

Urgent national regulation needed to safeguard dance education in Australia

New position paper urges federal and state action to protect children, support educators, and establish professional standards across Australia

Dance Arts Alliance (DAA), Australia's peak body for dance and performing arts education, has today released a landmark position paper outlining the need, and providing an initial plan, for a **national regulatory framework** to raise safety and professional standards across the Australian dance education industry.

Titled *The Imperative for Regulating the Dance Industry in Australia*, the report outlines urgent gaps in child protection, teacher accreditation, and accountability that currently place thousands of young dancers at risk and proposes a collaborative, sector-led roadmap for reform.

"There are more than 4,000 dance studios operating in Australia, yet there is no national regulatory framework around child safety or minimum teaching standards," said DAA Chair Melanie Gard. "This paper puts forward a clear solution: practical, inclusive regulation designed *with* the industry, not imposed on it."

The position paper draws on case studies from comparable sectors including Gymnastics Australia, Swimming Australia, and the Australian Cheer Sport Alliance, where regulation has significantly improved safety and professional conduct. It also highlights widespread support for reform from within the dance community, following extensive member consultation. Among its key recommendations, the report outlines the need for:

- The establishment of an **independent national regulatory body**
- **Mandatory accreditation** for studios and instructors
- Comprehensive training in child protection, injury prevention, and ethical teaching
- A **tiered, affordable model** of compliance to support small and regional studios
- A nationwide **public awareness campaign** to inform parents and families

Dance Arts Alliance is calling on **federal and state governments**, as well as national arts and sports agencies, to back the framework and provide funding support for implementation, particularly in rural and grassroots communities.

One strong supporter of DAA is the Member for Hastings, Paul Mercurio MP - who is one of Australia's most iconic dancers, and has experienced training and performing education in the industry first hand.

"Families need to know their children are safe in every activity they do" says Paul Mercurio MP. "DAA know the industry inside out and are best placed to lead this work. I have endorsed this position paper and am looking forward to working with DAA and other industry representatives to make Dance and Performing Arts education safe for our children and young people".

DAA will now lead the next stage of sector consultation and pilot program design, with a proposed national pilot program in 2026 with a full roll-out beginning in 2027.

Download the Full Position Paper: https://danceartsalliance.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Position-Paper_-The-Imperative-for-Regulating-the-Dance-Industry-in-Australia-Dance-Arts-Alliance_-May-2025-1.pdf

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About Dance Arts Alliance:

Dance Arts Alliance (DAA) is the peak body for the dance and performing arts education sector. DAA advocates for industry standards, child safety, sustainability, and professional development across recreational, educational, and full-time dance education across Australia.