

# Guidelines for University-Sponsored Programs for Minors

## Staff Acknowledgement of Guidelines for Programs for Minors

The organizers of any event on campus that involves child participants are responsible for the event. The university expects that all volunteers and staff will demonstrate exemplary behavior in relating to participants. To provide the opportunity for discussion with volunteers and staff, the following guidelines provide common-sense guidance for the program.

- Always work in an open environment (avoid private/unobserved situations).
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from participants. Set limits with participants who cling or hang on to staff and volunteers.
- If any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided respectfully and in the presence of others.
- If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, the adults should work in pairs.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs and notify the university employee responsible for the program of all injuries. A [Report of Incident form](#) should be filed with the Safety and Risk Management Office.
- Be an excellent role model. This includes not smoking, drinking alcohol, or swearing in the company of young people.
- Prohibit hazing or bullying by participants, staff, or volunteers.
- If any child reports allegations of child abuse, neglect, or inappropriate conduct, report the matter to your immediate supervisor.
- Avoid spending time alone with participants away from others, except in emergencies. For example, if a participant requires transportation to hospital or if a parent fails to pick up a participant at the end of a session.
- At least one staff member or volunteer of the same gender as the participant should be available during the program.
- Staff and volunteers will not share details about their romantic lives with participants or discuss such issues with participants.

- Staff and volunteers should stay out of the rooms of participants unless necessary for camp or program business and should not allow participants in their rooms or homes.
- Staff and volunteers should not engage in or allow participants to engage in rough, physical play or horseplay or inappropriate behavior.

If any of the following occur during a program, staff or volunteers should report immediately to the program director and record the incident.

- A participant is injured
- A participant seems very distressed in any manner
- A participant seems to have a crush on you, or is inappropriate with you, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

## **Guidelines for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

### **What is child abuse?**

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children or young people are harmed, usually by adults. Often, these people are people they know and trust. Abuse can result in damage to a child's or young person's physical, mental, or emotional health. Children or young people can be abused within or outside their family, at school, and within the sporting environment.

Under Montana law, physical abuse means an intentional act, an intentional omission, or gross negligence resulting in substantial skin bruising, internal bleeding, substantial injury to skin, subdural hematoma, burns, bone fractures, extreme pain, permanent or temporary disfigurement, impairment of any bodily organ or function, or death. Physical abuse may include situations where adults:

- Physically hurt or injure children or young people.
- Give children or young people alcohol, cigarettes, inappropriate drugs, etc.
- Sexually abuse children or young people through sexual assault, sexual intercourse, indecent exposure, deviate sexual conduct, sexual abuse, or incest.
- Use excessive, harsh, or inappropriate training methods, i.e., the nature and intensity of training should never exceed the capacity of the child's or young person's growing body.

### **What is Neglect?**

Neglect includes situations in which

- A child or young person's basic needs are not met (e.g., failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, or health care).
- Children or young people are consistently left alone and unsupervised by adults.
- Exposing or allowing the child or you to be exposed to an unreasonable risk to the child's health and welfare by failing to intervene or eliminate the risk.

### **What is Sexual Abuse?**

Sexual abuse includes situations in which adults/peers use children or young people to meet their own sexual needs through:

- Full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, or fondling.
- Indecent exposure to children.
- Showing pornographic books, photographs, or videos, or taking photographs for pornographic purposes.
- Inappropriate physical contact or touching.

### **Recognition of abuse**

It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. That is the responsibility of the Child Protective Services workers and/or law enforcement. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

The following may be signs of child abuse:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts, or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- Any injury for which the explanation is inconsistent.
- The child or young person describing what appears to be an abusive act.
- Someone else expressing concerns about the welfare of the child or young person.
- Unexplained changes in behavior.
- Sexual awareness inappropriate for age or engaging in sexually explicit behavior in games.
- Being prevented from socializing with other children or young people.

- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

The above list is not exhaustive, and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is taking place. However, if any staff member or volunteer is concerned about the welfare of the child, he or she should report the matter to their supervisor.

### **What to do if abuse by staff or a volunteer is suspected**

The program will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by anyone should be reported to the program director, who will take steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other children at risk.
- The Program Director will report the matter to the Director or Department Head of the unit that sponsors the program (e.g., Athletic Director, Conference Services, Director of Extended University). The Director or Department Head will work with Legal Counsel to refer the allegation to the Child Protective Services Unit, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. If the incident may also be a crime (e.g., sexual assault), the matter will also be reported to the police.
- If the Program Director is the subject of the allegation, the report will be made to the Program Director's supervisor.
- If there is a complaint against a member of staff, the Program Director will also conduct a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.
- Anyone who believes reporting to the Program Director may not be sufficient may report an incident using the incident report form or the child abuse hotline 1-866-820-KIDS (1-866-8205437).

### **The following action will be taken if there are concerns about staff members or volunteers**

- If the allegation is found to be a matter of poor practice, it will be dealt with as a performance or misconduct issue by the supervisor.
- If the allegation concerns the supervisor, or it is believed that the matter has been handled inadequately, any concerned staff or volunteer may report the matter to the next level of supervision.
- The supervisor will make an immediate decision about whether an individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further investigation.

## **Reports to Child Protective Services and/or the Police**

Information passed on to the Child Protective Services Office of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services or the police should include as much of the following information as is available:

- Name of child
- Age of child and date of birth
- Home address and telephone number
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else?
- What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, any special factors, and other relevant information.
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

Persons responsible for programs involving minors (under 18 years of age) shall discuss these guidelines with their staff and volunteers and ask them to sign them.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and will abide by the Guidelines above.

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Signature

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Date