



# CANOPY STUDIO



## Policies and Procedures 2024





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## Introduction

Canopy Studio is an aerial dance trapeze facility in Athens, GA that opened in 2002.

As an aerial dance and circus arts school, we teach adult and youth classes and private lessons in dance and circus trapeze, fabrics, lyra, tight wire, Spanish web, aerial yoga and more. The space is available for classes, workshops and professional training in the aerial arts.

Supportive, professional instructors guide students through a safe and challenging progression of skills in our well-equipped facility. We believe that the physical, emotional and mental skills learned in aerial arts enrich the rest of your life.

We make an extra effort to be clear about the studio's policies because we believe that working from a common set of expectations will lead everyone to the most satisfying experience. We are always available to answer any questions about our policies.

## Mission Statement

Canopy's vision is to provide a community arts center that is dedicated to enriching the culture of our community and the lives of individuals through flying dance trapeze, movement education and performance arts.

## What you will find here

This manual contains policies and procedures designed to make the experience of students at Canopy Studio (hereby referred to as Canopy) as safe, fun, and successful as reasonably possible, and which ensure that we share a common understanding of our shared endeavor.

## Acknowledgements

Canopy Studio would like to thank SHOW Circus School who graciously allowed us to use their detailed policies and procedure document to create one for Canopy. We are grateful for their willingness to let us use theirs as a template.

SHOW acknowledged the work done by the following organizations, which insights and materials have supported their process and are used in this document. The following are the organizations they credit with helping create their manual:

- The British Gymnastics Health and Safety Policy at [British-gymnastics.org](http://British-gymnastics.org) Self Defense Instructor Core Competencies, the National Women's Martial Arts Federation at [nwmaf.org](http://nwmaf.org); BALANCING ACTS – keeping children safe in congregations, Rev. Debra W. Haffner, Unitarian Universalist Association at [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)
- Also, thanks to the following organizations for their excellent work in safety and risk management and the policies and procedures they have put in place. The work these organizations have done has informed our work.
- Keeping Arts Safe, Arts Council England at [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk); Circus Development Agency at [www.circusarts.org.uk](http://www.circusarts.org.uk); Streetwise Community Circus Work- shops at [sccw.co.uk/](http://sccw.co.uk/)

## Definitions

**Policy:** A policy is a statement of the guiding principles to which we commit. Policies describe the commitments we make to fulfill the mission of CANOPY.

**Procedure:** A procedure is a method for implementing a policy; it is the way we make it meaningful in real life. Procedures limit or direct the actions of those involved in CANOPY, whether owner, instructor, student, or parent. This document includes both policy and procedures.

**Rule:** A rule is simply a statement of what is or is not expected action or behavior. A rule may be put in place by a particular instructor at any time in the context of a particular class or activity as long as it is consistent with these Policies and Procedures.

Rules, Procedures, and Policies assure consistency and best practice as we engage in learning together.

# I. Community Norms & Culture

## General Guidelines

Guidelines may be subject to change in the event of public health emergencies. CANOPY will communicate any policy changes to students via email.

It is the policy of CANOPY that our environment, practice, and human relationships will be safe and respectful in order to provide a context where people can have meaningful learning and interactions.

CANOPY holds responsibility to provide an environment free of predictable hazards, instruction that is professional and based on best practices in movement fields, and to exercise reasonable care in the training and safety of students.

We also expect that all students and parents will participate in ways that are consistent with our overall culture of safety and respect.

To this end, we have expectations and rules for maintaining a culture of safety and respect among students, parents, and instructors.

CANOPY strives to create an atmosphere of safety and creativity in which people are able to participate, express themselves, and be heard irrespective of gender or gender identification, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, ethnicity, religion, creed, age, size, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, political belief or affiliation, or veteran status. CANOPY will not discriminate in hiring and will make every reasonable effort to support the appropriate participation of all persons interested in learning the Aerial Arts. CANOPY will not tolerate any form of harassment or other discriminatory behavior, whether physical or verbal.

CANOPY explicitly desires to create a culture where all persons bring respect, curiosity and openness to our differences. Aerial arts is about creativity, confidence, collaboration, trust in oneself and others, and physical skill. It is expected that students, parents, and instructors will be generous in their speech toward one another, showing an interested and curious attitude toward one another.

CANOPY is a place where all are welcome to learn and grow at their own pace. CANOPY will not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior, including interpersonal disparagement, teasing, bullying, discrimination, or abuse, and will respond appropriately should any be brought to the attention of the instructors.

## Student/Teacher Ratios:

Children's Classes:

- 4 or fewer ..... 1 Teacher
- 10 or fewer ..... 2 Teachers
- More than 10 ..... 3 Teachers, especially if one teacher is in an assistant role

Adult/Middle School/High School Classes:

- 6 or fewer ..... 1 Teacher
- 12 or fewer ..... 2 Teachers
- More than 12 ..... 3 Teachers as needed

## Respect for instructors' competence and decisions

The instructors will respect the skill, competencies, and can-do attitude that students bring, as well as their interpersonal boundaries and privacy. It is expected that students will likewise respect the professional decision making of instructors with respect to training, supervision, participation, and progression.

Canopy has an active spotting culture to maintain consistent high levels of safety. For any trick breakdown, regardless of age or equipment, Canopy instructors reserve the right to touch students in a spotting capacity (most likely shoulders, neck, hip, and legs) until the trick is executed safely. Active spotting can also occur in an emergency and due to the quick and necessary reaction of an instructor, there might not be time for audible explanation of spotting procedures. Please know all spotting is necessary given the inherent risk of circus training.

Proper mats will be used for all training at Canopy Studio. An instructor has the option to use more safety equipment and mats at any point in a class should they deem it necessary. Mats will be used in all studio performances. Discretion will be given during the Advanced Shows and Repertory shows where mats will be used each time concerning height or degree of trick difficulty.

## Respect for the physical space

CANOPY students of all ages are expected to demonstrate discretion and controlled bodies throughout the Tracy Street Warehouse area for their own safety and the safety and comfort of our neighbors.

## Students will:

- Keep the studio clean and organized.
- Follow rules of engagement for all equipment.
- Put back any equipment or supplies in the appropriate place when done using them.
- Feel free to use cleaning supplies (paper towels, vacuum,

etc) to clean any messes you make.

- If universal precautions are required, instructors will perform clean-up.

### **Lost and Found:**

A lost and found basket is kept in the public restroom. It is students' responsibility to check the lost and found if they think an item has been left at the studio. Canopy Studio is not responsible for any items left by students at the studio. Items left longer than 30 days will be donated to a local charity.

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Principles & Policy**

### **Purpose and Introduction**

At Canopy Studio, a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace is one where all employees, students, and volunteers, whatever their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education, or disability, feel valued and respected. We are committed to a nondiscriminatory approach and provide equal opportunity for employment and advancement in all our programs. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and work to ensure that all voices are valued and heard.

We are committed to modeling diversity and inclusion for the entire arts industry of the nonprofit sector, and to maintaining an inclusive environment with equitable treatment for all.

This policy focuses on four main areas:

- The recruitment, development, and management of employees.
- The recruitment, development, and management of volunteers.
- The delivery of services.
- The development of public involvement and stakeholder engagement to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion within the local and national aerial arts community is increased, sustained, and free of exclusion or barriers.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Principles**

At Canopy, valuing diversity means recognizing and valuing difference in its broadest sense. It is about ensuring that our practices recognize, respect and value differences, so that we can all learn from each other.

