



TRAINING PROGRAM – EMPOWERING OUR FUTURE PRINCIPLES

180 Youth Outreach Youth Programs are dedicated to offering physically, psychologically and emotionally safe environments for all youth. Ensuring comprehensive safety requires more than simply following a list of policies and precautions; we must adopt a shared set of values and practices that provides empowerment of our future that centers around youth safety.

EMPOWERING OUR FUTURE (EOF) PRINCIPLES

- **Sharing:** All community members (*program leaders, staff, volunteers and youth participants*) share responsibility for assuring safety at all times.
 - Safety is part of daily conversation in designing, delivering, and enhancing programs.
 - EOF safety principles (**Sharing, Understanding, Acting**) are communicated as an integral aspect of each program.
- **Understanding:** All community members understand the expectations, responsibilities and opportunities to create a safe environment.
 - It is each member's responsibility to address unsafe practices and procedures.
 - Members understand that safety is situational. Ongoing training allows the adaptability necessary to be prepared, attentive and responsive.
- **Acting:** All organizational members act to resolve safety concerns in a timely fashion and follow mandatory reporting requirements.
 - Members practice open, honest communication and are aware of effective reporting pathways to address safety concerns without repercussions.
 - Community members are expected to hold each other to high standards of practice and engage in challenging conversations to elevate program safety.

INTEGRATING EOF PRINCIPLES INTO OUR PROGRAMS

- Leaders, staff and volunteers foster open communication and hold each other to high standards. Hierarchical barriers to communication are broken down.
- Proactively design collective responsibility, high standards and best practices into each Youth Program.
- Our community offers professional development and leadership training to enable the design and delivery of safe programs.

PROGRAMS SAFETY TRAINING

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SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

- The **recommended supervision ratio** for on-site programs is one staff or volunteer for every ten youth (1:10).
- Staff and volunteers should **avoid situations where they are alone with one, unrelated youth**. Another faculty, staff and/or volunteer should be made aware prior to an unavoidable one-on-one event. A “Two Deep” policy where two or more adults are present with youth at all times is highly recommended.
- Youth should be within **visual and/or hearing supervision of volunteers or staff at all times**. Exceptions to visual supervision include bathroom or changing room use. Under these circumstances staff or volunteers should respect youth privacy but remain within hearing supervision by waiting nearby. Send youth to bathroom in groups of 3-5 to reduce risk.
- To avoid youth-youth abuse, **youth should not be left alone with another unrelated youth for more than a few minutes**. For example, avoid prolonged periods in bathrooms or changing rooms where youth are not under visual supervision. Groups of 3-5 youth are safer than 2.

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR AND BOUNDARIES

- Share your enthusiasm! This is your chance to inspire future scientists and engineers—make the most of your time with them.
- Model respectful behavior for the participants, other staff and volunteers. Avoid inappropriate adult conversations and topics, including adult-oriented jokes or discussion of sexual interactions.
- Disciplinary measures never include use of physical punishment or failure to provide necessities of care, such as food, water or shelter. Nor should punishments single out an individual for group ridicule.
- Observe the physical and emotional state of youth each time they participate in a program. Signs of injury or suspected child abuse must be reported (see section below).
- Bullying, hazing or secret initiations are never allowed. Maintain adult-youth boundaries. Staff should ensure that programs are psychologically and emotionally safe for everyone, in addition to physically safe.

“GRAY AREA” BOUNDARIES

Below is a list of frequently encountered areas of concern related to appropriate boundaries. None of these areas is always a definite indication of a problem. In fact, when done publicly and with proper supervisor approval, many would be considered well-intentioned and positive. However, when done without proper consideration and approval, they can be indicative of an adult or youth forming the beginnings of an inappropriate relationship.

- **Social media** communication with youth: Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, etc.
- **Cell phone** communication, including texting.

- **Discussing personal issues** and information with youth or within earshot of youth. This includes any subject that one would normally discuss with a same-age friend: i.e. relationships, finances, family, gossip-type information, etc.
- **"Holding contracts" with youth.** Holding a contract with a youth means agreeing to keep a secret with a youth, however innocuous it may seem. Example: Staff A observes Youth X taking an extra snack despite instructions that it is one snack/camper. Staff A responds by saying "It's a good thing only I saw you, Staff B would be really mad." Two things happen as a result. First, Staff A now has leverage with which to manipulate Youth X and Youth X now knows that Staff A is willing to operate outside the authority of the other staff. This is one of the most common precursors to deviant behavior by adults and youth.
- **Physical contact.** This issue has a great deal of complexity and requires some training. Training points include public/private contact, gender awareness, age awareness, frequency and the "needy" youth, awareness of one's own needs, the role of horseplay, etc.
- **Consistent application of authority among youth.** It is human nature to relate more closely to some youth than others. However, it becomes a boundary issue when adults apply their authority inconsistently and some youth receive consideration not available to others.

MEDIA POLICY

Advances in technology are enabling new forms of social interaction that may extend beyond the appropriate use of cameras or recording devices. The following policies are meant to ensure the appropriate use of digital media:

- **Inappropriate use of cameras, imaging, cell phones or digital devices is prohibited.** It is inappropriate to use any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in showers, restrooms, changing rooms or other areas where privacy is expected by participants.
- **Participants must sign a media release form** before pictures or videos can be used for reports, advertising or promotional materials. See the Appendix for liability waiver and media release forms. These forms must be used verbatim and cannot be modified by individual programs without approval by the 180 Youth Outreach Board of Directors.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

All 180 Youth Program staff, volunteers and contractors are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This means we are required to report suspected abuse to appropriate agencies immediately upon witnessing or being notified of suspected abuse.

As part of our EOF Principles, timely and diligent reporting of suspected abuse is critical for ensuring safe environments. Trust your instincts; if you see suspected evidence of abuse, report it immediately to your supervisor and the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Welfare child abuse hotline: 800-237-0004 or for non-emergency, 615-254-6018.

YOUTH PROGRAM SCENARIOS: WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN THESE SITUATIONS?

1. One of your students is monopolizing your attention and is clearly developing a crush on you.
2. One of your students is withdrawn and not participating in the activities.
3. You arrive at an activity and two of your students are missing.
4. A student smashes their finger in a door while fooling around.
5. One of your students left her backpack at the last activity and wants to go back and get it.
6. The teacher chaperone for your group does not participate in activities.
7. One of your students constantly wants hugs.
8. One of your students is using foul language and misbehaving and won't stop when you ask them to volunteer training for low-risk events.

I confirm that I have read, understand, and will adhere empowering our future principles as listed above.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____