



# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION CODE OF CONDUCT

## YMCA OF THE FOX CITIES

### Volunteers

A foundational commitment of the Y is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of children. Thus, child abuse in any form is a primary concern to the Y. Child abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of a child resulting in injury or harm. In order to help prevent child abuse within Y programs, it is critical that all staff and volunteers understand the information provided, be on the lookout for suspicious behavior and abide by the following policies.

#### **SUPERVISION:**

1. In order to protect YMCA of the Fox Cities staff, volunteers and program participants at no time during a program may a volunteer be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. As volunteers supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that staff can see them.
2. Volunteers shall never leave a child unsupervised.
3. Restroom supervision: Volunteers will make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Volunteers will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the volunteer (not being alone with a child). If a volunteer is assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child regardless of age should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. Always send children in pairs and whenever possible, with staff/volunteers. Follow the "rule of 3," striving to have two adults whenever possible.
4. Volunteers should not release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian.

#### **INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN:**

1. Volunteers shall not abuse children including, but not limited to:
  - **Physical abuse** – hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, unnecessary restraints
  - **Verbal abuse** – degrading, threatening, cursing
  - **Sexual abuse** – inappropriate touching, exposing oneself, sexually oriented conversations
  - **Mental abuse** – shaming, humiliation, cruelty
  - **Neglect** – withholding food, water, basic care, etc.

**Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and will be cause for immediate dismissal.**

2. Volunteers must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Volunteers will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in situations necessary to protect the child or other children from harm and must be documented in writing.
3. Volunteers must respond to children with respect and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion and/or culture. Volunteers must portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact and maturity.
4. Volunteers may not be alone with children they meet in Y programs outside of the Y.
5. Volunteers are not to transport children in their own vehicles.
6. Volunteers may not date program participants under the age of 18 years of age.
7. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, intimate displays of affection toward other staff/volunteers, and sharing intimate details of one's personal life in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
8. Volunteers may not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with youth.
9. Volunteers may not have secrets with youth and will only give gifts with prior permission from YMCA staff.
10. Volunteers will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and allow children the right to say no. Children are not to be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.

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

### YMCA EXPECTATIONS:

1. It is a volunteer's legal and ethical duty to report suspected abuse or suspicious behavior. Volunteers will cooperate fully with any investigation. Contact your supervisor or other YMCA staff member in any situation of suspected abuse.
2. Volunteers must appear clean, neat and appropriately attired.
3. While the Y does not discriminate against an individual's lifestyle, it does require that in the performance of their task, volunteers will abide by the standards of conduct set forth by the YMCA of the Fox Cities.
4. Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during volunteer hours is prohibited.
5. Smoking or use of tobacco or vaping products in the presence of children or parents during volunteer hours is prohibited.

### MANDATED REPORTER REQUIREMENTS:

All volunteers must follow state specific mandatory reporting requirements. Volunteers should be trained to be aware of and understand their legal and ethical obligation to recognize and report suspicions of mistreatment and abuse.

Staff will:

- a. Be familiar with the symptoms of child abuse and neglect, including physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse.
- b. Know and follow organization policies and procedures that protect youths against abuse.
- c. Report suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities as required by state mandated reporter laws.
- d. Follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken.

As a YMCA staff or volunteer, we are all Mandated Reporters. If you are aware of, or suspect, any type of abuse of a youth, it is your obligation to call and make a report to Child Protective Services. We ask that you also communicate with your supervisor or Executive Director when contacting Child Protective Services.

Staff and volunteers will report concerns or complaints about other staff, volunteers, adults, or youths to their supervisor, Executive Director or Human Resources Director. Praesidium's Anonymous Helpline at 855-347-0751 may be called to discuss a potential child abuse issue.

Our organization cooperates fully with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse. Any staff or volunteer shall cooperate to the fullest extent possible in any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by the organization or persons given investigative authority by the organization. Failure to cooperate fully may be grounds for termination.

### I agree to abide by the Child Abuse Code of Conduct:

**Volunteer Name** (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_