At Canopy, equity means understanding everyone's needs, such that people engaging with us experience access, treatment, and outcomes free from bias and/or favoritism.

At Canopy, a commitment to inclusion means ensuring

that people do not face barriers in their engagement with us because of their personal characteristics.

This policy is compliant with the Federal Antidiscrimination Laws, ensuring that no person will be discriminated against based on:

- Age
- Color
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Hair
- Marriage or civil partnership
- National origin
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We recognize that disability may take many forms and be invisible, for example, mental health conditions, cognitive impairments, and sensory impairments.

We recognize that discrimination can be both direct, where a particular individual is subjected to worse treatment because of a characteristic, and indirect, where a policy or work practice systematically affects particular groups of people. Through this policy we aim to ensure that nobody experiences discrimination in their engagement with us, whether direct or indirect.

We understand that sometimes people can face discrimination on the appearance of a characteristic, or because of an association with someone with a particular characteristic, such as a career. This policy treats all such cases as discrimination.

We will treat all people at Canopy with dignity and respect.

We will not victimize anyone who raises a complaint or acts as a whistleblower to call out any poor practice that they report.

### **The Recruitment, Development, and Management of Employees**

Canopy is committed to building a workforce whose diver-

sity reflects the communities it serves.

We have a Recruitment and Screening Policy which ensures that throughout the recruitment process, job applicants are treated fairly and have equality of opportunity regardless of their personal characteristics.

We will not discriminate based on spent criminal convictions unless the role being recruited to requires a background check to be completed. Where there is such a requirement, this will be clearly stated in the advertisement and job description. Canopy will consider the nature and gravity of the offense, the time since conviction, and the nature of the employment tasks before disqualifying an individual from employment based on criminal background.

We have a range of policies outlined in our Employee Handbook, all of which are based on our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and working environments to meet the needs of individual employees wherever possible, when requests are raised to management.

We will ensure that Canopy's policies covering pay, benefits, grading and other terms and conditions do not cause indirect discrimination.

While Canopy may be liable for any unlawful discrimination committed by its employees and volunteers, if Canopy has taken all reasonable steps to prevent such discrimination from occurring, individual employees may be held personally liable for acts of unlawful discrimination.

All employees will undertake mandatory quarterly equality and diversity training.

All employees and supervisors have duties and responsibilities through this policy which are outlined below. Where behavior contravenes these duties and responsibilities, the matter may be dealt with through the Problem Resolution Policy and Procedures.

All employees have a personal responsibility to:

Treat everybody they encounter through their work with respect and dignity.

Adjust their practice to ensure that everybody with whom they engage with through their work has equality of access, equality of treatment and equality of outcomes.

Intervene to prevent or halt situations involving harassment or discrimination.

Report to their supervisor any behaviors or procedures which threaten to undermine this policy.

Respond promptly to any complaints about unfair treatment, ensuring that these are reported and escalated within Canopy as appropriate.

All supervisors have additional responsibilities to:

Act in accordance with the Federal Antidiscrimination Laws when recruiting for vacant roles.

Act in accordance with the wider human resource policy framework when supervising performance, ensuring that no employee faces unfair treatment.

Ensure that opportunities for training and development are available to all employees based on individual and organizational needs.

Ensure that the employee reporting to them is fully aware of this policy and receives appropriate training in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Address any instances of discrimination or failure to comply with this policy in any employee reporting to them, through the Problem Resolution Policy and Procedures.

## **The Recruitment, Development, and Management of Volunteers**

Canopy is committed to building a team of volunteers whose diversity reflects the communities it serves.

We have a process for recruiting volunteers to ensure fairness and respect for individual needs.

We rely on volunteers to engage with local communities on our behalf. As such, volunteers become the gatekeepers for many people seeking to engage with Canopy and have an important role in delivering this policy.

We acknowledge that many volunteers may not have had the opportunity to develop their understanding of the issues surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion. We will therefore ensure that all volunteers receive appropriate training and guidance on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and this policy.



All volunteers have an identified supervisor, who will provide any necessary support to individual volunteers requesting additional support or guidance in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

All volunteers are requested to:

Treat everybody they encounter through their volunteering role with respect and dignity.

Adjust their practice to ensure that everybody with whom they engage with through their volunteering role has equality of access, equality of treatment, and equality of outcomes.

Intervene to prevent or halt situations involving harassment or discrimination.

Report any behaviors or procedures which threaten to undermine this policy to their identified supervisor.

Respond promptly to any complaints about unfair treatment, ensuring that these are reported and escalated to the Executive Director as appropriate.

Where behavior contravenes this policy, the Executive Director will discuss the matter with the relevant volunteer(s). In extreme cases, it may be necessary to end the volunteering agreement with the individual volunteer.

### **The Delivery of Services**

We are committed to ensuring that all people seeking a service from us are treated fairly and with respect.

We will make reasonable adjustments wherever possible to meet individual needs to ensure that people engaging with us receive equality of access, equality of treatment, and equality of outcomes.

Our own support services are delivered through our employees and volunteers. As such, the main way in which we ensure adherence with this policy is through sections 3 and 4 of this policy.

In addition, we are committed to developing the use of technology to overcome barriers to access our services.

### **Public Involvement and Engagement**

One of Canopy's main roles is to understand and implement elements of diversity, equity, and inclusion through increasing representation of groups and individuals in the

communities we serve. Recognizing and understating the lack of diversity in the aerial arts and circus communities, Canopy is committed to increasing engagement and access to aerial arts in underrepresented communities through direct networking and programming.

### **Review and Compliance**

Concerns and informal complaints regarding the implementation of this policy should be brought in the first instance to the Executive Director.

For existing employees, if concerns are not able to be resolved informally, the Problem Resolution Policy and Procedure formal process should be utilized.

This policy will be reviewed yearly, unless there is a legislative change which triggers an earlier review.

## **II. Physical Safety**

### **Overview**

CANOPY STUDIO is dedicated to the emotional and physical safety of every student who walks through our doors. Aerial Arts activities are fun, but challenging, and we recognize that students need to both feel and be safe to be able to fully participate in our programs. CANOPY seeks to be at the forefront of Aerial Arts educators in creating a community of mutual support and caring. At Canopy Studio, we keep each other safe.

### **Be Safe**

Aerial Arts is one of the most fulfilling physical expressions a student can experience. It can be fun, creative, and challenging. Like many physical disciplines, it is not without risk. With this in mind, safety is at the forefront of our practice. Students are trained to be aware of risks and how to avoid them. When a student has the proper knowledge and awareness of Aerial Arts practices and how to keep themselves safe, the student can focus on skill building and the fun of practice while also making sure that the instructors and other students stay safe in the classroom. Safety for us is not only focused on the individual. It's about keeping everyone in our community safe and making sure the Aerial Arts culture of respect, responsibility and camaraderie permeates the lives of our students, informing their choices and enriching their experiences.

### **Physical preparation**

Please allow time for a visit to the bathroom or to change

clothes before class, so the student does not miss warm ups.

If a student arrives within the first 15 minutes of class, dressed, ready to participate, and warmed up to the satisfaction of the instructor, they may be allowed to join class at the instructors' discretion. A proper warm up is required to prevent injury and increase your capacity. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late you are welcome to remain and observe the class.

All students should be properly nourished and hydrated before taking classes. Please refrain from bringing large meals into the studio and observe the potential for food allergens.

