

Child protection policy

EJC 2024 undertakes to provide a safe environment where the welfare of the young person is paramount. We will provide an experience where children/young people who participate in any aspect of the European Juggling Convention 2024, and specifically our Youth program, are treated with respect and care, and where their emotional, physical and mental safety is paramount. This policy is targeted at all adults involved in our organisation. Parents of all participating children will be informed of policies and procedures.

EJC2024 encourages the following approach:

- Participation is voluntary.
- All participants are treated equally.
- All participants are listened to and respected.
- Differences of culture, religion, sexual orientation are respected.

EJC 2024 will do its best to include young people with disabilities.

The Code of Behaviour for Staff/Volunteers can be categorised under the following headings:

- Child-centred approach
- Good practice
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Physical contact
- Health and safety

Child-Centred Approach

- Treat all children and young people equally – do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, cultural background, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.
- Help create an environment of trust in which members feel comfortable, accepted and able to express themselves.
- Listen to and respect children and young people.
- Involve children and young people in decision-making, as appropriate.
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability).

- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal).
- Have fun and encourage a positive atmosphere.
- Offer constructive criticism when needed. All criticism should be constructive and not overly focused on any one individual.
- Treat all children and young people as individuals.
- Respect differences of ability, cultural background, religion, race and sexual orientation.
- Respect a child's or young person's personal space.
- Discuss boundaries on behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and young people and their primary carers.
- Encourage feedback and discussion from the group.
- Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials.
- Lead by example.
- Be aware of a child's or young person's limitations, due to for example a medical condition.

Good Practice

- Be inclusive of children and young people with disabilities.
- Encourage children and young people to report any bullying, concerns or worries.
- Report any incidents and accidents.
- Keep parents informed of any issues that concern their children.
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made. If you think that something you said may have caused offence or upset, then try to address it in a sensitive manner.
- Be aware of a child's/young person's privacy and safety in relation to use of media e.g. photos in press and on social networking sites.

Inappropriate Behaviour

- Don't use or allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language.
- Don't allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Don't hit or physically chastise children/young people. Physical Contact
- Seek consent of child/young person in relation to physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation). Resistance from the child should be respected.
- Avoid inappropriate touch.

- Check with children/young people about their level of comfort when doing touch exercises.
- Let children/young people pair up with each other when doing activities requiring physical support/assistance.
- Physical contact will be in response to the need of the child/young person and not the need of the adult.
- Physical contact will be open and not secretive.

Health and Safety

- Don't leave children unattended or unsupervised. All children ages 12 and under should be supervised by their parent/guardian/other at all times.
- Manage any dangerous materials.
- Provide a safe environment.

Anti-bullying code:

- Bullying is not acceptable behaviour.
- Name calling is not tolerated.
- No one suffers abuse of any nature.
- No one is victimised.
- Each participant is supported and listened to.
- If a workshop tutor becomes aware of an instance/allegation or has a suspicion of bullying, they should try to establish as many facts as possible, including who was involved, the presence of any witnesses, was it a once-off occurrence etc.
- All instances of bullying should be reported to the Youth Circus Coordinator.
- If a case of bullying is confirmed, the workshop tutors will discuss the best approach.

This will depend on the severity of the bullying, the ages of the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) among other factors.

- The parents/ primary carers of both members will be informed.
- Once all these steps have been taken, a decision will be taken on disciplinary procedures for the perpetrator(s).

Disciplinary Procedures

- It may be felt in some cases that a verbal warning is sufficient.

- The member who has committed bullying may not be considered for a workshop or series of workshops, depending on the severity of the bullying and other relevant factors.

Dealing with Challenging or Disruptive Behaviour

- Trainers should always follow the agreed code of behaviour regardless of how frustrating a situation becomes.
- More than one trainer should be present when dealing with an instance of disruptive behaviour.
- We are aware that a member may be displaying challenging behaviour as a result of issues at home/school or in other areas of their lives and will treat the young person with sensitivity. Trainers should be open to listening to a member expressing any concern. Trainers will report any concern should they have a serious concern about the young person's welfare.

Lost Children

All children will be registered with a contact number upon arrival on site. Lost children will be escorted to the Info Point, where they will remain in the care of at least 2 appropriate members of the organising team until reunited with a parent or guardian.

Youth Consent Forms

The following form must be completed by all attendees under age 18