



## **Sudbury Savoyards' Policy on the Presence of Minors and Others in Technical Working Areas**

Ratified by the Sudbury Savoyards Board of Trustees September 6, 2006

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The Sudbury Savoyards are strongly committed to encouraging full family participation in community theater and performance, and in the support activities required for those activities to succeed. We have long promised that if a member wishes to learn a skill or a tool or engage in an activity, the Company will support, as best it can, that person in learning to do so. In the technical realm, people have learned to sew, perform carpentry, paint scenes, rig lighting instruments, and a myriad of other tasks. We have long encouraged families to bring children to technical work days, where the children have contributed by painting set pieces, tracing signs, sewing, and sweeping floors, among other accomplishments. However fulfilling these contributions have been, the safety of all participants must remain a primary concern.

To avoid even the remote possibility of personal injury or material damage, we find it necessary to set guidelines and restrictions with regard to the presence and participation of all, particularly children, in technical activities. The age ranges noted in these policies are necessarily rough, and may be considered somewhat fluid. On the other hand, some restrictions are strict and are not subject to negotiation.

### **Personal safety is the principal goal.**

**The Technical Director or designated Responsible Authority has the ultimate authority at any time to determine if a child's behavior at that moment, regardless of age, is inappropriate given concerns for safety or disruption. He/she has the authority to take whatever action is necessary to remediate the situation.**

A "Responsible Authority" is a Technical Director; Stage Manager; Set, Sound, Costumes, or Lighting Crew Chief, or other person designated by the show's Producer or a Company officer.

Two types of work areas are covered by this policy: "benign work areas" are those areas where work is performed with minimally dangerous tools, such as paint and sewing work areas; "technical work areas" are those areas where work is performed using hazardous tools (saws, nail guns) or where heavy materials are manipulated (hanging lights, building set pieces, etc). These work areas are differentiated by the degree of harm that might ensue in terms of personal injury or material damage.

The venues in which we do technical theater work are typically rented build spaces or performance locations in which the Savoyards are transients. We must engage in conscientious effort to make such spaces safe for our use. It is the responsibility of the overall manager of a technical activity (likely the Technical Director or the Stage Manager) to designate benign and technical work areas, including defining a boundary when these areas share a room.

The following restrictions and conditions define a baseline set of safety measures under this policy.

1. No child age three or younger may be allowed in a technical work area. Children age three or younger may remain in a benign work area only in-hand or in-arms of a responsible adult, (usually a parent) or so handled by an able, older child who is also under the supervision of an adult. Children in strollers or infant carriers should be no more than arm's length from a responsible adult who will take immediate charge should a hazard arise.
2. It is recommended that only persons engaged in the work at hand (even adults, but especially children) should be present in a technical work area. This doesn't mean that non-active participants can't be in the same room as a technical work area, but they should be safely away from any risk to themselves or other workers. This restriction may be strengthened where conditions warrant (on stage, or where close quarters limit free movement, for example).
3. No child between four and seven may be allowed in a technical work area. Children between four and seven will be allowed in a benign work area only under close supervision (specifically, in visual and audible range) of a responsible adult or capable older child. It is expected that children in this age range can participate in work (roller painting, for example), but they should only be present while performing such work, under adult supervision. Supervising adults may be required to restrain these children during set up of the work area so that, for instance, flats can be moved into position.
4. Children between the ages of eight and fourteen should be under the supervision of a responsible adult who is onsite, but need not be in the same room or in visual contact with the child at all times. If these children are in a technical work area, a responsible adult must take responsibility for supervising that child. Again, it is expected that only children involved in a relevant project should be in the work area.
5. It must be made clear to any child of any age (as well as to their chaperones) that any directive from any involved adult **MUST** be obeyed if that directive involves concerns for safety or disruptive or distracting conduct. Failure to do so may result in removal of the child and chaperone from the site.
6. **No child of any age, regardless of level of adult control or supervision, is allowed to be present on stage during set assembly or disassembly, during the installation or strike of lights, sound equipment, or overhead rigging, or at any time the venue is not designated as "safe" by a Responsible Authority.** Related areas of activity (transit paths, set-up areas, associated work areas) may be similarly designated "off limits" by Responsible Authorities.
7. All persons in any work space have a responsibility to conduct themselves and their work with primary concern for the safety of all present. Work that involves particular hazard, whether from the tools or material used, or the noise or by-products generated, should be segregated from other work to the degree possible. Where such work cannot be so segregated, warning should be given to all others present, and work should proceed only when the safety of all has been assured. All users of tools, powered or otherwise, are encouraged to use proper safety equipment, such as safety glasses and hearing protection.

**[end]**