



Youth Protection Code of Conduct and Procedures

You will be asked to review the following 6 sections:

- 1.) Code of Conduct (pages 1 – 4)
- 2.) Reporting Procedures (pages 1 – 2)
- 3.) Appropriate and Inappropriate Physical Interaction with Minors
- 4.) Appropriate and Inappropriate Verbal Interaction with Minors
- 5.) Electronic Communications
- 6.) One-on-One Interactions

At the end of each section, you will be asked to sign, acknowledging that you have read, understood and agreed to the following policies and procedures of working with minors as defined in this packet.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct:

- Our employees and volunteers will exhibit the highest ethical best practices and personal integrity.
- Our employees and volunteers will provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.
- Our employees and volunteers will not physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse or neglect a youth or adult.
- Our employees and volunteers will share concerns about suspicious or inappropriate behavior with their supervisor or administrator.
- Our employees and volunteers will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a youth to the Fresno State Title IX Coordinator @559.278.5357.
- Our employees and volunteers will accept their role of responsibility to protect youth and adults from all forms of abuse.

Code of Conduct with Minors

The following requirements and guidelines are intended to assist employees and volunteers in making decisions about interactions with minors. For clarification of any guideline, or to inquire about behaviors not addressed here, contact your supervisor.

Our program provides participating minors with the highest quality services available. We are committed to creating an environment for minors that is safe, nurturing, empowering, and that promotes growth and success.

No form of abuse will be tolerated, and confirmed abuse will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Our program will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse are made that require investigation.

The Code of Conduct outlines specific expectations of program employees and volunteers as we strive to accomplish our mission together.

1. Minors will be treated with respect at all times.
2. Minors will be treated fairly regardless of race, sex, age, or religion.
3. Employees and volunteers will adhere to uniform best practices of displaying affection as outlined by our organization.
4. Employees and volunteers will avoid affection with minors that cannot be observed by others.
5. Employees and volunteers will adhere to uniform best practices of appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions as outlined by our organization.
6. Employees and volunteers will not stare at or comment on minors' bodies.
7. Employees and volunteers will not date or become romantically involved with minors.
8. Employees and volunteers will not use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of minors.
9. Employees and volunteers will not have sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, on our organization's property.
10. Employees and volunteers will not have secrets with minors and will only give gifts with prior permission.
11. Employees and volunteers will comply with our organization's policies regarding interactions with minors outside of our programs.
12. Employees and volunteers will not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with minors.
13. Employees and volunteers are prohibited from working one-on-one with minors in a private setting. Employees and volunteers will use common areas when working with individual minors.
14. Employees and volunteers will not abuse minors in anyway including (but not limited to) the following:

Physical abuse: hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, unnecessary restraints

Verbal abuse: degrading, threatening, cursing

Sexual abuse: inappropriate touch, exposing oneself, sexually oriented conversations

Mental abuse: shaming, humiliation, cruelty

Neglect: withholding food, water, shelter

15. Our program will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one minor by another minor. In addition, our program will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, we will take steps needed to eliminate such behavior.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- a. *Physical bullying* – when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
- b. *Verbal bullying* – when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
- c. *Nonverbal or relational bullying* – when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- d. *Cyberbullying* – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
 - i. Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images;
 - ii. Posting sensitive, private information about another person;
 - iii. Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad; and
 - iv. Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.

- v. Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person’s willingness to participate.
- vi. Sexualized bullying – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. This policy applies to all youth, staff and volunteers.

16. Employees and volunteers will report concerns or complaints about other employees and volunteers, other adults, or minors to the Fresno State Title IX Coordinator reached at 559.278.5357 (leave a message if no answer) or via the **Reporting Form** located at the Title IX website: <https://adminfinance.fresnostate.edu/title-ix/index.html>

17. Employees and volunteers may not have engaged in, or been accused or convicted of minors abuse, indecency with a minor, or injury to a minor.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood and agreed to the following policies and procedures of working with minors as defined in this section.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Reporting Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors between Adults and Minors

Because our program is dedicated to maintaining zero tolerance for abuse, it is imperative that every employee and volunteer at our program participate actively in the protection of program. In the event that employees and volunteers observe any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors on the part of other employees or volunteers, it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations. Remember, at our programs, the policies apply to everyone.

Examples of Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors Between Adults and Minors

- Violation of the abuse prevention policies
- Seeking private time or one-on-one time with minors
- Buying gifts for individual minors
- Making suggestive comments to minors
- Picking favorites

All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior with minors will be taken seriously. Our program's procedures will be carefully followed to ensure that the rights of all those involved are protected.

