



*Child and Youth Abuse
Prevention policy*

*Presented by ScotDance Canada
Risk Management*

Adopted September 2, 2018

CHILD AND YOUTH ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR SCOTDANCE CANADA

Introduction

To help protect children, **SCOTDANCE CANADA (SDC)** has adopted the following Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program. It is important that all **SCOTDANCE CANADA** volunteers understand and implement these guidelines to help prevent sexual abuse against children. The following includes the Purpose and Definitions for these guidelines, the outlines of Protection and Prevention, and an Acknowledgement to be signed by those people working with children.

Purpose

These procedures are designed to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse in order to:

1. Provide a safe and secure environment for children, youth, adults, members, volunteers, and visitors.
2. Assist **SCOTDANCE CANADA** in evaluating a person's suitability to supervise, oversee, and/or exert control over the activities of children and youth.
3. Satisfy the concerns of parents and staff members with a screening process for volunteers and professional members.
4. Provide a system to respond to alleged victims of sexual abuse and their families, as well as the alleged perpetrator.
5. Reduce the possibility of false accusations of sexual abuse made against volunteers and professional members.

Definitions

The following terms are used herein and are defined as follows:

1. *Professional Member - Teacher:* This group of members educates the dancers in the technique of Highland dancing in preparation for competition and medal tests. They register annually starting in September with ScotDance Canada (SDC). Requirement of registration is a member of good standing in one of the three International Examining Bodies. Current membership is evidenced by supplying a photocopy of the Examining Body Membership Card. Professional members register with SDC in order to receive current information and to allow their students to compete.
2. *Professional Member – Adjudicating Panel:* The members of the Adjudicating Panel are certified by the Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing (RSOBHD) in Scotland. The

composition of the Adjudicating Panel at competitions varies from event to event. Judges can be hired from countries other than Canada. The Canadian Members of the RSOBHD. Adjudicating panel are members of ScotDance Canada. Although membership is not mandatory, the panel still registers with ScotDance Canada in order to receive current information. A great majority are teaching members as well, so they register in order for their dancers to participate. The panel has very specific guidelines, rules and regulations to follow as laid-out by the RSOBHD in the most current Constitution and Rules book.

3. *Pipers hired for SDC Sanctioned Events* – These individuals are approved by ScotDance Canada Affiliates (provinces) to pipe at ScotDance Canada sanctioned events.
4. *Children/Youth/Minor*: Any person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday or the age of majority as defined by provincial law.
5. *Adult*: Any person who has reached his/her 18th birthday or age of majority as defined by provincial law.
6. *Sexual Abuse*: The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any minor or adult to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct or rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of minor or adult, or incest with a minor or adult, or as defined by federal and state law. This includes and is not limited to unwelcome sexual remarks, jokes, advances, leering, whistling, or sexual gestures; sexual touching, fondling, molestation, assault, or other intimate physical contact; compelling another person to engage in a sexual act by threats or fear or undue influence; and providing or displaying pornographic materials to another person.
7. *Emotional Abuse*: Verbal or nonverbal conduct including mental exploitation, degrading communication, or humiliating or threatening conduct that may or may not include bullying or as defined by provincial law.
8. *Physical Abuse*: The deliberate application of force to any part of a child's body, which results or may result in a non-accidental injury. Physical abuse may include shaking, choking, biting, kicking, burning, poisoning, holding a child under water, or any other harmful or dangerous use of force or restraint. Most child physical abuse is associated with physical punishment or is confused with child discipline.
9. *Layered Screening*: Consideration given to those volunteers with skills and expertise in a particular field. The level of screening for volunteers based on risk assessment associated with the Job Description.
10. *Competition Organizer*: Committees, associations and/or organizations comprised of experienced volunteers that may include parent(s) of dancers and always include at least one professional member of SDC who oversees the technical aspects of the event. They facilitate the event from planning through to execution, and in doing so provide competitive

opportunities for dancers. Organizers are required to follow the rules and regulations of the RSOBHD and SDC and must register annually with SDC, the National Registration Agent for RSOBHD. All Organizers must attend annual meetings hosted by an SDC registration agent. Non-attendance at Organizers meetings for a period of two years will result in automatic removal of their registration number as per RSOBHD rules.

