

Youth Safety Overview

The following is an overview of the policies, practices, and procedures for youth programs of the Calgary Stampede Foundation (CSF) developed, revised, and implemented over the past nine years. These are informed by best practice research, third-party experts and implemented by CSF's educators. These policies, procedures and practices are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis and evolve based upon industry standards.

Comprehensive Program

The Calgary Stampede Foundation has a comprehensive system of policies and procedures that supports safe programs and environments.

- A set of six corporate and organizational policies guide our programs, including but not limited to policies on Codes of Conduct (youth and adult), Protected Disclosure, Duty of Care, Background Screening, and Respectful Workplace. Internal review and updating of all policies occurs at least every three years.
- Operating procedures provide specific instructions on key areas of safety, including Investigation Procedures.
- Youth Interaction best practices guide behavior and requirements for supporting youth safety, including supervision (no youth alone with any adult), physical contact in rehearsals (requires consent), and guidelines on personal relationships.
- TransAlta Performing Arts Studios features state-of-the-art security measures, including video surveillance, electronically controlled access points, and see-through glass doors on all rooms and offices.

Awareness, Education and Communications

The Calgary Stampede Foundation prioritizes clear delivery, communication, and education of safe policies, practices, and behaviours.

- Annual distribution of policies, practices, and other youth program guidelines which outline responsibilities, expectations, and access to procedures.
- Annual staff and faculty orientations are held which include duty of care and duty to report discussions.
- Youth safety policies and practices are also shared with partners and all those who work in proximity to youth, including the Grandstand Production team.
- All policies and policy updates are available on multiple platforms, in addition to in-person and email communications.

Culture of Transparency, Disclosure and Caring

The Calgary Stampede Foundation's organizational and programming culture centres around and encourages transparency and disclosure.

- Youth psychologists are available for one-on-one counselling for Stampede Foundation youth program members, group sessions, topic specific drop-in sessions for youth, and consultations for Stampede Foundation staff.
- Program leaders consistently encourage a culture of “see something, say something” in communications both in-person and digital.
- Feedback from program members and parents is actively sought after through a twice-annual formal, third-party anonymous survey.
- Youth, employees, contractors, and volunteers have access to a confidential disclosure platform that connects them to a third-party helpline. Feedback is reported to the Stampede Foundation monthly.
- Program leaders intentionally and consistently discuss the priority for safety and wellness within programs in regular communication to instructors and youth members, keeping the culture of caring and wellbeing at the forefront for all and encouraging reporting of all concerns.
- Workshops, orientations, and other planning meetings for instructional staff align program delivery towards holistic youth development, focusing on building life skills and empowering youth as good humans.
- Program leaders consistently place an emphasis on the priority of safety and wellness for program planning and decisions. When communicating program activities, plans, or policies, program leaders emphasize a priority of safety, encouraging youth to come forward with concerns.
- Annual in-person sessions on Consent and Conduct are delivered to all youth program participants, clarifying behaviour expectations in and out of program activities, fostering a culture of caring.
- Complementary training for educational staff provides deeper understanding on issues relating to safety and wellness, fostering, and prioritizing a safe and respectful environment. In the last years we have undertaken Disclosure, SafeSport, Gender Inclusivity, and Mental Health First Aid sessions with instructional staff.

Compliance Reporting and Monitoring

Policy and procedure compliance is monitored and reported on regularly and on an ad-hoc basis.

- Conduct compliance is monitored through regular observation by program leaders and through survey response monitoring.
- Code of Conduct policies require mandatory review and sign off from all employees, volunteers, and youth.
- All safety incidents or complaints received are documented, stored, and tracked, and investigated where necessary.
- The Stampede Foundation Board of Directors receive bi-monthly reports including any applicable summaries of complaints and major incidents, with a thorough review completed and reported on at least annually.