### **Attire**

Adult students should attire themselves properly. Appropriate undergarments should be worn so that an individual's body is protected during wraps, drops, and dynamic practice and may include dance belts, sports bras, and/or any other compression-type garment. If they don't, instructors can ask them to correct the situation.

Children will be most comfortable with their legs covered and in fitted tops. They can wear fitted tank tops or leotards with tights with the feet exposed or leggings, sweatpants, or pajama pants. Please pair tights with shorts to cover undergarments. "Swishey" athletic pants tend to be slippery on the trapeze bar.

As kids age and learn more difficult combinations, it is important to cover the arm pits and wear more fitted attire. This is for the protection of your children, and a teacher may ask that you take precautionary measures if they see your child struggling due to clothing.

All students should avoid wearing attire that is see-through or otherwise distracting to their fellow students or that is not amenable to working on the equipment they're on.

Students must remove shoes before entering the training area. Aerial work is done barefoot.

Slings and fabrics students should make sure their clothing do not have zippers as they can damage the equipment.

Pole students should wear tight, bike-type shorts or tight undergarments under loose shorts.

### **Accessories and scents**

Students must take off any loose jewelry or watches before class. Accessories can damage equipment, instructors and yourself. Be respectful of the other people in class with you. Avoid heavily scented perfumes, deodorants or scents. The instructor has the right to ask a student to stop wearing a scent that is distracting to the class. Please make sure hair long enough to swing in front of the face is pinned back

from the face and from around the neck.

Pole students are encouraged to not put on lotion the day of class as it makes you and the poles slick.

No food or drink is allowed outside of the waiting area. Water is permitted in the studio in sealed containers. No glass containers allowed. Students must be responsible for any food, beverages or water bottles that you bring into the waiting area and remove them upon departure. CANOPY is not responsible for, nor can we guarantee the safety of, any personal items left at the studio.

### **Physical and psychological readiness**

Students will come to class prepared to work. Do not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Please do not come if you have had a fever in the previous 24 hours. Follow the directions of your medical provider regarding any limitations in activity, and communicate these directions to your instructor[s].

It is the prerogative of all CANOPY instructors to prohibit any student from participating in any activity for the safety of the student, instructor and/or other students. An instructor has the right and responsibility to modify or prohibit participation due to alcohol or drug use, sleep deprivation, injury, illness and any other condition that hampers a student's ability to participate safely and responsibly in the class.

CANOPY has the right to request a doctor's note if they feel it necessary for the safety of the student, class or instructor.

### **Class Advancement**

All classes at CANOPY are based on a level progression system to ensure proper comprehension and safety. Students must master a certain skill set before moving up to the next level. A session of classes does not equal a level. Each level involves many different skills that are fundamental to the ability to safely learn the next level. The instructor's primary responsibility is to assess a student's readiness. A student will be allowed to take a class as many times as necessary to master the complete skill set, and will not be allowed to progress to a higher level until the instructor grants permission. Instructor decisions are final.

Canopy has a culture that prioritizes safety and trick progression. Please do not deviate from lesson plans that have been presented in class. We have an extensive breakdown of what tricks apply according to appropriate level. If you have questions about tricks or levels, please consult your teacher or proctor.

All students will seek guidance from Canopy instructors

regarding training or particular apparatus. In most classes, instruction will be limited to one specific apparatus, however, a teacher might cross-train with different equipment for special lesson plans. During performance training, please consult with your teacher for equipment policies.

### **In the Studio**

Students **MUST** follow the safety rules and all safety direction from the instructor. A student who does not may be asked to sit out a portion of a class, or to take a break from participation.

- Students must stay off equipment until the instructor gives permission or direction.
- Students are expected to attend to the activity being led by the instructor at all times during the class. If you require a break, notify the instructor.
- No gum or food during class. Students may bring a water bottle. We provide water breaks and water for students.
- Students are expected to be respectful and encouraging to classmates. Students are expected to not show off their skills, but to show up for themselves and their peers in a way that honors everyone's hard work and can-do attitude. If everyone is working at the top of their current skill level, everyone is succeeding equally.
- Students are not allowed to bring in personal equipment. During classes, students must use equipment covered under current studio insurance policies.

### **Bathroom Breaks**

CANOPY has a single public bathroom in the hall. Please help keep the public area and the bathroom area clean and free of personal items.

### **Changing Room**

Students may change clothes in the public bathroom. The Studio has a strict one person at a time policy, with the exception of parents/adult designee/sibling for the purpose of assisting children.

### **Drop-off /Pick-up (Guests and Parents)**

Canopy Studio assumes responsibility for supervision of minor children between ages 8 and 18 upon their arrival in the studio for their scheduled class. (Parents of children 8 and under are expected to remain at the studio during the class or designate a responsible adult who will remain on-site during the class.) Canopy Studio is unable to assume responsibility for monitoring/supervising minor children outside of the studio, or for more than 10 minutes before/

after class. A parent or designee must accompany children to the first class of each new session.

At all times minor children will be supervised by the instructor during class time. When minor children are waiting for parents for pick-up, they will wait in the interior waiting area only. They will not wait outside. Minors under age 8 must be picked up in studio by a parent or adult designee.

During summer camp operations, Canopy Studio will maintain pick-up permission slips on file for all minor students age eight and over. These waivers will identify whether or not minor child (age eight and over) may be dismissed from Canopy without an adult designee present, and will provide a list of adult designees, including their relationship and full contact information, to whom minor children may be dismissed.

These waivers will clearly identify how late pickups will be handled, including how and where minor child will be supervised in parents' absence, and consequences for late pick up.

No minor child will ever be dismissed to an adult who is not identified on the permission slip or waiver.

Instructors and staff have the right to ask for I.D. of any adult picking up a child at any time and adults will comply.

### **Waiting area and class observation (Guests and Family Members)**

For the safety of instructors and students, parents/guardians/adult designees,\* family members and guests remain in the waiting area during class time or private lessons. Instructors will make reasonable accommodations for special circumstances if a parent's physical presence will substantially improve a student's experience without jeopardizing other students' safety.

\*Guardian: A guardian is a non-parent adult who holds custodial and/or legal responsibility for a minor child. Adult designee: An adult designee is an individual over 16 years of age who has permission to transport to/from and/or supervise a minor student at CANOPY Studio classes and events. Each adult designee must be designated in writing.

Parents are expected to supervise their children. They will keep any children who are not participating in the class or private lesson in the waiting room area and not allow them to wander the studio or play with studio or office equipment. For the sake of safety, guests are asked to maintain a quiet environment during class so students and teachers can give and receive instruction.

Aerial Arts equipment and classroom supplies are reserved for class participants during class.

Please respect the privacy of the administrative desk and CANOPY studio supplies. Please ask a CANOPY studio staff member or a veteran community member to orient you to this public area. The “Backstage” area of CANOPY is strictly limited to teachers. Please do not go behind the curtain to this area without permission.

Parents and adult designees will follow the instruction of staff while in the waiting area.

If a class is designed as one in which parents and children participate together, instructors expect one-on-one parent/child attention. Parents’ undistracted participation is central to learning and safety for all students. Other minor children who are not enrolled in the class may wait in the waiting area if supervised by another designated adult.

During private lessons for youth, parents/adult designees are expected to remain in the waiting area.

Adult students and parents/responsible adults accept responsibility to ensure that any guests/designees are aware of all of these expectations.

## **Emergency Procedures**

### **Injury and Accident Reporting Procedure**

In the event of an injury, the teacher will control the location and activity of the class and attend to the injured student.