11. *Registrar*: These volunteers issue the dancer numbers the day of the event and deal with last minute registration issues that may arise the day of the competition. In 100% of the events, this task is completed in an open venue and the participants are accompanied by the parents.
12. *Stage Carpenters*: These volunteers are almost exclusively fathers of the dancers. The stages are erected prior to the dancers arriving and taken down after the event. Periodically through out the day they are asked by the organizer to perform maintenance on the structure.
13. *Stage Marshals*: These volunteers in most events are in clear view of parents and guardians. In many cases the professional members mentioned above volunteer to assist the organizers.
14. *Scrutineers*: This position requires specific training and in most cases these volunteers have performed this task repeatedly at other events in previous years. They are sequestered in a room and have no contact with parents or dancers. They are usually professional members and/or the parents of a participant and are very well known in the community. Very rarely do these volunteers work singularly. Minimum number of scrutineers required would be a 2 person team.
15. *Runners*: This is usually a sibling of one of the participants or a member of the Competition Organizing Team. They “run” the competition results from the judges to the scrutineering room throughout the day. At large competitions, they usually have a chair in close location to the judging tables to cater to the needs of the judges.
16. *Award Presenters*: This category of volunteers usually consists of past Championship Dancers, VIPS or a member of the Competition Organizing Team. They are very well known to the community. Their tasks are always performed in full view of the audience and in many cases video-taped.

Protection and Prevention

ScotDance Canada Members Job Descriptions

Dance Teacher: This group educates the dancers in the technique of Highland dancing in preparation for competition and medal tests. Teachers are certified by at least one of the International Examining Bodies based in Scotland. Training for a teacher status involves years of

specific dance classes, medal exams, competition and schooling in our Highland dance community.

Member of the RSOBHD Adjudicating Panel: They are registered with the Board in Scotland. Any complaints with regards to the actions of judges are forwarded in a report to the Board. The Board in Scotland, through the disciplinary committee, deals with the complaints. This is outside the jurisdiction of SDC. A great majority of judges are active SDC teaching professionals.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Competition Organizers:

- Register annually as a Competition Organizer via SDC, the registration agent for the RSOBHD.
- Organize, coordinate, and facilitate Highland dancing competitive event(s).
- Adhere to the rules and regulation of the world governing body of Highland dancing (RSOBHD) as detailed in the most current version of the current RSOBHD Constitution and Rules.
- Follow procedures and guidelines as detailed in the current SDC Competition Organizers Manual. The manual explains RSOBHD rules specific to organizers. It details procedures for implementing the rules and provides SDC-prepared documents to assist in training volunteers for competition specific tasks such as marshalling, stage preparation, scrutineering, contracting and coordinating of judging and musical accompaniment.
- Enlist additional volunteers to facilitate the execution of the competitive event and ensure SDC volunteer screening procedures are followed. Document any concerns and report them to SDC in a timely manner.
- Handle any objections or complaints regarding the event according to the current RSOBHD Constitution and Rules and SDC Competition Organizer Manual.

Registrar:

- Ensures competitor registration station is set up near the event entrance or other highly visible area.
- Issues numbers to competitors the day of the event upon verification of the dancer's registration with the RSOBHD via display of dancer registration card.
- Report any discrepancies to the Competition Organizer.
- Take direction, as required, regarding any errors or omissions with registration.

Stage Carpenter

- When required, plans and constructs dancing stage(s) according to the guidelines provided in the RSOBHD Constitution and Rules at minimum and based on directive of the Competition Organizer.
- Works with additional stage carpenters as required.
- Stage to be erected prior to the start of the dancing event and dismantled following completion of the event.
- May be asked to be on-call for minor maintenance, such as taping or leveling of stage as required by competition organizer during the event.

Stage Marshals

- Line up dancers according to competitor number and in accordance with SDC Marshalling Instructions as provided in the SDC Competition Organizer Manual, and the RSOBHD. Recommendations for Accommodation and Marshalling of Competitors as provided in the current RSOBHD Constitution and Rules.
- Marshalling which may or may not be in full view of dancers, parents and other spectators and never in isolation.
- If a stage manager is required due to the number of platforms, then that position should be filled by a current member of SDC.

Scrutineers

- Tabulate individual and overall scores from Judging Sheets according to the scrutineering rules provided in the current RSOBHD Constitution and Rules.
- May use SDC-recommended forms and/or software to facilitate the execution of this task.
- Ensure judging scores are kept confidential.
- File overall results once tabulated and report results to RSOBHD when required in accordance with the RSOBHD Constitution and Rules regarding Championships.
- Execute task without direct contact with competitors.

Runner/Steward

- Transport Judge's mark sheet from Judge's station to the scrutineering station upon completion of each dance class.
- No direct contact is made with the competitors; the information contained on the Judge's mark sheet is considered confidential.

