

we create tech

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Protecting Participants, Staff, and Volunteers

Last Updated: March 2026

We Create Tech, Inc.

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Approved by: Shana Sanders, Founder & CEO

1. Purpose & Commitment

We Create Tech (WCT) is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all participants, staff, volunteers, and partners involved in our programs. This Safeguarding Policy establishes the principles, standards, and procedures that guide how WCT prevents, recognizes, reports, and responds to any form of violence, harassment, abuse, or misconduct, whether directed at children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

This policy applies to all WCT programs, including but not limited to CreativX Lab, TechRise, CreativeTech, Dance Code Create, CreativX Sport, NextGen Tech Collective, and any affiliated activities delivered in partnership with schools, community organizations, youth centers, and sport organizations.

WCT maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** for any form of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or misconduct toward program participants. Every individual associated with WCT has a responsibility to uphold this policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All WCT staff (full-time, part-time, contracted)
- All volunteers, mentors, and facilitators
- Board of Directors members
- Partner organization staff who deliver programming on behalf of or alongside WCT
- Guest speakers, coaches, and visiting professionals
- Any adult who has direct or indirect contact with WCT program participants

This policy covers all WCT activities regardless of location, including in-person programming at schools, community centers, sport facilities, and partner sites, as well as virtual programming, events, and field trips.

3. Key Definitions

Safeguarding

All measures taken to prevent violence, harassment, or abuse to children or adults in WCT programming, and all recognition, reporting, response, and remedy activities undertaken to address actual or potential abuse or harmful behavior. (Adapted from Safe Sport International)

Child / Minor

Any individual under the age of 18.

Vulnerable Adult

Any person aged 18 or older who may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to disability, illness, age, or other circumstances. This includes adaptive athletes and participants with physical, intellectual, or sensory disabilities.

Abuse and Misconduct

Includes but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse: any non-accidental physical contact that causes harm or injury

- Emotional abuse: patterns of behavior that harm a participant's emotional development or sense of self-worth, including bullying, intimidation, threats, humiliation, and isolation
- Sexual abuse or misconduct: any sexual contact, behavior, or communication directed at a minor or vulnerable adult, including grooming behaviors
- Neglect: failure to provide adequate supervision, safety, or care for participants in WCT's charge
- Harassment: unwelcome conduct based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other protected characteristic
- Hazing: any action that subjects a participant to mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, or risk of injury for the purpose of initiation or group acceptance

4. Prevention Measures

4.1 Screening and Background Checks

- All staff, volunteers, facilitators, and contractors who have direct contact with minors or vulnerable adults must undergo a criminal background check prior to beginning work with WCT
- Background checks will be conducted through a reputable third-party provider and renewed every two years
- Any individual with a conviction for a crime involving violence, abuse, or exploitation of a minor or vulnerable adult will be prohibited from participating in WCT programming in any capacity
- WCT reserves the right to disqualify any individual whose background check reveals information that may pose a risk to participant safety

4.2 Training Requirements

- All staff and volunteers who work directly with participants in the CreativX Sports Labs must complete SafeSport Trained Core certification through the U.S. Center for SafeSport (or equivalent approved training) prior to engaging with participants
- Training must be renewed annually through appropriate refresher courses
- All staff must complete Georgia mandated reporter training and understand their legal obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect
- New staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding orientation during onboarding that covers this policy, reporting procedures, and code of conduct expectations
- Safeguarding training records will be maintained by WCT and made available for review

4.3 Code of Conduct for Adults

All adults associated with WCT programming must:

- Treat all participants with dignity, respect, and fairness
- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries at all times
- Never be alone with a single minor in an unobservable or private setting. If one-on-one interaction is necessary, it must occur in an open, visible area or with another adult present
- Never use physical force, intimidation, threats, or demeaning language with participants
- Never engage in any form of sexual contact, romantic relationship, or sexualized communication with a minor participant
- Never provide alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substance to a participant
- Never photograph, record, or share images of participants without proper consent from a parent or guardian
- Report any concerns about participant safety immediately following the procedures outlined in this policy
- Model positive behavior and inclusive language at all times

4.4 Supervision and Program Environment

- WCT will maintain appropriate adult-to-participant ratios for all programs. A minimum of two adults must be present at all in-person programming

- Program spaces must be visible and accessible. Closed-door, private meetings with minors are prohibited
- Transportation of participants by WCT staff or volunteers requires written parental/guardian consent and must never involve a single adult with a single minor
- Digital communications with minor participants (email, text, social media, messaging platforms) must include a parent, guardian, or second WCT staff member
- All program locations must be assessed for physical safety and accessibility prior to use

4.5 Inclusive Safeguarding for Adaptive Sport Programming

Through CreativX Sport and partnerships with adaptive sport organizations, WCT works with participants who have physical, intellectual, and sensory disabilities. Additional safeguarding considerations include:

- Staff and volunteers must receive disability awareness and sensitivity training
- Communication methods must be adapted to the needs of each participant (visual aids, sign language interpreters, simplified instructions, assistive technology)
- Physical assistance must only be provided with explicit consent from the participant (or their parent/guardian) and must be appropriate to the activity
- Equipment and program spaces must be accessible and safe for participants with varying abilities
- WCT will work with partner organizations to understand the specific safeguarding needs of their athlete populations