First aid will be rendered immediately, and further medical consultation will be called if necessary. If the injured party is a minor, and further medical consultation is indicated, the parent will be notified as soon as safely possible. Personal and medical information will be provided to any medical or public safety personnel as requested. First Aid Kits are located on the stairs and in the backstage storage area AKA “the pod.” All injuries and accidents will be reported on the reporting form and will be reviewed with the instructors and staff to determine if there were safeguards that were not in place, or if there are additional safeguards that could be put in place in the future.

While Aerial Arts always involves a certain level of risk, events that rise above the usual level of risk must be addressed. CANOPY will assess all incidents that seem to rise above the normal level of risk, whether or not they result in injury. Appropriate corrective action will be taken to reduce risk in the future. These incidents will be handled via conversation with relevant staff or in full staff meetings.

### **Emergency Information**

Our Emergency Exit Plan Binder is located under the main sound system. This binder contains a list of instructor and emergency services contact information, class rosters with emergency contact information, student medical information, and building exit plan with meeting spot. This information can also be found the red emergency folder labeled “EMERGENCY EXIT PLAN.” These plans will be inspected, reviewed with staff and revised as necessary at the beginning of every session. Emergency information will be provided to medical and safety personnel upon request.

### **Fire or other incident requiring evacuation**

In the event of a fire or other emergency (e.g., gas leak or imminent threat of violence) when in the CANOPY Studio, all will immediately follow the evacuation procedures below.

Instructors maintain control of the class and situation, and lead children out of the building via safest escape to outside. Parents who may be in the waiting room will take direction from staff about how to assist meaningfully. Shoes and coats will be retrieved. The instructor retrieves Emergency Exit Plan Binder from the desk area.

If minor students are present and parents/adult designees are not on-site, parents will be notified by phone of the situation after child safety is secured.

Staff will dismiss minor students only to parents/adult designees and will check off each child in the Emergency Exit Plan Binder as they are dismissed. At all times the staff must be able to identify where a child is and to whom they were dismissed. All will follow directions of emergency and safety personnel that may be on scene, and those directions may supersede our policy. Parents who are on-site will not remove their children from the scene without checking in with the staff in control.

In the case of minors who have waivers giving permission for independent departure; in an emergency situation, they will be held with the group until a parent/adult designee can be reached. The adults will determine whether the emergency circumstances support solo departure. In such a situation families will not be penalized for late pick-up.

### **Disruptive person**

Should a person become disruptive, either from within or without our community, staff will immediately safeguard the students.

Should the disruptive behavior escalate toward violence, the staff will call the police immediately and move students to

as secure a location as possible.

Staff will use de-escalation techniques as possible with a disruptive person, but will not engage a violent person. Personal safety is always paramount.

CANOPY has a No Tolerance policy for violence and all violence will be reported to the police.

### III. Best Safety Practices in Coaching & Instruction

CANOPY is absolutely committed to providing a safe environment and safe, best practices in coaching and instruction.

The following are standards of good practice we expect from all of our instructors.

#### **Instructors will:**

1. Always put the safety and the welfare of the students as the highest priority.
2. Treat all students with respect and dignity.
3. Assess and minimize the risks associated with participation.
4. Be informed about, and follow, emergency procedures in the event of accident, re or other incident.
5. Always ensure there is at least one other responsible adult present at all times during training/teaching sessions or that the instructor remains “on camera” at all times. (An exception would be taking children in groups to the bathroom or an unforeseeable emergency.)
6. Maintain appropriate, healthy boundaries and be a role model for excellent behavior within the studio and in all interactions.
7. Providing manual support is an essential component of teaching circus skills. It enables students to approach complex skills safely and progressively, and reduces the risk of injury due to a fall or error in performance.
8. Instructors will always take care when spotting to employ recognized techniques. Instructors will always ask the students’ permission before touching them except in the case of sudden or emergency spotting/catching.
9. Instructors will ensure that physical touch is for the purpose of instruction, and is only used when necessary.
10. Supporting techniques must assist, not inhibit perfor-

mance.

11. Physical contact should not be invasive of sensitive areas of the body i.e. genital areas, buttocks or breasts except in case of emergency.
12. Staff will avoid close physical proximity, body contact and manual touch outside the process of learning and performing circus skills.
13. Keep up to date with their knowledge and technical skills.
14. Not exceed the level of their qualifications.
15. Respect the needs, wishes, and boundaries of all participants, and clearly articulate when safety concerns supersede. If the student is a minor, they will discuss any such differences or incidents with the parent at pick-up or as soon as possible.
16. Recognize the psychological and physical development of the individual and avoid training inconsistent with their level of readiness.
17. Motivate the students through positive feedback and constructive criticism
18. Create a safe and enjoyable situation
19. Follow CANOPY procedures for reporting any accident or incident (regardless of injury) together with any subsequent treatment or action
20. Show respect to parents/adult designees and do our best to provide information and answer questions (outside of class times) via email.

#### **Equipment Safety Procedures and Management**

**Mats:** All mats are cleaned once a week by a hired professional. Mats will be cleaned and disinfected immediately by an instructor during a class if exposed to bodily fluids (i.e. sweat, blood, saliva).

**Equipment:** Canopy instructors will perform equipment scans before each class or lesson. If anything should appear faulty or questionable, the equipment will be immediately removed from the space and tagged. In addition, overall rigging inspections are performed weekly and documented in our studio rigging log. These inspections are evaluated by American Circus Educators Safety program each year.

**Surfaces:** All hard surfaces and equipment that can be cleaned with disinfectant will be cleaned on the same schedule as the mats. This includes chairs in the waiting area, the

front desk, and other classroom equipment.

**First Aid:** Canopy Studio has a first aid kit, which will be maintained with supplies as they are depleted. All staff are trained on how to use these supplies appropriately and must be informed when a student requires the use of the first aid kit.

**Blood borne pathogens:** Instructors will use appropriate safety measures when dealing with blood on an apparatus or surface. They will restrict access to the area, wear plastic gloves, clean the area with a bleach solution and dispose of the waste properly. Any blood exposure and clean up must be reported in the incident report book.

**Rigging:** All rigging points, apparatuses and rigging materials in the studio are inspected on a schedule. All rigging equipment including the portable aerial rig, apparatuses, slings, swivels, carabiners, shackles, quick links, blocks, master links, ropes, rescue eights, etc are inspected as part of this schedule. Worn equipment is destroyed and removed from the studio. Instructors will check all rigging visually before it is used and report any rigging issues to the Executive Director. Any rigging in question will not be used by instructors or students and will be labeled or taken down as appropriate.

No one is allowed to train in the studio alone. If an instructor is seeking outside training time, they must be accompanied by another person who can give first aid and call 911 in emergency cases.

## IV. Business Policies

### Adult and Youth Class Distinction

Each CANOPY class is designated for a particular population. Adult classes are for individuals ages 18 and up. Teen classes are for ages 13 - 20. Youth classes are available for ages 18 months to 13 years. A student under 18 may attend an adult class with the permission of the instructor. Permission must be received BEFORE registering for the class.

### Mindbody Accounts

CANOPY asks all students to create an account in Mindbody, our scheduling and payment system. Detailed instructions for how to do this are on our website. Assistance is always available from our Business & Financial Manager, Associate Director, or Executive Director in getting your account set up.

Parents must create accounts in their name and add their children as family members. A minor child cannot have an account in their name only as our waiver form must be

agreed to by an adult.