Award Presenters

- Present trophies, medals, ribbons or other awards to winning competitors upon completion of the competitive events.
- Presentations usually to occur in same public venue as competition and never with presenter in isolation with a dancer.

Screening Procedures

The following screening procedures are to be used with volunteers who are entrusted with the care and supervision of minors or a person who directly oversees and/or exerts control or oversight over minors. All information collected should be maintained in confidence.

Rule of Two:

All individuals outlined within the screening procedures section must adhere to the “Rule of Two”. The goal of the Rule of Two is to ensure all interactions and communications are open, observable, and justifiable. Its purpose is to protect participants (especially minors) in potentially vulnerable situations by ensuring more than one adult is present. There may be exceptions in emergency situations.

In general, the two-adult rule simply states that no fewer than two adults and two children must be present at all times. Avoid private and or one-on-one situations unless in an emergency.

The main purpose of the two-adult rule is to increase accountability and decrease isolation. There are many benefits to having two sets of adult eyes on any given situation with a minor including:

- Significantly reduces the risk of an incident of abuse. A predator won't hang around if they know they are in sight of another adult
- Protects against false accusations
- Reduces liability and a possible claim of negligence
- Offers additional help if there is an accident or emergency

Organizations are encouraged to ensure that individuals in supervisory roles are appropriate for, and acceptable to, the individual. It is imperative no matter what role an individual plays, that actions must be taken to limit the instances that put minors at risk of being in vulnerable situations.

Dance Teacher – Member of ScotDance Canada

Risk level based on continual and private involvement with dancers: high

Individuals are considered to be in a position of trust and authority

Requirement:

- As of September 2010, all existing ScotDance Canada Members who were full time or part time teachers or judges submitted an “Enhanced Canadian Police Information Centre Record Check” for the renewal process. As of 2015, and all subsequent 2 years, renewing members will complete an online police check through Sterling Talent Solutions.
- All new members must submit an Enhanced Canadian Police Information Centre Record Check via their local police department if of legal age (in accordance with SDC Risk Management police check requirements). If under the age of 18, initial criminal record

checks cannot be performed by police agencies or Sterling Talent Solutions. Once the member has attained age 18, they must submit a criminal record check as a minimum requirement. If eligible to have an ECPI conducted at age 18, this may be done as well, or when the member attains age 25. For all subsequent 2 years, renewing members will complete an online police check through Sterling Talent Solutions.

- Implementing the Rule of Two means that any one-on-one interaction (private) between a teacher and a dancer must take place within earshot and view of another adult, i.e. not behind closed doors.
- Teachers should self-identify situations that may put you or the dancer in a vulnerable situation and consider ways to avoid or alter the environment. Make this a regular practice.
- When travel is necessary, avoid situations where there is only one teacher/volunteer with a single minor dancer. Prior to traveling to an event, make arrangements with others to associate with during the event and when away from the venue. Ensure the teacher/volunteer has been appropriately screened and that the dancer is comfortable with the individual and parental consent is given.
- Social media (minors) – avoid outside communicating/contact with minors via social media, no friending of minors, etc. Communication/contact should be via the minor's parent/guardian.
- Parents should be encouraged to play a proactive role by asking the teacher if the organization the teacher belongs to has adopted responsible practices to protect minors.

Member of the RSOBHD Adjudicating Panel - Member of ScotDance Canada

*Risk level based on no direct contact with dancers **while adjudicating**: low*

Individuals are considered to be in a position of trust and authority.

Requirement:

- Skill requirements set by RSOBHD. Every member of the Adjudicating Panel is accountable to the RSOBHD.
- As of September 2010, all existing ScotDance Canada Members who are RSOBHD judges submitted an "Enhanced Canadian Police Information Centre Record Check" for the renewal process. As of 2015, and all subsequent 2 years, renewing members will complete an online police check through Sterling Talent Solutions.
- All new members must submit an Enhanced Canadian Police Information Centre Record Check via their local police department. In all subsequent 2 years, renewing members will complete an online police check through Sterling Talent Solutions.
- As a condition of employment, foreign judges are required to fulfill equivalent ECPI police record checks through approved agencies within their country of residence and submit to the governing body where they reside, who will provide confirmation to SDC's Risk Management Committee. Police checks have an expiration date of 2 years and would need to be renewed accordingly upon request to judge.

Pipers hired for SDC Sanctioned Events:

Risk level based on no direct contact with dancers **while piping**: low

Individuals are considered to be in a position of trust and authority.

