

2025

# **JazzYYC Youth Safety Policy**

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## Policy Context

JazzYYC is committed to educating and supporting the love of jazz music in Calgary for individuals of all ages. At times JazzYYC's program offerings may include and/or be directed at youth under the age of 18 years. A current example is JazzYYC's Lab Band program.

This policy aims to set clear guidelines, expectations, and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all underage youth participating in JazzYYC activities or ensembles and the JazzYYC staff and direct contact volunteers who work with them. JazzYYC is dedicated to promoting an environment where all musicians partnered with the organization can thrive, feel secure, and be inspired to reach their full potential.

## Scope

This policy applies to all staff, direct contact volunteers, the JazzYYC board of directors and any individuals that are directly involved with underage youth through educational programs or the operation of JazzYYC activities and productions.

## Our Commitment

JazzYYC is dedicated to the safety and protection of all youth involved in JazzYYC activities and programs. We recognize our responsibility to provide a secure environment and to take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to youth. This includes:

- **Zero Tolerance for Abuse:** We have a zero-tolerance policy for any form of abuse, harassment, or exploitation.
- **Safe Environment:** Ensuring that all activities, rehearsals, and performances are conducted in a safe and supportive atmosphere.

In addition, JazzYYC commits to:

- Conducting regular reviews of our policies and procedures to ensure they meet the highest standards of safety.
- Providing channels for youth, parents, and staff to provide feedback on our policies and practices. Parents and Guardians are encouraged to communicate any concerns or suggestions regarding their child's safety and well-being to the organization.
- Ensuring staff and direct contact volunteers are aware of and adhere to this and other policies, participate in required training, and report any concerns or incidents immediately.
- Ensure the Executive Committee offers guidance on all safety-related matters concerning students, staff, and direct contact volunteers and reporting any significant findings to the board for review. Additionally, the Executive Committee is tasked with overseeing the implementation of this policy.
- Continuous improvement based on feedback provided and new developments in youth protection and engagement practices.

## Definitions

**Youth:** a person under the age of 18.

**Contractor:** An individual who enters into a contractual agreement with JazzYYC to perform specific tasks or services, related to JazzYYC's mission and/or work with students.

**Staff:** An individual engaged by JazzYYC for the fulfillment of the organization's mission through administrative or operational roles, (includes both employees and contractors).

**Direct Contact Volunteers:** Individuals who engage directly and regularly with youth, providing supervision, instruction, or mentorship. This includes chaperones during field trips.

**Event Support Volunteers:** Individuals who assist with the logistics and organization of events, without direct interaction with youth.

**Director:** An individual elected or appointed to serve on the board of directors of JazzYYC including committees within the board

**JazzYYC Representative:** An individual who acts on behalf of JazzYYC in any capacity, including but not limited to directors, officers, employees, consultants, contractors, direct and indirect contact volunteers.

**JazzYYC Program:** Any program, activity, instrumental or vocal ensembles formally offered or provided by JazzYYC.

## Expectations and Requirements

JazzYYC requires all individuals covered by the scope of this policy to read, acknowledge, and adhere to the Youth Safety Policy in addition to JazzYYC's Code of Conduct. The JazzYYC Youth Safety Policy outlines acceptable and unacceptable verbal and non-verbal behaviors when interacting with youth and the options available to address concerns. All concerns regarding breaches of the Youth Safety Policy will be taken seriously and addressed according to JazzYYC's governance practices and procedures outlined Appendix A.

The following outlines recommended best practices and behaviors in addition to prohibited practices when interacting with youth. Please note, this is not an exhaustive list.

### Best Practices

- Treat all youth equally, with respect, dignity, and fairness.
- Involve parents or guardians wherever possible and reasonable.
- Be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted and always work in an open environment.
- Maintain reasonable adult-to-youth ratios to ensure safety and activity supervision.
- Don't engage in private or unobserved situations with individual youths.
- Staff and volunteers should not engage in any online social media interaction with a minor without parental consent and only within a JazzYYC-approved digital platform setting.
- Posting photographs of youth in a JazzYYC program is only permitted where the youth and their parent or guardian provide permission in writing.