Payments for classes, private lessons, birthday party rentals and camps are taken through our Mindbody site. We expect deposits to be made in advance of a birthday party or rental. Students may request a payment plan for a class enrollment but full payment is due by the end of the session. Private lessons must be paid for at the time of the lesson. Payments may be made on line or at the studio. We accept credit cards, cash and checks.

### Registration Policies

Each new session of classes will be announced and open for on-line registration through Mindbody at least 2 weeks prior to the start of a new session.

We ask for full payment prior to the start of a new session. A student must be on the roster to attend the class and can only be put on the roster when payment is received. Any student who has not paid for the session will not be allowed to participate until payment is made. Payment in full for the previous session is required before students may register for the next session.

### Canopy Private Lesson Policy

Canopy Studio endeavors to provide the highest quality and level of aerial arts training available. Our primary focus is offering classes at all levels, at various times, over our regular 8 – 12 week sessions. The following policies will guide how teachers offer private and semi-private lessons and how students participate and pay for them.

1. Lessons not on the Session Calendar will be referred to in the following manner:
  - Private Lesson (1 student)
  - Semi-Private Lesson (2 or 3 students)
2. Lessons not on the Session Calendar have a 3 student limit.
3. Session Calendar classes are the studio's priority and emphasis for children. Private lessons are considered supplemental for children.
4. Age Requirements for Private and Semi-Private Lessons:
  - Children must be 5 years of age to begin private lessons unless they are participants in the outreach program.
  - Children aged 11 and up may begin taking private lessons on fabrics. The Executive Director will make the decision as to any exceptions to this rule.
  - Children aged 16 and up may take fabrics classes with

the permission of senior fabrics instructors.

5. Payment can be made via cash, check or by credit card at Canopy's Mindbody system.
6. Payments are run via Mindbody within 24 hours of the lesson or on Monday following a weekend lesson.
7. Cancellation policy:
  - Lessons must be cancelled by email or phone 24 hours prior to the scheduled lesson.
  - If a student cancels a private lesson in less than 24 hours or does not show up, they will be charged for the lesson.
  - The only exceptions are due to weather, health or injury, but notification is still required as soon as possible. If no notice is given, the above policy will be followed.

### **Private Lesson Contracts**

Each private lesson student, or their parent if they are a minor, will sign a contract prior to taking lessons at Canopy Studio. This contract covers an understanding of attendance, payment, costs and scheduling.

### **Make Up Policy Definitions**

"Progressive classes" are a scheduled block of 8-12 weeks of classes where the skills learned each week are built on the skills of the previous weeks. It is important for students to attend each week in order to maintain the pace of the class and learn the proper steps to safely execute the learning objectives of the curriculum.

A "make-up" is when CANOPY allows a student to participate in an appropriate alternative structured activity at the studio at a later time because of a previous absence in a progressive class. All "make-ups" must be at the same or lower class level or in one of our approved "drop-in" classes.

It is noted that weather cancellations follow CCSD and UGA announcements. This is considered an "act of God" and not something that CANOPY can control.

### **Adult Class Make-Ups**

1. CANOPY may offer session-enrolled students attendance at Open Studio (but not drop-in classes,) for free to make up as many as two classes missed during the current session if it is educationally appropriate. Missed classes must be made up in the current session.
2. If a student misses several classes and falls behind the rest of the class in a way that is detrimental to the safety and/or continuity of the class, the instructor may ask the

student to move to a class with a more appropriate skill level, or ask the student to take private lessons to catch up and then rejoin the class.

### **Youth Class Make-Ups**

Make-ups are permitted only with instructor approval. In case of medical/illness, please talk with staff about appropriate accommodations.

### **Open Studio**

CANOPY offers several "Open Studios" each week for students to practice, explore, or make-up a missed class. Only current adult students who have had at least one session of slings, pole, lyra, or trapeze may participate in an Open Studio that corresponds to the equipment they are now learning. Please check the studio schedule for each apparatus open studio time(s).

### **Adult Class Drop-Ins**

A "drop-in" class is one in which the instructor will teach new skills but weekly attendance is not required for effective learning. The per class cost of drop in classes is lower if students enroll for the entire session. The per class fee is slightly higher for those who prefer not to commit to an entire session.

Students who are enrolled for an entire session will be notified about any changes in any drop-in class schedule. If you plan to drop in to a drop-in appropriate class, please check social media and be prepared for changes in the schedule.

### **Fabrics / Silks Classes**

CANOPY offers specialized instruction in Fabrics (Silks) with the following guidelines:

- Children must be at least 11 years old to begin private lessons in Fabrics

### **Youth Class Drop-Ins**

Drop-ins are not permitted in youth classes except with explicit permission from a director and lead teacher of that class.

### **Class Arrival - Adult Classes**

Please arrive 10 minutes early to check that your name is on the roster, to finish payment.

### **Class Arrival - Youth Classes**

Parents must come into the studio with their child on the first day of a new session. Please arrive 10 minutes early on the first day of class to check that your child's name is on the roster. For every subsequent class, your child should arrive 5 minutes early. Students will be expected to sit quietly until

class begins. Please do not drop your child off any earlier than this as Canopy does not have the space or staff to monitor children who are not in class. Canopy cannot be responsible for unattended children outside of their class time.

Please pick your child up promptly at the end of their scheduled class.

If your child is taking private lessons, the lesson must be booked via Mindbody and payment will be remitted within 24 hours of the lesson or on the first Monday if on a weekend.

### **Canopy Studio Policies with Regard to Children at the Studio**

Students without guardians/parents may be present if sibling is in class and/or child is enrolled in next class provided they do not cause distractions, interruptions or disturbances. They cannot be on the floor, the points, in studios, or backstage and cannot use Canopy computers or be a distraction to the staff. This privilege will be revoked after one incident/complaint.

All students/children that have a guardian (nanny, babysitter etc.) are the responsibility of the guardian and the guardian is acting as the parent and will assume responsibility that kids not in class will not cause distractions, interruptions or disturbances. They cannot be on the floor, the points, in studios, or backstage and cannot use Canopy computers or be a distraction to the staff.

Students shall not bring young child/children to the studio during class time without adequate and appropriate supervision. Students with disruptive children of any age will be appropriately disciplined, up to and including suspension from class/studio. Disruptive behavior includes running, chasing, screaming, shouting, yelling or other excessive noise, throwing, pushing, hitting, fighting, bullying, prolonged crying or temper tantrums, or other behavior that distracts and/or interrupts classes, teachers, or staff.

Canopy is not a childcare or baby-sitting facility. Student families cannot drop their children off at the studio when the child is not registered for a class at that time or that day.

We cannot regulate anything that happens in the parking lot, next door, on the loading dock, etc. and cannot be responsible for anything that happens outside Canopy doors.

### **Pets**

No pets allowed on premise.

### **Camps**

Registration forms for Camps are available at the studio and

on our website. Payment can be made through your Mindbody account or by check. Payment in full is required for a student to be considered enrolled.

### **Scholarship and Work-Trade Policies**

Canopy Studio offers financial aid for students and families based on the following guidelines.

#### **Scholarships Guidelines**

Applications for Financial Aid will be available prior to the start of each session of classes. Any student wishing to be considered for financial assistance must fill out an application and turn it in by the deadline which will be posted prior to each session.

Students who have a referral from one of our “partner” agencies (ESP, ABHS, Butterfly Dreams, Georgia Options) or who have documented disabilities will be considered first for financial aid.