- **Individuals considered to be in a position of trust and authority**
- Approved by SDC's Affiliates (provinces) to be placed on the SDC Pipers' List
- Required to provide an "Enhanced Canadian Police Information Centre Record Check" as an initial police check and all subsequent 2 years will complete an online police check through Sterling Talent Solutions.
- As a condition of employment, foreign pipers are required to submit equivalent ECPIIC police record checks from approved agencies within their country of residence to SDC's Risk Management Committee. Police checks have an expiration date of 2 years and would need to be renewed accordingly upon request to pipe.

Registrar:

Risk level based on registration of dancers the day of a competition: low

Requirement:

- Person(s) filling the position be identified prior to the competition. Organizers identify the person's involvement in the community by verifying the dancers' name and teacher. If unknown, teacher verification required. Organizers log and maintain this information in their files.
- Any issues or problems must be recorded and reported to SDC.

Stage Carpenters.

Risk level based on involvement with dancers: low

Requirement:

- Person(s) filling the position be identified prior to the competition, Organizers identify the person's involvement in the community by verifying the dancers' name and teacher. If unknown, teacher verification required. Organizers log and maintain this information in their files.
- Any issues or problems recorded and reported to SDC.

Stage Marshals

Risk level based on involvement with dancers: low to medium

Requirement:

- Person(s) filling the positions be identified prior to the competition, Organizers identify the person's involvement in the community by verifying the dancers' name and teacher. If unknown, teacher verification required. Organizers log and maintain this information in their files.
- Any issues or problems recorded and reported to SDC.

Scrutineers

Risk level based on involvement with dancers: low

Requirement:

- Person(s) filling the positions be identified prior to the competition, Organizers identify the person's involvement in the community by verifying the dancers' name and teacher. If unknown, teacher verification required. Organizers log and maintain this information in their files.
- Any issues or problems recorded and reported to SDC.

Runners/Stewards

Risk level based on involvement with dancers: low

Requirement:

- Person(s) filling the positions be identified prior to the competition. Organizers identify the person's involvement in the community by verifying the dancers' name and teacher. If unknown, teacher verification required. Organizers log and maintain this information in their files.
- Any issues or problems recorded and reported to SDC.

Award Presenters

Risk level based on involvement with dancers: low

Requirement:

- Person(s) filling the positions be identified prior to the competition. Organizers identify the person's involvement in the community. Organizers log and maintain this information in their files.
- Any issues or problems recorded and reported to SDC.

Confidentiality

Information obtained through the screening, application, reference check, interview, and criminal background check will be kept in confidence, unless otherwise required by law. All information discovered or obtained through the above-referenced means will be kept in a secure location and access to it will be restricted if possible.

Confidentiality at all times must be attained in accordance with ScotDance Canada's Risk Management Data Protection Policy.

Behavioral Guidelines for Volunteers

All volunteers will observe the following guidelines. The Rule of Two should be implemented at all times.

1. Avoid all touching with minors. In the event a minor initiates physical contact and/or inappropriate touching, it is appropriate to inform the minor that such touching is inappropriate. The line up area for the dancers is a “no touch” zone. Should a dancer require assistance with a dance number or other costume adjustments, 2 marshals should attend to the dancer. It is a risk management protocol to avoid any contact with minors backstage. If at all possible, the parent should be called backstage to assist for costume adjustments/dance numbers.
2. Restricted-enclosed back stage area: The marshals must work in pairs. Under no circumstances should the stage marshals be touching the dancers (*grabbing* a dancers arm to pull them into line for example). If any costume adjustments are to be made, this must be completed in pairs and preferably with a stage manager present. If at all possible, the parent should be called backstage to assist. If there are more than 3 stages lining up at one time, ScotDance Canada is making a strong recommendation that a stage manager is required to oversee the stage marshals.
3. Never engage in physical discipline of a minor. Volunteers shall not abuse minors in any way, including but not limited to physical abuse, verbal/mental abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse of any kind. Marshals should be cognizant of their tone when speaking to the dancers.
4. If you recognize an inappropriate relationship developing between a minor and adult, maintain clear professional boundaries and refer the minor to another individual with supervisory authority.
5. Anyone who observes abuse of a minor will take appropriate steps to immediately intervene and provide assistance. Report any inappropriate conduct to the proper authorities and officials of the event as well as **SCOTDANCE CANADA** for handling.

