



Child Protection Policy

It purpose of this policy statement is:

To protect children and young people who receive Balanced Motions' (BMI) services from harm. This includes the children at location where BMI services are provided.

To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Balanced Motion, Inc. including paid and unpaid staff, Board members, and other students.

This Policy and Guidelines must be taken into consideration when planning any activities, especially when they involve children directly or indirectly.

Everyone associated with Balanced Motion, Inc. has child safeguarding responsibilities, including volunteers and professionals who work with BMI.

To this end, all BMI constituents should:

- Read and acknowledge BMI's Child Safeguarding and Participation Policy ("Policy").
- Familiarize themselves with situations that may present risks and learn how to mitigate such risks.
- Commit to child safeguarding best practices and model safe behaviors.
- Contribute to an environment where everyone, including children, are able to recognize unacceptable behavior and feel comfortable discussing their rights and concerns. This Policy should be considered in the context of the non-exhaustive list of BMI activities:
 - When engaging in activities involving children (whether directly or indirectly)
 - When planning or implementing BMI activities
 - When developing activities involving children including third party events and partner-led events
 - When processing, storing, and distributing children's personally identifying information ("PII")
 - When promoting our work using images and quotes or stories of children



- While volunteering or staffing events

Scope

BMI expects all constituents to adhere to the following expectations when interacting with children:

- Always work in a way that respects the child’s dignity and rights and places their best interests above all other considerations.
- Always treat all children with equal respect, without discrimination, regardless of their race, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, social origin or any other shared characteristic or trait.
- Always respect cultural and religious differences when engaging with children and their families and be sensitive to these in interactions with them.
- Always maintain appropriate boundaries whenever having direct or indirect contact with children, and do not engage in any conduct that breaches appropriate boundaries; this includes online and digital contact.
- Always act on safeguarding concerns swiftly, reporting matters of concern in accordance with these Guidelines to reduce the risk of further harm to a child. If a child needs emergency medical attention, make that your first priority.
- Report known or suspected child abuse immediately or as soon as practically possible to the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer (Sule K. Welch)
- Always follow the ‘two-adults’ rule, with two or more adults (visibly) supervising all children’s activities at all times (physically or digitally). ***
- Don’t be “alone with a child” (physically or digitally) that is not your own or under your care.
- Don’t engage in any sexual activity (contact or non-contact) with a child, or any activity that could be perceived as intimate.
- Don’t endorse the participation of a child in abusive activities (e.g., bullying or harassment).
- Don’t verbally or emotionally abuse a child, such as by shaming or degrading them (including stalking or online bullying).



- Don't discriminate or single out children based on personal reasons, preferences or prejudice, or make a child uncomfortable.
- Don't groom children or engage in any sexual activity with a child (including online).
- Don't marry a child (including if permitted under state law).
- Don't assault, hit, burn, slap, punch, pinch, kick, bite, push a child or pull their hair outside of designed class activities.
- Don't neglect children.
- Don't expose children to violence outside of designed class activities.
- Don't engage in harmful practices (such as female genital mutilation or cutting or child marriage).
- Don't engage in child trafficking.
- Don't engage children in illegal activities or expose them to situations that might endanger them.
- Acknowledge that classes, pending location, are temporarily recorded, contemporaneously and/or through approved BMI platform with virtual classes.

Communications about and with Children

Child safeguarding should be top-of-mind when communicating with or about children. Below are several key risk mitigation principles when engaging in such communications:

- Some communication with children may be verbal or written and should be inclusive.
- No digital or electronic communication should occur exclusively between BMI staff and children under the age of 13 (i.e. parent must be cc'd).
- Communications about children should incorporate photos, video and language that are respectful and protect the dignity and rights of children.
- BMI publications, blogs, stories etc., should not include personal information, addresses, social media handles or contact information or any combination that would risk violating the privacy and/or safety of the child.
- Personal addresses or contact information about children should not be distributed unless proper authorization from all parties is given.