An additional amount of scholarship funds will be available based on income. CANOPY uses the current Federal Poverty Level guidelines published each year by the US Department of Health and Human Services.

All students must apply for aid each session and must register for the class by emailing the Associate Director before the session begins.

#### **Scholarship for Private Lessons**

Only community service organization or CANOPY’s partner agency referrals can be considered for scholarships for private lessons.

The CANOPY Board of Directors is solely responsible for the allocation of financial aid funds. Any appeals must be made directly to the Board prior to each session. There is no guarantee that funds will be available each session or that the Board will provide funding for scholarships for any particular session.

### **General Refund and Cancellation Information**

CANOPY reserves the right to cancel any event which does not obtain minimum enrollment. If a full session class, workshop, camp, private lesson, space rental or any event is cancelled by CANOPY due to lack of participation, the fee for that event will be refunded 100% or we will provide an account credit.

#### **Individual Class Cancellations by Canopy**

Canopy will only issue account credits/refunds if we have to cancel more than two weeks of classes for reasons beyond our control. This will be calculated within 30 days of the



end of the session. Refunds will incur an additional \$20 admin fee. Students are encouraged to make up any cancelled class days in another appropriate level class (see Make Up Policy, page 13-14). Additionally, no payment disputes will be considered after 90 days from the transaction date. Account credits will expire after 12 months.

### **Camp Withdrawal by participants**

If a student withdraws from a camp before it has begun, the price of the camp minus a \$20 administrative fee, is refundable; or the student can opt for an account credit at 100% of the price of the camp. No refunds/credits will be given for camps after camp has begun. Refunds/credits are not given for participant dismissal, failure to attend, absence or sick days. There is no pro-rating for camps attendance.

### **Class Withdrawal by participants**

If a student requests to withdraw from a class before the session has begun, the price of the class is refundable minus a \$20 administrative fee; or the student can opt for an account credit at 100% of the price of the class. Canopy will not refund/credit an account for a class once the session has begun except in the case of injury, health emergencies, or major life events (such as moving). In those special cases, a pro-rated refund, minus \$20 admin fee, or account credit will be considered. Refunds are not given for failure to attend or schedule conflicts – students are encouraged to make up any missed days in another appropriate level class (see Make Up Policy, page 13-14). No payment disputes will be considered after 90 days from the transaction date. Account credits expire after 12 months.

## **V. Communication Policy - Social Media, Private Texting, Emailing**

### **Social Media usage by CANOPY**

This policy refers to all material on the formal CANOPY website and affiliated social media arenas, and technology later utilized. All social media will remain professional and public. CANOPY staff will not post anything disparaging of CANOPY or CANOPY students, current or former, in any social media setting. CANOPY staff will be respectful and professional in all communications (by word, image or other means). Staff shall not use obscene or sexually-charged language on any professional social media network or engage in communication that is harassing, threatening, bullying, or defamatory or that discusses or encourages any illegal activity or the inappropriate use of alcohol, use of illegal drugs, inappropriate sexual behavior, sexual harass-

ment, or bullying, or otherwise violates CANOPY policies.

We are committed to maintaining both transparency about our programs and activities, and the privacy of all students. CANOPY will provide information about programs and activities while avoiding posting any information or engaging in communications that violate state or federal laws. Beyond what is required by law, CANOPY will not post any confidential or private information such as contact information or names about any students on the internet anywhere without express permission.

Insofar as we have control, we will not put images of minor children in any public space without explicit permission. Staff is advised not to post CANOPY-related photos on personal social media excepting photos of themselves and other adults with whom they have existing personal relationships and have obtained explicit consent. As a guideline for responsible decision making, staff is expected to err on the side of caution, ask permission, and respect boundaries or any rescinding of permission. We request that all CANOPY students extend this courtesy to one another and likewise seek permission before posting photos on personal social media sites.

Even where blanket permission has been granted to CANOPY, staff will use good judgment about appropriateness of particular shots or images, and consult the owners.

If there is any doubt of anything not specifically identified in these guidelines, parent/guardians of minor students and all adult students must give informed consent prior to anything being posted in public.

Any student can request of CANOPY at any time that a posting on social media that involves or identifies them be taken down. CANOPY will comply as soon as possible.

Other CANOPY students/participants are asked not to re-post photos of minor children (except their own) outside the CANOPY websites. Although we cannot monitor this, we ask that members of the CANOPY community not re-post anything without permission of those pictured or their legal guardians out of respect.

### **Privacy and Transparency with internet/social media communication with minors**

We maintain the same practice for online, email, and social media communications as in our face to face interactions. Social Media is inherently public, even when people are utilizing private messaging services such as email or Facebook messages, as we have no control over the technology and changes any service provider might make. As with our face to face expectation of two set of eyes on every adult/child

interaction, this expectation is at the center of keeping children and youth safe, and so is our core guiding principle.

As much communication as possible shall be conducted through the formal CANOPY email/social media system. Any private communications conducted outside this system must be observed by a parent and/or another professional.

Parents will be asked what method of copying them into an interaction is preferred. To every extent possible, staff will endeavor to honor parents' preference.

Specifically, in all communications with minors (text, email, private message,) instructors will copy parents/guardians. Such communication will be for the purpose of conducting business only. Should staff receive a private message from a minor, they will reply with a cc: to an owner and/or parent. Minors will be informed of this at the start of any session when there is discussion of communication policies and it will be made transparent within the communication as it occurs. (For example, "Timmy, I am adding your mother to this chat session so she is aware of all we are discussing.")

Any email, text, or FB message (or other social media that may be used in the future) that does not meet these guidelines will be shared with the owners, for the purposes of transparency.

Email and other private communication will be limited to conducting business. (For instance, a class is cancelled or rescheduled; a student informs a teacher of an injury or missing class.)

Private messages between instructors and minor students shall not be considered private. At any time, the administration or parents can ask to see private messages between instructors and minor students. In the event that a minor child discloses information in a private communication that suggests that the child may be in danger, appropriate child protective action will be taken immediately. This may or may not include sharing the communication with the child's parents or guardians.

There may be times when Social Media is utilized for educational or communication purposes in an ongoing manner, or as a subgroup of the larger CANOPY community. For instance, this might be a closed Facebook group is started for a single classes' conversation or for planning of an event. In this case, should any minor students be involved, their parent or guardian will also be subscribed to the closed group, with full access.

CANOPY staff have a responsibility to maintain appropriate employee-student relationships, whether on or off duty. Instructors and administration will not "friend" minor stu-

dents. That is, in private social media use, boundaries will be maintained to prevent the accidental disclosure of personal information about instructors or students. The only way to assure this is to avoid "friending" minor students.

While the Aerial Arts world is a small community, and there are often prior and co-existing relationships, attention will be paid by all employees to keeping professional accounts professional and private friendships private. Where this involves adult students, particularly where those adults have children who are also CANOPY students, there will be a clear distinction between interactions as "Friends" on social media identities, and professional relationships. Staff is expected to attend to their privacy settings such that these distinctions are maintained.

## VI. Child Protection Policies & Procedures

Canopy Studio is more than just Aerial Arts. The studio is a safe space that fosters creativity, builds confidence, and promotes lifelong fitness. Our instructors are dedicated professionals, from a variety of disciplines, inspired by their passion for Aerial Arts arts. We aim to provide top notch instruction for people of all ages, body types, and skill levels in a non-competitive environment.