Recommendations for Enclosed/Restricted Back Stage Areas

- Organize prior to day of competition
- Identify the volunteer by requesting the name of their dancer and the teacher.
- Verify/confirm with the teacher if not known
- Maintain a log of all volunteers according to SDC’s Risk Management Data Protection policy.
- Marshals work in pairs (Rule of Two) and never in isolation of other volunteers, professionals and/or adults.
- Maintain a no touch zone
- Conscious of the tone used when talking to dancers

- More than three stages – strongly recommend Stage Manager who is a member of SDC.
- Marshalling conduct to be reviewed with marshals prior to working with dancers.
- Review and make readily available the SDC Marshalling Instructions.
- Should an issue arise never deal with it alone. Work in pairs and preferably call the stage manager to deal with the issue. Report any issues to SDC.

Disqualification

No person may be entrusted with the care and supervision of minors or may directly oversee and/or exert control or oversight over minors who has been convicted of the offenses outlined below, been on a probated sentence or received deferred adjudication for any offense outlined below, or has presently pending any criminal charges for any offense outlined below until a determination of guilt or innocence has been made, including any person who is presently on deferred adjudication. The following offenses disqualify a person from care, supervision, control, or oversight of minors:

1. Any offense against minors as defined by provincial law.
2. A misdemeanor or felony offense as defined by provincial law that is classified as sexual assault, indecency with a minor or adult, assault of a minor or adult, injury to a minor or adult, abandoning or endangering a minor, sexual performance with a minor or adult, possession or promoting child pornography, enticing a minor, bigamy, incest, drug-related offenses, or family violence.
3. A prior criminal history of an offense against minors.

Sexual Offender at SCOTDANCE CANADA

SCOTDANCE CANADA will not allow a person known to be a sexual offender to remain or become a member of the organization.

Response to Sexual Abuse – Crisis Plan

SCOTDANCE CANADA will respond promptly to investigate any accusation of sexual abuse. All accusations of sexual abuse will be taken seriously. It is important to be appropriately respectful to the needs and feelings of those who allege sexual abuse and those who have been accused of sexual abuse.

When an allegation is made involving sexual abuse, the person reporting the complaint is to be told about the guidelines and the procedures to be followed. The Chair of the Risk Management Committee or an appointed person will begin investigating the allegations and may use the assistance of legal counsel or other consultants. If the chair or the appointed person is the individual accused of sexual abuse, then the next highest-ranking official or SDC Office Bearer will conduct the investigation. The investigation will be conducted as follows:

1. Report the incident to appropriate authorities in accordance with the state mandatory reporting laws.
2. Report the matter to **SCOTDANCE CANADA's** insurance carrier.
3. Cooperate with authorities and the insurance carrier.
4. **SCOTDANCE CANADA** may suspend the alleged offender while a confidential investigation is being conducted.
5. An official of **SCOTDANCE CANADA** (and legal counsel or other consultants) will then meet with the governing body of **SCOTDANCE CANADA** and present a report on their investigation, which will include findings and recommendations of actions.
6. An official of **SCOTDANCE CANADA** will meet with the alleged perpetrator and notify him/her of the results of the investigation and recommendations for actions.
7. An official of **SCOTDANCE CANADA** will meet with the alleged victim, along with his/her parents or guardians, and notify them of the results of the investigation and recommendations for actions.
8. During the investigation, an official of **SCOTDANCE CANADA** shall maintain contact with the alleged victim and his/her parents or legal guardian, and inform them of the actions taken and assist them in their process of healing.
9. An official of **SCOTDANCE CANADA** (and legal counsel or other consultants) may meet with the alleged perpetrator, the alleged victim, and any others with knowledge of relevant facts.
10. Communicate with criminal and civil legal counsel of **SCOTDANCE CANADA**.
11. Communicate with those affected by the alleged perpetrator.
12. Hire a consultant or assign a spokesperson to respond to media or prepare a statement for the media if the need shall arise, subject to the approval of **SCOTDANCE CANADA's** attorney.

Revised July 2020

Revised May 2020

Revised June 2021

Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program Acknowledgment

These guidelines have been designed to guide and assist you when working with minors. The information establishes general practices and guidelines and should not be construed in any way as a contract of employment. **SCOTDANCE CANADA** reserves the right to make changes in the content or application of this program and to implement those changes with or without notice.

The terms defined herein are defined for the purposes of the program and do not suppose or establish a legal relationship. These terms are not defined for the purposes of creating a legal relationship with **SCOTDANCE CANADA** or any related or associated entity and instead are to be used with this document.

I have received a copy of **SCOTDANCE CANADA's** Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program. I understand it is my responsibility to become familiar with and adhere to the information contained herein. I understand that these policies are the property of **SCOTDANCE CANADA**.

Print Name

Signature

Date

June 2021