5. Recognizing Abuse and Misconduct

All WCT staff and volunteers are expected to be aware of the signs of potential abuse. Indicators may include but are not limited to:

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained injuries, bruises, burns, or marks
- Injuries inconsistent with explanations given
- Flinching when approached or touched

Behavioral Indicators

- Sudden changes in behavior, mood, or attendance
- Withdrawal from group activities or specific individuals
- Fear of certain adults or reluctance to be left alone with someone
- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior
- Self-harm or expressions of hopelessness
- Aggression or acting out that is unusual for the individual

Environmental Indicators

- An adult seeking excessive one-on-one time with a participant
- An adult giving gifts, special attention, or privileges to a specific participant
- An adult communicating privately with a minor participant outside of program channels
- Secretive or boundary-crossing behavior between an adult and a participant

When in doubt, report. It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to investigate or determine whether abuse has occurred. The responsibility is to recognize potential concerns and report them.

6. Reporting Procedures

6.1 Internal Reporting

Any staff member, volunteer, or partner who witnesses, suspects, or receives a disclosure of abuse, neglect, or misconduct must:

1. Ensure the immediate safety of the participant
2. Report the concern to the WCT Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible (within the same day)
3. Complete a written incident report documenting what was observed, disclosed, or suspected, including dates, times, individuals involved, and any statements made (using the participant's own words where possible)
4. Do not investigate the matter independently or confront the alleged perpetrator
5. Do not promise confidentiality to the participant, but reassure them that the information will only be shared with people who need to know to keep them safe

WCT Safeguarding Lead: Shana Sanders, Founder & CEO

Contact: hello@wecreatetech.org | [insert phone number]

If the concern involves the Safeguarding Lead, the report should be made directly to a member of the WCT Board of Directors.

6.2 External / Mandatory Reporting

In the state of Georgia, all adults are considered mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect. WCT staff and volunteers must also report to the appropriate authorities:

Child abuse/neglect	Georgia Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS)1-855-GACHILD (1-855-422-4453)
Imminent danger	Call 911 immediately
Sexual abuse of a minor	Georgia DFCS and local law enforcement
Abuse of a vulnerable adult	Georgia Adult Protective Services1-866-552-4464
Sport-related misconduct	U.S. Center for SafeSportuscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern

External reporting to authorities is not optional and is required by Georgia law regardless of any internal investigation or process.

7. Response Protocol

Upon receiving a report, the Safeguarding Lead will:

6. Ensure the immediate safety of the participant(s) involved
7. Contact the appropriate external authorities as required by law (DFCS, law enforcement)
8. Remove the alleged perpetrator from contact with participants pending the outcome of any investigation (this applies to staff, volunteers, and partner personnel)
9. Notify the participant's parent or guardian (unless the parent/guardian is the subject of the concern, in which case external authorities will advise)
10. Document all actions taken with dates, times, and details
11. Cooperate fully with any external investigation by authorities
12. Provide appropriate support to the affected participant(s), including referrals to counseling or support services
13. Review the incident with the Board of Directors and determine any necessary policy or procedural changes

Confidentiality: All safeguarding reports will be handled with strict confidentiality. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis with individuals directly involved in the response or required by law.

8. Media, Photography & Consent

- Written consent from a parent or guardian is required before photographing, recording, or sharing images of minor participants
- Consent forms must specify how images will be used (social media, website, marketing, grant reporting, media)
- Participants (or their parents/guardians) may withdraw consent at any time
- Images must never be demeaning, exploitative, or identify a participant in a way that could put them at risk
- When sharing images of participants with disabilities, WCT will follow ethical communication guidelines and obtain specific consent for any storytelling or media use
- Staff and volunteers must not use personal devices to photograph participants unless explicitly authorized and must not share images on personal social media accounts

9. Data Protection & Record Keeping

- All participant data (enrollment forms, emergency contacts, medical information, attendance records) will be stored securely and accessible only to authorized WCT staff
- Safeguarding incident reports will be stored separately from general program records in a secure, access-controlled location
- Records will be retained in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements
- WCT will not share participant data with third parties without written consent from the participant or their parent/guardian, except as required by law or for safeguarding purposes

10. Partner Organization Standards

WCT partners with schools, community centers, sport organizations, and other nonprofits to deliver programming. When delivering programming in partnership:

- WCT will share this Safeguarding Policy with all partner organizations and require acknowledgment
- Partner staff who interact directly with WCT participants must meet WCT's background check and training requirements, or demonstrate equivalent safeguarding standards
- WCT will clarify safeguarding responsibilities and reporting lines with each partner prior to program delivery
- If a safeguarding concern arises during partner-hosted programming, WCT's reporting procedures apply in addition to the partner's own procedures

11. Policy Review & Updates

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Lead and the Board of Directors
- The policy will be updated as needed following any safeguarding incident, changes in law, or organizational growth
- WCT is committed to continuous improvement in safeguarding practices and welcomes feedback from staff, participants, families, and partners
- WCT will participate in external safeguarding learning opportunities, including the Play Coll3ctive Community of Practice, to strengthen organizational capacity

12. Staff & Volunteer Acknowledgment

All staff, volunteers, facilitators, and contractors are required to read, understand, and sign this Safeguarding Policy before engaging in any WCT programming. By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the We Create Tech Safeguarding Policy and agree to comply with all its provisions.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Role / Title