### Policy

It is the policy of the CANOPY to require staff and volunteers in our CANOPY classes and events to comply with the Child Protection Policies and Procedures to assure that children and youth in our CANOPY classes and events learn and grow in a safe space that fosters creativity and builds confidence.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to do everything possible to ensure a safe physical and emotional environment for children, youth, and adults. The administration expect the participation of all staff in promoting awareness and understanding of safety and healthy boundaries in relationships between adults, youth, and children in our community.

### Overview

In order for children to learn and grow, they must experience their environment as generally respecting their bodily autonomy.

We think of this autonomy as "personal space," the private area of control inside an imaginary line or boundary that denotes each person as separate. Ideally, that boundary

helps us stay in charge of our own personal space. It helps keep out the things that make us uncomfortable - unsafe and unwanted feelings, words, images, and physical contact. Solid social rules strengthen the boundary. Behaviors that routinely disrespect or ignore boundaries make children vulnerable to abuse.

CANOPY is committed to simultaneously being a space that fosters creativity and builds confidence and minimizing risks associated with physical movement practice.

### **Guiding Principles**

We hold two things as true:

1. Children and youth must experience their environment as respecting their bodily autonomy, and that there are teaching and safety reasons for the physical personal space to be crossed (i.e.: spotting, emergencies.)
2. It is our strong belief that having consistent understanding and experience of how physical touch occurs will teach children not only physical Aerial Arts skills, but will provide a touchstone of what healthy and consented touch looks like. We are committed to engaging children and youth in physical movement education that simultaneously and explicitly respects their personal space, and allows them to be part of the decision making about how and when their personal space changes. The common practice of checking in with students about what feels ok to their body sets a standard enabling them to notice when something does not.

### **Objectives**

**The key objectives of the policy are as follows:**

- To ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- To ensure there are robust procedures, support and guidance available.
- To ensure all CANOPY staff are able to recognize, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people.
- To promote safe practice and challenge poor practice.
- To ensure that appropriate action is taken as a result of any concerns or allegations.
- To ensure that all CANOPY staff who are involved in a role with children have attended appropriate training to equip them to accomplish the above.

### **Physical interaction and interpersonal boundaries**

The process of learning and performing Aerial Arts skills necessarily requires close physical proximity, body contact and manual touch. As with other contact sports or activities (i.e.: football, dance, theater, martial arts,) the practice requires that students become comfortable with interpersonal boundaries which are considerably different than those employed in normal social interactions.

In the interest of creating a safe and respectful community for adults and youth CANOPY is committed to maintaining clarity, professionalism and appropriateness about the proximity, contact and touch intrinsic to the practice.

We are especially sensitive to the fact that a failure to distinguish between practice boundaries and social boundaries could result in grey areas that might provide opportunities for boundary mistakes and/or violations.

To prevent boundary mistakes or violations, CANOPY affirms that:

1. Exercises and activities which require close physical proximity and/or body contact will be confined to teaching/learning and practice environments.
2. Exercise and activities which require close physical proximity and/or body contact will have explicit beginnings and ends.
3. Exercises and activities which require close physical proximity and/or body contact will be explicitly consented by all participants. A method will be in place by which consent may be rescinded—generally by use of a one-word command (i.e.: “stop”).
4. Manual touch (the placement of one’s hands on another’s body) will be explicitly consented in every instance with the exception of emergency spotting.

### **The staff’s critical role**

#### **Boundaries**

It is important that staff maintain meaningful relationships with the young people with whom they work. This means exercising good judgment in using their influence with children and youth and refraining from using young people to fulfill their own needs. Young people are in a vulnerable position when dealing with persons older than themselves, and may find it difficult to speak out about any behavior on the part of their teachers and coaches that makes the young person uncomfortable. In addition, the standard is not a young person’s comfort level, but objective boundaries. It is

the responsibility of adult volunteers and staff to maintain these appropriate boundaries.

### **Care with Communication**

All communication has the potential to carry harmful messages. Communication includes body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, as well as the choice of words in written and verbal expression. Children, youth, and adults suffer damaging effects when leaders engage in physical, emotional, verbal, or intellectual abuse of any kind. In addition, behavior that is coercive, seductive, suggestive, or contains sexual innuendo can be especially damaging and is incompatible with youth programming.

### **Pay Attention**

Safety is everyone's responsibility. We ask that members, friends, adults, and older youth participating in any way at CANOPY commit both to learning about the "red flags" signaling possible child abuse or other distress. Our staff has taken Project Safe and Mandated Reporter training to ensure that they are fully educated, and strongly encourage all members of the community to fully inform themselves by reading the attached materials.

### **Speak Up**

We also ask that anyone with concerns raise them should they notice a child behaving in a way that causes concern or should they notice an adult behaving in a way that is inco- nary illegal activities among children or youth.

## **Studio safety procedures: Always two sets of eyes**

### **Public Settings**

Staff shall minimize opportunities where children can be subject to any kind of abuse or mistreatment. This includes arranging classes and activities so that children are not left alone with a single adult out of sight of others.

### **Two Adults or Open Doors**

In all areas of the studio, we strive for the presence of at least two adults with sight lines whenever possible. This can be accomplished by always making sure that classes and events take place semi-publicly - either in eye shot of others or on the closed circuit monitor.

There will be at least two adults present for any activity that takes place away from the studio. Two authorized adults (2 staff or a staff and a selected parent(s)) must always be present with a group in any setting outside the studio. This includes, but is not limited to, trips to the loading dock. In the case of emergency, such as the need to evacuate the studio, staff will prioritize addressing the immediate risk,

and supervision standard of "Two Sets of Eyes" will be reestablished as quickly as possible

### **Administration/Instructor Discretion**

Upon the discretion of the instructors, any class which needs more adult support may require more adults interacting with the class at all times, regardless of overall supervision requirements. This may mean that a parent of a child over the age of 8 is asked to stay on premises.

### **No Unauthorized Private Meetings**

No person working with children or young people should arrange a meeting with a child or young person at or away from CANOPY without the presence of the parent (or other authorized adult) or the explicit authorization of the parent.

### **No Tobacco, Drugs, Alcohol, or Illegal Activity**

The CANOPY staff shall not permit or encourage the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, weapons, or any illegal activities among children or youth.

## **Mandatory reporting of abuse or neglect**

The staff of CANOPY Studio maintain a zero tolerance for violence or abuse, and will fully comply with the mandatory reporting requirements of the State of Georgia. We will report to the appropriate authorities any situation in which we have:

Reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from:

1. Abuse (including sexual abuse) which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare;
2. Neglect (including malnutrition); or
3. Physical dependence upon an addictive drug.

We note here that "reasonable cause to believe" is the standard for reporting. We are not equipped to investigate a situation, and will act reasonably to protect children and youth by reporting to those who are equipped to investigate.

A copy of the mandatory reporting requirements is provided to every staff person during staff training, kept on file, and attached to this document.

## **VII. Red Flag Behaviors**

"Red Flag" behaviors are human behaviors which may indicate that an adult is at- risk to harm a child. All staff in CANOPY classes and events must notify the owners if they witness these behaviors.

Any interaction between a child and adult that causes discomfort or concern must be interrupted on the spot and discussed with the owners as soon as possible. No staff should ever keep secret any concern they may have about children's safety.

