

CITY OF MONROE

SAFE CHILD STANDARDS OF OPERATION

PURPOSE

The Dowd Center Theater is strongly committed to child safety and establishing and maintaining a child safe and child friendly environment. The purpose of this Child Safety Standard of Operation (SOP) is to ensure the safety of patrons, minors (children under 18 years), by stipulating the proper qualifications and training for the staff and volunteers who manage and operate program within the Center. This SOP reflects our commitment to provide a safe environment where every person has the right to be treated with respect and is safe and protected from harm.

All employees/contractors/volunteers interacting with minors will have to sign this document acknowledging that they have read and will abide by the Child Safe SOP. The Department Director and the Safety and Risk Coordinator have responsibility to ensure sign off and acknowledgement by staff members of the Child Safe SOP.

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

All minors who come to the Dowd Center Theater have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to the safety and well-being of all children accessing our services and the welfare of those children in our care will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all children are valued and feel safe.

The City encourages and respects the views of minors who access our services via the Dowd Center Theatre, Monroe Science Center, Parks and Recreation Centers or other City facilities. We listen to and act upon any concerns that minors and/or their families raise with us. We teach children what they can do if they feel unsafe via our procedures outlined by administration. We ensure that minors and their families know their rights and how to access the complaints procedures available to them. We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES

To ensure that employees/volunteers/contractors/renters who work with minors have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their capacity is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment, the City of Monroe will implement strategies that include:

- All new employees/volunteers/contractors/renters undergo orientation and receive a copy of our child safe standard operating procedures and sign for acknowledgement by the department.
- All employees receive regular supervision sessions that include a focus on ongoing learning about child protection and other matters that affect minors.

Two-Adult Protection Rule

At no time should a child be alone in the presence of only one adult during a city-operated program or special event. Private, one-on-one contact between a staff member or volunteer and a child is prohibited at all times. Two levels of leadership require two paid staff or a combination of a paid staff member and an approved volunteer. To provide for this process, the department is responsible for ensuring that sufficient adult leadership is provided at all times. If personal contact is needed (including first aid procedures) it must be in full view of other adults and/or children. In such cases, documentation is required (i.e., accident/incident reports).

Responding to Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

The Dowd Center Theater will not tolerate incidents of child abuse. All incidents or suspected incidents of child abuse must be reported.

All employees and volunteers are required to review this policy and understand their obligation to notify the National Child Abuse Report Hotline on 1-800-4-A-CHILD as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected AFTER contact has been made to Department Director or the Safety and Risk Coordinator.

We will ensure that employees have access to relevant information resources such as Child safe environment: Guidelines for mandated notifies and information for organizations. We will ensure that support is available for the employee making the report.

Protection Guidelines

Caring for minors brings additional responsibilities for employees/contractors/volunteers of this organization. All staff members of this organization are responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of minors by:

- Ensuring the safety and welfare of the child or young person is principal at all times.
- Treating all minors with dignity, equality and respect.
- Adhering to this organization's child safe policy at all times.
- Ensuring that minors understand their rights and explaining to the child in age-appropriate language what they can expect when participating in an activity or program offered by the Center.
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by minors and/or their parent/guardian.
- Notifying the National Child Abuse Report Hotline as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a minor has been or is being abused or neglected.

Staff Conduct and Supervision

- No adult should be alone with minor(s) in any part of the Center, at any time during the program day.
- At least one staff member at a supervisory level must be present in the Center at all times.
- Staff must wear nametags or apparel that visually identify them to parents and visitors as employees who are responsible for the program and the children enrolled.
- Center staff may not take a child or children enrolled in the program to their home or in their own vehicle without permission of the child's parent and the Operations Supervisor.

Supervision of Children and Youth

- Minors must be accompanied by an authorized member of the program or event.
- Visual supervision of children must be maintained at all times. No child can be left unattended at any time whether indoors or outdoors, asleep, resting, or awake.
- Minors may be released only to a parent, legal guardian or an authorized adult.
- Indoor and outdoor activity spaces must be arranged so minors can be visually supervised by staff at all times.
- Staff, volunteers and adult actors may not verbally, emotionally, physically, or sexually abuse children and youth.
- Staff, volunteers and adult actors may not discipline children and youth by the use of physical punishment or failing to provide the necessities of care.

Dressing Rooms

Employees, contractors and site users must ensure that:

- Minors are supervised in change or dressing rooms while ensuring their right to privacy.
- A minimum of two adults of the same gender as the group should be present at all times.
- Adults avoid one-to-one situations with a Child in a dressing or change room area.
- Phones, cameras and recording devices are not used in dressing or changing rooms and in particular while minors are getting dressed.

Transporting Children

Employees and contractors may only transport Children in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of City programs and services. Other than in an emergency, employees and contractors must not transport Children without prior written approval from their parent or guardian. Seeking approval requires providing information about the proposed travel, including the:

- Form of transport to be used
- Reason for the journey
- Route to be followed, including any stops or side trip; and
- Details of anyone who will be present during the travel.

ANNUAL REVIEW

To ensure that this procedure remains current and effective in identifying and minimizing risks of harm to minors, it is monitored and reviewed annually. This SOP will also be reviewed after any incident where a minor is at risk of harm or a breach is identified. Furthermore, this SOP must be reviewed in its entirety and accurate, complete records must be made of the review, including the date, location of review, who participated in the review and any discussions.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Organization: _____