minor) to identify that a minor has a disability, and (2) reasonable accommodations to a minor with a disability to provide equal opportunity to participate in the program/activity. Reasonable accommodations may include: positioning the minor in close proximity to the instructor, movement breaks, and project modifications. All modifications/supports are determined on a case-by-case basis and will be communicated to the parent/guardian. Where a program or activity does not allow for safe access for wheelchair users or individuals with limited mobility (e.g. due to location), this will be explicitly stated in all marketing and communication material related to the program/activity.
- Student Records: BPATS must protect the privacy of the individuals it serves. Personally identifiable information and documentation relating to a minor participating in a program or activity, or their parent/guardian, should be kept confidential and secured.
- Non-discrimination: Any form of discrimination is inconsistent with the values of BPATS and as such are strictly prohibited. All persons participating in programs governed by this Policy, including both Responsible Adults and minors, are subject to removal from the program in the event they violate this policy.

VII. Emergency and Medical Issues

Programs and activities are expected to ensure appropriate procedures related to medical issues that may arise in serving minor children. At a minimum, these procedures must address the following topics:

Communication and Notification of Emergency

- Program/activity staff should establish an appropriate procedure for response and the notification of the minor's parent/legal guardian in case of an emergency, including medical or behavioral problems, natural disasters, or other significant program disruptions.
- Program/activity staff should maintain a list of all program participants and a directory of program staff. This list should include participant's name; local room assignment (if applicable); gender, date of birth, address, and phone number(s) of parent or legal guardian, as well as emergency contact information.
- Program/activity staff should provide information to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) detailing the manner in which the participant can be contacted during the program.

Medical Treatment, Administration of Medicines and Emergency Services

- BPATS shall obtain health/medical emergency information for each program participant, which will include the following:
 1. A statement informing the parent/guardian that the minor should carry medical insurance information with them.
 2. A statement authorizing the release of medical information and emergency treatment in case the parent/guardian/emergency contact cannot be reached for permission.
 3. A list of any medical conditions the minor may have, including any allergies that could impact his/ her participation in the program.
 4. All emergency contact information including name, address and phone number of the emergency contact.
 5. Information related to the minor's COVID-19 immunization status.
- Any distribution of participants' medicines by program staff should be handled in the following manner:
 1. The participant's family provides the medicine in its original pharmacy container labeled with the participant's name, medicine name, dosage and timing of consumption. Over-the-counter medications should be provided in their manufacturer's container.
 2. Programs/activity staff should keep the medicine in a secure location, and at the appropriate time for distribution should meet with the participant.

3. The Programs/activity staff member should allow the participant to self-administer the appropriate dose as shown on the container.
 4. Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) are expected to make arrangements for the administration of any medicine that the participant cannot self-administer. Programs/activity staff will not administer medicine.
 5. Devices for the self-administration of medications which are prescribed by a physician may be carried by the participant during program activities (Examples include personal "epi" pens and asthma inhalers)
 6. Participants can self-administer over-the-counter medication that they bring themselves, but only with prior approval.
- BPATS will make reasonable efforts to ensure the Responsible Adults have access to basic first-aid kits at all times.

VIII. Background Screening Requirements

All BPATS staff and Responsible Adults must clear a background check prior to participation in programs or activities involving minors. At a minimum, the background check must meet the following requirements:

- The individual must complete a self-disclosure form disclosing any and all arrests or convictions involving crimes of a violent or sexual nature.
- The individual must agree to disclose any such arrest or conviction occurring thereafter to the Director of Education within three days of such arrest or pleading guilty/no contest or being convicted.
- The Director of Education is responsible for providing a list of the Responsible Adults involved in Programs to the parents/guardians of all Minors involved in the Program.
- The Director of Education is responsible for ensuring that all required screening has occurred.
- The Director of Education shall coordinate the screening process for all BPATS staff, contractors and volunteers.
- The Director of Education is responsible for monitoring compliance with the background screening requirement.
- The cost of background checks will be covered by BPATS.
- BPATS may request additional information for certain individuals that it deems necessary to meet the requirements of this Policy.

A prior conviction shall not automatically disqualify a person from participating in an activity or program with minors. However, any person whose screening, after an individualized determination by BPATS, produces circumstances that bear adversely upon his or her ability to provide for the safety and well-being of Minors will be prohibited from having contact with Minors through BPATS. Except where required by law, background screenings that are conducted pursuant to this Policy will be used only for purposes consistent with this Policy and will otherwise be kept confidential. Records of background screening will be maintained separately from an individual's personnel or student file.

IX. Obligations and Procedures

No member of the BPATS faculty, community or third party shall serve as a Responsible Adult in an activity or program that includes Minors unless and until such a person has:

- Read and confirmed understanding of this Conduct with Minors Policy;
- Completed the background screening process outlined in this Policy; and is
- Approved by the Director of Education (or designee).

X. Enforcement

Sanctions for violations of this Policy will depend on the circumstances and the nature of the violation, but may include suspension, dismissal, termination, and, where appropriate, exclusion from BPA premises and events. BPATS may also take necessary interim actions before determining whether a violation has occurred. Additionally, depending on the circumstances, law enforcement authorities may be notified, where appropriate.

XI. Confirmation of Understanding and Agreement

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the information and guidance provided by this policy document. I understand that it is my responsibility to comply with and implement these policies.

Signature

Printed Name

Date (MM/DD/YY)