



**CHILD AND YOUTH  
ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM  
FOR SCOTDANCE CANADA**

**Adopted July 7, 2010**

# CHILD AND YOUTH ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR SCOTDANCE CANADA

## Introduction

To help protect children, **SCOTDANCE CANADA** 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 (S.O.B.H.D.) 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 S.O.B.H.D. 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 S.O.B.H.D. in the Constitution and Rules 2006.

3. *Children/Youth/Minor*: Any person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday or the age of majority as defined by provincial law.
4. *Adult*: Any person who has reached his/her 18th birthday or age of majority as defined by provincial law.
5. *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.
6. *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.
7. *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.
8. *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.
9. *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 S.O.B.H.D. and SDC and must register annually with SDC, the National Registration Agent for S.O.B.H.D. 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 S.O.B.H.D. rules.
10. *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.

11. *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 throughout the day they are asked by the organizer to perform maintenance on the structure.
12. *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.
13. *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.
14. *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.
15. *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 S.O.B.H.D. Adjudicating Panel:* They are registered with the Board in Scotland. They have absolutely no contact with parents or dancers the day of a competition. 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 S.O.B.H.D.
- Organize, coordinate, and facilitate Highland dancing competitive event(s).

- Adhere to the rules and regulation of the world governing body of Highland dancing (S.O.B.H.D.) as detailed in the most current version of the S.O.B.H.D. Constitution and Rules.
- Follow procedures and guidelines as detailed in the current SDC Competition Organizers Manual. The manual explains S.O.B.H.D. 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 S.O.B.H.D. 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 S.O.B.H.D. 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 S.O.B.H.D. 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 S.O.B.H.D. Recommendations for Accommodation and Marshalling of Competitors as provided in the S.O.B.H.D. Constitution and Rules.
- Marshalling to occur 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 S.O.B.H.D. 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 S.O.B.H.D. when required in accordance with the S.O.B.H.D. 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.

#### Dance Teacher – Member of ScotDance Canada

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

#### **Requirement:**

- All existing ScotDance Canada Members who are full time or part time teachers to submit an "Enhanced Canadian Police Information Centre Record Check" for September 2010 renewal process. In all subsequent years, renewing members annually complete a 'good character' declaration.
- All new members must submit an Enhanced Canadian Police Information Centre Record Check. In all subsequent years, renewing members annually complete a 'good character' declaration,

Member of the S.O.B.H.D. Adjudicating Panel- Member of ScotDance Canada

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

**Requirement:**

- No screening required.
- Skill requirements set by S.O.B.H.D. Every member of the Adjudicating Panel is accountable to the S.O.B.H.D.

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 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. These materials will be archived.

Reference is made to the Mechanics of Maintaining the Database. This document will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval at the July 2010 AGM.

## **Behavioral Guidelines for Volunteers**

All volunteers will observe the following guidelines:

1. Avoid all inappropriate touching with minors. All touching shall be based on the needs of the individual being touched, not on the needs of the volunteer. 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 should be 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 recommended that they be sent back to their parents.
2. Restricted-enclosed back stage area: ScotDance Canada is requesting that the marshals work in pairs. The line up area will become a “no touch” zone. 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 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**

1. Organize prior to day of competition
2. Identify the volunteer by requesting the name of their dancer and the teacher.
3. Verify/confirm with the teach if not known
4. Maintain a log of all volunteers
5. Marshals work in pairs and never in isolation of other volunteers, professionals and/or adults.
6. No touch zone
7. Conscious of the tone used when talking to dancers
8. More than three stages – strongly recommend Stage Manager who is a member of SDC.
9. Marshalling conduct to be reviewed with marshals prior to working with dancers.
10. Review and make readily available the SDC Marshalling Instructions.

11. 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.