



Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct establishes acceptable interactions and outlines the expectations and responsibilities of any person with access to children at your organization.

STEP 1: Developing the Code of Conduct

- Include a Code of Ethics describing the vision and guiding principles of the YSO and commitment to keeping kids safe.
- Gather input from leadership, staff, volunteers, parents, and children on the day-to-day behaviors important to them.
- Provide guidance on behaviors that are appropriate, inappropriate, and harmful and the consequences for breaking the Code of Conduct.
- Check parent and partner organizations for suggested models and integrate licensing, certification, and regulatory requirements.
- Include child abuse reporting laws and the consequences for failing to report.

STEP 2: Implementing the Code of Conduct

- Share with all constituents and include your YSO's commitment to maintaining a safe environment.
- Verify all current staff and volunteers understand, agree, and sign the Code of Conduct.
- Integrate review and acknowledgment of your Code of Conduct into your screening and hiring process for all new staff and volunteers.
- Embed the Code of Conduct into ongoing performance reviews.
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities and know how, when, and to whom to address or report concerns.

STEP 3: Reinforcing the Code of Conduct

- Provide positive reinforcement when appropriate behaviors are observed and report inappropriate or harmful behaviors.
- Review during staff meetings, supervision, and training and in ongoing communication with staff and volunteers.
- Add the Code of Conduct to your YSO's website and in any marketing, recruitment, or advertising.
- Collect and review data with staff on the frequency and types of reports to identify areas that need to be addressed.
- Evaluate, revise, and update the Code of Conduct at least annually.