#### Behaviors to Watch for When Adults are With Children

[www.stopitnow.org/les/tip\\_sheet\\_behaviors\\_to\\_watch\\_for.pdf](http://www.stopitnow.org/les/tip_sheet_behaviors_to_watch_for.pdf)

#### Signs That an Adult May Be At-Risk to Harm a Child

[www.stopitnow.org/signs\\_adult\\_risk\\_harm\\_child](http://www.stopitnow.org/signs_adult_risk_harm_child)

## VIII. Parents' Responsibilities

- Ensure that they and their children abide by CANOPY rules.
- Ensure that their children arrive on time and that they arrive on time to pick them up. It is the responsibility of the parents to make any necessary transport arrangements to get their children to any training sessions.
- Talk to their children and ensure that they are aware that they have the right to be protected and free from harm. Parents should make sure that their children know that if they feel they are being teased, bullied or are concerned about the way their instructor or another student or adult is treating them, they can talk to their parents or the CANOPY staff without fear of getting into trouble.
- Ensure that they and their children are aware of the identity of the staff.
- Be patient with their children's progress. Aerial Arts students progress according to their age, ability and stage of maturation. Parents should bear in mind that long-term improvement and physical fitness are the ultimate goals.
- Be a supportive and a stabilizing influence through the inevitable ups and downs of training. Parents should encourage their children and provide positive feedback.
- Leave the teaching to the instructors. Parents should not pressure their children, offer coaching advice or try to change or undermine any goals agreed between the instructor and student. It is the instructor's role to offer constructive advice relating to the students' development. It is helpful if parents can offer the support and encouragement necessary to help their children feel good about themselves.
- Model, rehearse, and re-enforce with their children the high standards of behavior expected in the studio and help them to maintain a positive attitude.

- Maintain open communication with CANOPY instructors regarding their students learning and community participation.
- Stay informed by checking the website, Facebook page, Instagram, or other social media source CANOPY may employ for any updates or changes.

## IX. Staff Qualifications/Requirements

- Working knowledge of Canopy Studio policies, procedures and curriculums
- Professional manner and attitude when representing CANOPY and its owners
- Previous Aerial Arts instruction experience (Aerial Arts teacher training recommended)
- Open and clear communication with students and staff about scheduling, policies, procedures, curriculums and any issues that may arise
- Know your limits and know when you need support
- Familiarity with the Mindbody Online registration system and payment processing
- Working knowledge of CANOPY rigging and safety standards and practices
- CANOPY reserves the right to perform SORI and CORI checks (Sexual Offender Registry Information/ Criminal Offender Registry Information) provided by Georgia, on all instructors.
- Class planning in accordance to our curriculums and progressions
- Arrive 15 minutes before the start of your class, ready to teach
- Lead instructors must meet the minimum age requirement of 18+
- All Canopy instructors are required to have First Aid and Concussion training on file. Canopy will offer renewals at two- or three-year intervals depending on the last instructor training.

# Understanding of Studio Policies & Procedures and Child Protection Policies

## Signed Agreement - Instructor/Staff/Volunteer

### Statement of expected behavior and instructor/staff signed agreement

As a school that is committed to the physical and emotional safety of children and youth, we hold a special responsibility to ensure that there are structures and policies in place that will minimize risk and protect our children and youth from harm and abuse from within or without our school. We require staff to avoid situations where it is known that abuse or neglect is more likely to occur. We require that all compensated and volunteer staff, as leaders and role models in the CANOPY classes and events at CANOPY, adhere to the following policy and procedures while interacting with children and youth in the CANOPY classes and events. CANOPY will support this duty through the development and provision of training opportunities for all staff, and by monitoring compliance and effectiveness of this policy and attached procedures.

Our policy may be simply summarized:

1. Two sets of eyes: Ensure that our children have “two sets of eyes” looking out for their well-being at all times.
2. If you see something, say something: Speak to the class leader or to the owners if you have any concerns for safety.

### Instructor / Staff / Volunteer Signed Agreement

As I engage in the education, coaching, and training, I will apply the following principles to all relationships with children and youth at CANOPY. I will:

1. Be consciously gentle and non-threatening in all physical contact and proximity with children, youth, and adults;
2. Communicate in a manner that is proactive, positive and affirming;
3. Ask for consent for touch whenever possible and safe;
4. Refrain from all behaviors, both verbal and physical, that are in any way erotic, suggestive or sexual in nature; including sexual suggestiveness and joking; and
5. Report to the owners any risk to the safety and well-being of our children and youth and any observed or suspected abuse.
6. Take action as soon as possible to help protect anyone at risk of imminent harm.

I have read and understand the following SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH in the CANOPY classes and events. I agree to abide by these procedures in order to create an environment that is safe from the potential for abuse or harm and to honor and preserve the trust placed in me by parents and owners of CANOPY. I will participate in training opportunities to ensure that I fully comprehend and can employ all safety procedures.

By signing below, I certify that I have not committed, been legally accused, or convicted of a sexual offence or violence against any person, and will fully cooperate in any and all measures that CANOPY makes at this time or in the future to confirm this statement.

By signing below, I also certify that I have read Canopy Studio’s Policies & Procedures manual and agree to abide by the guidelines set forth in this document. I understand conduct that goes against any policy set forth in this document may result in suspension or termination of employment.

Printed name of Staff Member \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Understanding of Studio Policies & Procedures and Child Protection Policies

## Signed Agreement - Student/Parent/Guardian

### Statement of expected behavior and parent/guardian signed agreement

As a school that is committed to the physical and emotional safety of children and youth, we hold a special responsibility to ensure that there are structures and policies in place that will minimize risk and protect our children and youth from harm and abuse from within or without our school. We require staff to avoid situations where it is known that abuse or neglect is more likely to occur. We require that all compensated and volunteer staff, as leaders and role models in the CANOPY classes and events at CANOPY, adhere to the following policy and procedures while interacting with children and youth in the CANOPY classes and events. CANOPY will support this duty through the development and provision of training opportunities for all staff, and by monitoring compliance and effectiveness of this policy and attached procedures.

Our policy may be simply summarized:

1. Two sets of eyes: Ensure that our children have “two sets of eyes” looking out for their well-being at all times.
2. If you see something, say something: Speak to the class leader or to the owners if you have any concerns for safety.

### Student / Parent / Guardian Signed Agreement

SIGNED AGREEMENT I understand that the CANOPY staff and owners will apply the following principles to all relationships with children and youth at CANOPY to:

1. Be consciously gentle and non-threatening in all physical contact and proximity with children, youth, and adults;
2. Communicate in a manner that is proactive, positive and affirming;
3. Ask for consent for touch whenever possible and safe;
4. Refrain from all behaviors, both verbal and physical, that are in any way erotic, suggestive or sexual in nature; including sexual suggestiveness and joking; and
5. Report to the owners any risk to the safety and well-being of our children and youth and any observed or suspected abuse.
6. Take action as soon as possible to help protect anyone at risk of imminent harm.

I have read and understand the CHILD PROTECTION POLICY and PROCEDURES. I agree as a parent/guardian to abide by and support these procedures in order to create an environment that is safe from the potential for abuse or harm and to honor and preserve the trust placed in me by parents and staff of CANOPY. I will conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with these procedures, cooperate with them. I understand that these are blanket procedures that have to do with creating a culture of safety, and will not ask for my child to be exempted from them. I will speak to the class leader or owners if I have any concerns about the safety of any children and youth in our community.

By signing below, I also certify that I have read Canopy Studio’s Policies & Procedures manual and agree to abide by the guidelines set forth in this document. I understand conduct that goes against any policy set forth in this document may result in suspension of participation.

Printed name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of Guardian (if student is under 18) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student or Guardian if under 18 \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