- The informed consent of a chaperone, parent/guardian or designee should be obtained before recording information or obtaining images, and the intended use(s) of such materials explained.
- Communications with children should be limited to official BMI business, including for youth engagement, youth empowerment, and volunteer organizing business and be conducted over monitored channels.
- Communications with children should be conducted through official BMI platforms on email, SMS and other BMI communications tools. Any communications that cannot take place on official platforms of email and SMS must be conducted via official BMI-supported devices.
- A parent/guardian should be included in or informed of individualized communications with children.
- Children’s personal information in mass audience events or digital recordings should be anonymized to avoid identifying children publicly.

Transportation of Children

Use of personal vehicles to transport children from one location to another is permitted, but capacity is not to exceed the maximum factory standards of the vehicle, and two adults must be present in each vehicle. In addition, proper insurance is required when transporting children involved in a BMI activity. Special parental permission to transport may be required depending on the activity. Parental permission/consent, licensing and insurance should be documented.

The field trips should depart from and return to a pre-approved place. Departure and return times must be age-appropriate (night-time departures or arrivals are discouraged). Children should have adequate time to adjust and rest upon arrival at the destination. All local road/traffic/safety regulations must be followed.

Meeting Locations

Whenever possible, meetings involving children should be held in a public and accessible location, such as the studio, a school, house of worship, library, community center, or the like. If meetings are held in private homes, all pets, firearms, and alcohol should be out of sight and out of reach. An assessment and accommodations should be made prior to an event in a home.

Alcohol and Drugs



Children invited to a BMI sponsored fundraiser or event where alcohol is present must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. BMI staff acting as chaperones must not consume alcohol at BMI events; children attending events are not permitted to consume alcohol under any circumstances.

Personal Use of Social Media Sites

Social media interactions with children should be limited to professional communications only and generally in connection BMI volunteer activation. Upon attendance in classes, students and parents sign waivers regarding untagged use of photos and videos. Parents have the opportunity to opt-out of any social media posts.

Before posting photographs and videos of children, permission must be obtained from the subject(s) and their parent, legal guardian, caregiver, or designee. This is a nonwaivable requirement where photographs of children involved in BMI activities or events are concerned.

Reporting

Reporting of child abuse

BMI constituents are responsible for reporting any good-faith belief that any child is or has been subject to child abuse of any kind, in any circumstance, within or outside BMI activities. The person making such report must notify BMI's Child Safeguarding Officer. BMI will follow up on the incident consistent with this Policy.

Allegations involving BMI personnel or constituents

BMI constituents should report to the BMI's Child Safeguarding Officer the good-faith belief that a BMI constituent has violated this Policy. BMI will investigate any allegations and determine the appropriate response regarding BMI personnel. If the complaint concerns BMI's Child Safeguarding Officer, BMI constituent will refer any allegations to the appropriate authorities.

Recruiting and Screening

BMI will follow applicable federal and state laws regarding recruiting and screening of prospective BMI personnel who interact with children. BMI may perform background checks on all prospective employees whose responsibilities include working with children and may perform criminal background checks on volunteers and others who interact with children or their data. Due diligence will also be conducted on vendors, partners, and others who interact with children as part of their responsibilities to BMI.



APPENDIX

Definitions

- “Chaperone” – a parent, caregiver, or designee who has received explicit written consent from parents/guardians of children to be responsible for a child for any event or activity or is the parent/legal guardian of the child.
- “Child” or “children” – an individual constituent under the age of 18.
- “Child abuse” includes all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial or other exploitation of a child, including any actions that result in actual or potential harm to a child. Child abuse may be a deliberate act, or it may be a failure to act to prevent harm.
- “Board member” – a member of the BMI Board.
- “Child protection” – actions BMI takes when we have specific concerns that a particular child is at risk of significant harm.
- “Non-staff personnel” – temporary employees, interns, consultants, independent contractors, vendors and vendor staff, etc.
- “Staff member” – a member of staff or management of BMI, permanent or temporary.
- “Volunteer” – a supporter who offers their time, knowledge and/or abilities to BMI on a non-paid basis.
- “Vendor” – any entity or individual with whom BMI has contracted for paid work.
- “Donor” – a known constituent who has contributed to BMI