### Prohibited Practices

In the context of the role of staff and direct contact volunteers within JazzYYC, the following practices will not be tolerated and may also be prohibited by law. To engage in these practices may affect continued employment, contractual, volunteer or program member status:

- Taking youth alone on journeys. Spending unwarranted amounts of time alone with youth away from others.
- Relating to youth from JazzYYC programs in non-program activities, such as weekend visits.
- Engaging in rough or physical contact is never permissible, whether in play or as a form of punishment.
- Forming intimate emotional, physical, or sexual relationships with youth.
- Allowing or engaging in touching a person in any sexually suggestive manner.
- Allowing/encouraging youth to swear or use sexualized language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to youth, even in fun.
- Reducing a youth to tears as a form of control or isolating the youth from his/her peers.
- Allowing allegations made by a youth to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Inviting or allowing youth to stay with you at your home.
- Asking youth to keep any type of secret from other youth, staff or from their parents or guardians.

- Utilizing personal devices to record, photograph or capture images of youth. Staff are expected to exercise sound judgement and discretion where individualized programming requires online interactions.

## **Expectations Of Youth Safety - By Role**

### *Direct Contact Volunteers*

- All direct contact volunteers interacting with youth are responsible to act in the best interests of students, parents, visitors, fellow volunteers, employees, and the reputation of JazzYYC. This includes treating all students, parents, visitors, and JazzYYC representatives with dignity and respect and being considerate of the circumstances.
- All direct contact volunteers must read, adhere to and sign the confidentiality clause in the Code of Business Conduct, JazzYYC's Confidentiality Policy and the Youth Safety Policy Acknowledgement and Agreement.
- If a direct contact volunteer has a concern, they should address it immediately. This may initially be with the Program Instructor, Operations Manager or Executive/Artistic Director. If the individual is uncomfortable or an initial concern remains unresolved, it should then be escalated to [safetyconcerns@jazzyyc.com](mailto:safetyconcerns@jazzyyc.com). See Appendix A for process details.
- Direct contact volunteers must notify JazzYYC of all criminal charges at the time the charge is issued.
- The JazzYYC Board of Directors retains the authority to refuse or withdraw permission for any volunteer to continue working with any JazzYYC program or activity if the volunteer breaches a JazzYYC policy, procedures or if deemed advisable by the Executive Committee or JazzYYC staff.
- If a direct contact volunteer chooses to transport a youth, they must request that the guardian or parent sign a consent form before the youth is allowed to be transported. The consent form must clearly state that JazzYYC assumes no responsibility in this matter.

### *Staff*

JazzYYC retains the services of contractors and employees ("staff") who may interact with youth through JazzYYC education programs, ensembles or other activities (including volunteering).

- Staff are expected to be a role model of professional behaviour at all times while ensuring a safe and respectful environment.
- Staff are not required to transport underage youth or students to and from programs, activities or practices on behalf of JazzYYC. This responsibility lies with parent(s) or guardian(s).
- If a staff member chooses to transport an underage youth, it is understood that JazzYYC assumes no responsibility, and that the driver is acting independently. Staff are strongly encouraged to request that the guardian or parent sign a consent form before the youth is allowed to be transported. The consent form must clearly state that JazzYYC assumes no responsibility in the matter.

## *Youth and Parents/Guardians*

### **Youth**

- All underage youth or students must follow JazzYYC's IDEA and Respectful Workplace Policy and Code of Conduct, which includes respecting personal boundaries and maintaining appropriate behavior at all times.
- Students must report any suspicious, inappropriate, or uncomfortable behavior to a trusted adult, such as the Operations Manager, or Executive/Artistic Director immediately.
- Students should understand appropriate ways to interact with adults in JazzYYC programs or activities ensuring that all interactions are professional and respectful.
- Students should avoid situations where they are alone with an adult without other students or other adults present.
- Students are encouraged to look out for one another and to speak up if they see their peer(s) in an uncomfortable situation.
- Students should use JazzYYC designated forms of communication and tools for all official communication and not engage in private conversations with adults on personal devices.

