

## **APPENDIX 9: Code of Conduct and Monitoring**

### **Sample Code of Conduct**

#### **(Name of Organization) Code of Conduct Involving Interactions with Children and Youth**

(Name of Organization) is committed to the safety and protection of children and youth. This Code of Conduct, along with the (Name of Organization) child safety policies and procedures applies to all staff, employees, and volunteers who represent the (Name of Organization) and who interact with children or youth in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

The public and private conduct of staff, employees, and volunteers acting on behalf of (Name of Organization) can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact, or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work.

We should be aware of our own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with children and youth, and be particularly aware that we are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. We must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviors with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes seductive speech, jokes or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses. We are to provide safe environments for children and youth at all times.

We must show prudent discretion before touching another person, especially children and youth, and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, or celebration. (Name of Organization) personnel and volunteers are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child.

Physical contact with children can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it, and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a child or young person are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open, and another staff member or supervisor is notified about the meeting.

We must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable cause to suspect, that children and youth are being maltreated in any way. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate organizational and civil authorities as described in the (Name of Organization) child safety policies and procedures.

Staff and volunteers should refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol at all times, and from the use of tobacco products, alcohol and/or drugs when working with children. Adults should never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to young people. Staff members and volunteers should not accept or give gifts to children without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.

Communication with children by staff and volunteers is only allowed for (Name of Organization) business. For the protection of all concerned, the key safety concept that will be applied to these interactions is *transparency*. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between staff, volunteers, and minors:

- Communication between (Name of Organization) personnel (including volunteers) and children/youth that is outside the role of the professional or volunteer relationship is prohibited.
- Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the organization are to be made using a (Name of Organization) email address.
- Electronic communication that takes place over a (Name of Organization) network or platform may be subject to periodic monitoring.
- Staff, and volunteers who use text messaging or any form of online communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to communicate with children/youth may only do so for activities involving (Name of Organization) business.

The organizational contact for questions about or reports of breaches of this Code of Conduct is (enter name of the staff member's/volunteer's immediate supervisor). If the supervisor is not available, or if the behavior involves a direct supervisor, (Name of designated alternate or Human Resources) should be contacted.

In the event that a child or youth is in immediate danger, and a supervisor (or designated alternate or human resources) is not available, call the Department of Children and Families (Day and evening/weekend phone numbers) or the local Police Department (number) and notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

The (Name of Organization) will not discharge or in any manner retaliate or discriminate against any person who, in good faith, submits a report to DCF, expresses a concern, or reports a breach of any of the behaviors contained in this Code.

All incidents will be investigated within (a stated timeframe) by (name of designated individual, supervisor or manager), and the employee/volunteer reporting the incident will be informed of the outcomes.