STORY STUDIOS AUSTRALIA

YOUNG WRITER CODE OF CONDUCT

WELCOME TO STORY STUDIOS!

Story Studios is a place for curious minds, bold ideas, unexpected discoveries and stories of every shape and size.
It's a place to experiment, take creative risks, learn new skills and share the wonderful (and sometimes wonderfully strange) things that come out of our imaginations.
Every young writer has a part to play in making Story Studios a welcoming, supportive and inspiring place to be. Our Code of Conduct helps us look after one another, respect each other's creativity and make the most of our time together.

By taking part in a Story Studios program, young writers agree to follow these expectations.

1. Respect Each Other

Great stories come from all kinds of people, and everyone deserves to feel welcome at Story Studios.
We ask all young writers to:

- Treat fellow writers, mentors and staff with kindness and respect.
- Listen when others are speaking and give everyone the opportunity to contribute.
- Respect differences in opinions, backgrounds, identities, abilities and experiences.
- Help create an environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing ideas and trying new things.
- Follow reasonable instructions from mentors and staff.
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation and deliberate exclusion are not acceptable at Story Studios.
- We understand that disagreements happen. What matters is how we respond to them, and we encourage young writers to work through difficulties respectfully, with support from their mentors when needed.

2. Respect Stories and Ideas

- Every writer has their own voice, and every story begins somewhere.
- At Story Studios, we encourage young writers to:
- Be open to new ideas, different perspectives and unfamiliar ways of storytelling.
- Give feedback that is thoughtful, constructive and kind.
- Respect the courage it takes to share creative work, particularly when a story is still taking shape.
- Respect the ownership of other people's stories, characters and ideas. Never copy or share someone else's work without their permission.
- Be mindful of the age and comfort of others when sharing stories involving mature, frightening or sensitive subjects.
- We love imaginative risks and ambitious storytelling. Sometimes a mentor may ask a young writer to adapt how they share particular content to make sure it's appropriate for the group.
- Remember, it's fine to disagree about a story. It's never okay to make someone feel embarrassed or unwelcome for writing one.

3. Make the Most of Your Writers' Group

- Our sessions are a chance to explore, experiment and develop your skills alongside other young writers.
- We ask you to:
- Arrive ready to participate, learn and contribute.
- Give activities a go, even when they take you outside your creative comfort zone.
- Allow others the space and concentration they need to write.
- Avoid behaviour that repeatedly disrupts activities or prevents others from participating.
- Bring the writing materials you need for your session, such as a notebook, pencil case, laptop or charger, where required.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Everyone works differently, and creativity doesn't always happen on command. We don't expect every young writer to be writing every minute, but we do ask everyone to make a genuine effort to participate and support the group.

4. Look After Our Space

- Whether we're writing in a studio, a shared venue or an online space, we all have a responsibility to look after our surroundings.
- Young writers are expected to:
- Treat equipment, furniture, books and other people's belongings with care.
- Help keep our writing spaces tidy and safe.
- Use shared materials responsibly.
- Leave dangerous or inappropriate items at home.
- Respect the rules of the venue and follow instructions relating to safety.

5. Use Technology Responsibly

Technology can be a wonderful storytelling tool, but it should support our creative work rather than distract from it.

During sessions:

- Use laptops, tablets and other devices only for writing and activities approved by their mentor.
- Refrain from playing video games, using social media, watching videos or accessing unrelated online content at any time during sessions or while in the studio, including during breaks or before and after sessions.
- Digital platforms and shared writing spaces must be used respectfully.
- Do not photograph, film, record or take screenshots of other participants or their work without appropriate permission.
- Do not share another person's private information, writing or creative work without their permission.
- Do not use digital tools to bully, exclude, embarrass or harass others.

If you're unsure whether a particular website, application or AI tool is appropriate for an activity, please check with your mentor first.

6. Staying Safe and Connected Online

Young writers attending Story Studios At Home are part of the same creative community, even when we're joining from different places.

To help make our online groups welcoming, engaging and safe, we ask you to

- Join sessions using your own first name so your mentor knows who is attending.
- Be ready to participate and respond to your mentor.
- Keep your camera on where possible to help everyone feel connected. If this is difficult for personal, accessibility or technical reasons, your family can discuss alternative arrangements with Story Studios.

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- Mute your microphone when needed to help others be heard.
- Choose an appropriate background or use a suitable virtual background.
- Treat others respectfully in video calls, chat functions and shared digital spaces.
- Keep session links, passwords and access details private.
- Never record sessions, take screenshots or share images of other participants without permission.
- Follow your mentor's instructions about using online tools and platforms.
- Online sessions are intended for enrolled young writers. Parents and guardians should not participate in sessions unless this has been arranged with Story Studios.

7. Arriving and Leaving Safely

Young writers attending in-person programs must follow the arrival and dismissal arrangements agreed upon by their parent or guardian.

- If you are registered as to be collected, you must remain in the designated supervised area until an authorised person collects you.
- If you are registered as may leave alone, you may leave independently when your session has finished.
- You must not leave a session or venue early without permission from Story Studios staff and, where required, your parent or guardian.
- If you're unsure about your collection arrangements, speak to a mentor or Studio Host.

Parents and guardians are responsible for keeping Story Studios informed of any changes to collection arrangements.

8. When Things Go Wrong

Everyone makes mistakes, and learning to work with others is part of growing as a writer and a person.

If a young writer's behaviour doesn't meet the expectations of this Code of Conduct, a mentor or staff member will explain the concern and help them understand what needs to change.

Depending on the situation, this may involve:

- A reminder or conversation about expectations.
- A formal warning and communication with a parent or guardian.
- A meeting or agreed plan to support more positive participation.
- A temporary break from an activity or session.
- Suspension or cancellation of enrolment if behaviour continues or presents a serious concern.

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We aim to respond fairly and proportionately, taking into account individual circumstances and support needs.
Serious behaviour that threatens the safety or wellbeing of others, including violence, significant bullying or harassment, may result in immediate removal from a session or further action without prior warnings.
Our priority is always to keep Story Studios safe and supportive for everyone.

9. Speak Up!

Your voice matters at Story Studios, both in your writing and beyond it.
If something happens that makes you feel unsafe, uncomfortable, worried, excluded or upset, we encourage you to tell someone.
You can speak with your Story and Writing Mentor, Studio Host, another trusted member of the Story Studios team, or your parent or guardian.
You can also contact Story Studios directly.
We will listen, take your concerns seriously and help you find the right support. You will not be in trouble for raising a genuine concern or asking for help.
If you're worried about something involving a mentor or staff member, you can speak with another trusted adult or contact Story Studios management directly.

Our Story Studios Promise

We want Story Studios to be a place where every young writer feels they belong.

A place to find your voice, make discoveries, build friendships, develop your craft and write stories that only you could tell.

By looking after one another, respecting different ideas and approaching our time together with curiosity and kindness, we can make that happen.

Thank you for helping make Story Studios a wonderful place to write.

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