### **Parents/Guardians**

- Parents or guardians should educate youth in their care about personal safety, and the importance of setting boundaries. They should regularly discuss what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behavior and encourage them to speak up if they feel uncomfortable.
- If a student reports any concerning behavior, parents or guardians should take it seriously and report it immediately.
- Parents should follow up on any reports made to ensure that appropriate actions have been taken and that their child feels safe.
- Parents and/or guardians are primarily responsible for the transportation of the underage youth or students in their care to and from all JazzYYC programs, activities or practices.
- Parents and/or guardians must provide written consent for all activities involving youth, including out-of-town programs organized by JazzYYC. Youth under 18 years will not be allowed to participate in programs without a written consent form signed by their parents or guardians. Parents must educate themselves on applicable policies regarding transportation by JazzYYC representatives or individuals acting independently of JazzYYC.

## Background Checks

All staff and direct contact volunteers utilized by JazzYYC that are expected to work directly with youth, must undergo thorough background checks before being engaged in JazzYYC activities.

Staff and direct contact volunteers are required to undergo a Police Information Check (PIC) and a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) every 2 years. These costs are carried by JazzYYC.

A Police Information Check (PIC) is **not** a requirement for Event Support Volunteers, guest speakers, clinicians, presenters, visitors to a JazzYYC event, or parents assisting their own child for JazzYYC events.

## New Staff & Direct Contact Volunteers

For any new staff or direct contact volunteer covered by the scope of this policy, they will be required to have a clear background check as a condition of employment or direct contact volunteer status. This requirement will be confirmed at the time of joining JazzYYC and prior to engaging in JazzYYC programs or activities.

## Training

Mandatory training on appropriate conduct when interacting with youth and how to address concerns will be provided regularly, including the review and acknowledgement of this policy. JazzYYC may engage an appropriate 3<sup>rd</sup> party or training partner to administer such training. This training will be provided for those covered by the scope of this policy.

## Reporting A Concern

JazzYYC takes all concerns seriously. Any suspicious behavior, allegations or incidents must be reported immediately.

Anyone with a concern is encouraged to report it to Executive/Artistic Director immediately upon becoming aware of a situation or concern. If an individual is uncomfortable raising the concern in this manner or if a previous concern has not been resolved they are encouraged to utilize the [SafetyConcerns@JazzYYC.com](mailto:SafetyConcerns@JazzYYC.com) email address. This email address will be monitored by the Executive/Artistic Director and members of the Executive Committee to ensure that issues and concerns are addressed promptly.

- **JazzYYC's Investigation Process** – see Appendix A for details.
- **Confidentiality:** Any complaint brought forward or investigation conducted under this policy will be treated as confidentially as possible. JazzYYC will endeavour to disclose only the necessary information that is required to resolve the complaint, thoroughly and professionally investigate incidents, to take corrective action or as required by law.



- **Transparent Communication:** JazzYYC will maintain open and transparent communication with youth and their parents or guardians about the activities, policies, and any incidents that may occur as appropriate.

## Referenced Documents

This policy is part of the JazzYYC Policy Framework and aligns with all other JazzYYC policies. For further consultation and for context, the following documents may be referenced or utilized.

### JazzYYC Policies and Documents

- Board of Directors Manual
- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality Policy
- Conflict of Interest
- Respectful Workplace and Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Policy
- Ensemble Policy
- Mount Royal University (MRU)/JazzYYC Youth Lab Band Program

### Forms

- Field Trip Consent form
- Informed Consent & Acknowledgement of Risk Form-MRU

### Other

Appendix A – JazzYYC Youth Safety Policy Investigation Process

Appendix B – JazzYYC Youth Safety Policy Incident Details

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**For additional information, please contact [SafetyConcerns@JazzYYC.com](mailto:SafetyConcerns@JazzYYC.com)**

*JazzYYC maintains the exclusive right to amend, adjust or terminate this policy at any time. Revisions or additions to the information contained in this policy document will be made as required.*

## AGREEMENT & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read and agree to adhere to the Youth Safety Policy and the procedures and practices outlined in this document. I also agree to comply with all other relevant policies and guidelines established by JazzYYC, including those related to appropriate conduct and confidentiality.

I understand that adherence to these policies is a condition of continued employment or volunteer opportunities with JazzYYC. Failure to abide by these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer status with JazzYYC.

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Name

Position

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Signature

Date