1. **Employee and Volunteer Response** – In the event that an employee or volunteer witnesses suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations from another adult, the employee or volunteer is instructed to do the following:

Guidelines for Response to Suspicious or Inappropriate Behavior

- Interrupt the behavior.
- Report the behavior.
- Document the report but do not conduct an investigation.
- Keep reporting until the appropriate action is taken.

Reporting Suspected Abuse by an Adult

1. Employee or Volunteer Response to Abuse

As required by mandated reporting laws, employees and volunteers must report any suspected abuse or neglect of a minor—whether on or off program property or whether perpetrated by staff, volunteers, or others—to the Fresno State Title IX Coordinator.

Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. A person who mistakenly reports suspected abuse is immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith and without malice.

* Refer to California State University Executive Order 1083 on Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect for specific mandated reporting requirements and more information (<https://calstate.policystat.com/policy/10927154/latest>).

In addition to reporting to campus authorities, employees and volunteers are required to report any suspected or known abuse of minors perpetrated by employees or volunteers directly to the program leadership so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims and others who may be at risk. Reports of suspected or known abuse may be made confidentially to the following:

Fresno State Title IX Coordinator reached at 559.278.5357 (leave a message if no answer) or via the **Reporting Form** located at the Title IX website:

<https://adminfinance.fresnostate.edu/title-ix/index.html>

Additional Guidelines for Employee or Volunteer Response to Incidents or Allegations of Abuse

- If you witness abuse, interrupt the behavior immediately.
- If abuse is disclosed to you, assure the individual disclosing that he or she was correct to tell to you.
- Protect the alleged victim from intimidation, retribution, or further abuse.
- Be sure to document the incident, disclosure, or circumstances causing your suspicion of abuse.
- It is not your job to investigate the incident but it IS your job to report the incident to your supervisor in a timely manner.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood and agreed to the following policies and procedures of working with minors as defined in this section.

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Date: _____



Appropriate and Inappropriate Physical Interactions with Minors

Our program has implemented a physical-contact policy that will promote a positive, nurturing environment while protecting minors, employees, and volunteers from misunderstandings. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all employees and volunteers working with minors:

<i>Appropriate Physical Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Physical Interactions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Pats on the shoulder or back • Handshakes • High-fives and hand slapping • Verbal praise • Pats on the head when culturally appropriate • Touching hands, shoulders, and arms • Arms around shoulders • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-frontal hugs • Kisses • Showing affection in isolated area • Lap sitting • Wrestling • Piggyback rides • Tickling • Allowing a minor to cling to an employee’s or volunteer’s leg • Any type of massage given by or to a minor • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the minor or the employee or volunteer • Compliments relating to physique or body development • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas

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Appropriate and Inappropriate Verbal Interactions with Minors

Employees and volunteers are prohibited from speaking to minors in a way that is, or could be construed by any observer, as harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.

Employees and volunteers must not initiate sexually oriented conversations with minors. Employees and volunteers are not permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with minors.

The program’s policies for appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions are:

<i>Appropriate Verbal Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving minor in the personal problems or issues of employees and volunteers • Secrets • Cursing • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming • Belittling • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate minors • Derogatory remarks about the minor or his/her family

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Electronic Communications

Electronic communication provides a venue for private communication between employees and minors. Therefore, with electronic communication policies, our program stresses transparency in all interactions.

Electronic Communication

<i>Appropriate Electronic Communication</i>	<i>Inappropriate Electronic Communication</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sending information via email to minors AND parents/guardians.• Replying to emails from minors only if parents are included.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sending and replying to text messages from minors• Communication through social networking sites (like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)• Sending and replying to emails from minors• Sending and replying to instant messages

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One-on-One Interactions

Most abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a minor. Our program aims to eliminate or reduce these situations and prohibits private one-on-one interactions unless approved in advance by program administration.

In those situations where one-on-one interactions are approved, employees and volunteers should observe the following additional guidelines to manage the risk of abuse or false allegations of abuse:

Additional Guidelines for One-on-One Interactions

- When meeting one-on-one with a minor, always do so in a public place where you are in full view of others.
- Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted. Limit affection to pats on the shoulder, high-fives, and handshakes.
- If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by.
- Inform other employees and volunteers that you are alone with a minor and ask them to randomly drop in.
- Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

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