Guidelines for Good Practice for University Programs for Children

The organizers of any university event held on or off campus that involves children participants are responsible for the maintaining a safe and secure environment 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 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 and be of the same gender of the students being supervised.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs and notify the university employee responsible for the program of all injuries. An Accident Investigation Form should be completed and filed with the Safety and Risk Management Office. The form may be requested by calling 247-2155.
- Be an excellent role model. This includes not smoking, drinking alcohol or swearing in the company of any participants in the event.
- 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. In the event of sexual abuse/assault, report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator, Janet Simon, at 657-2221. In addition, any crime should be reported to Campus Police at 657-2147.
- Avoid spending time alone with participants away from others, except in emergencies.
- In the event of a medical emergency, call 911. Campus Police will automatically be notified. The child’s parents/guardians and the individual in charge of the camp/student group need to be notified immediately. If the medical issue does not require emergency response, parents/guardians need to be contacted to transport the child for appropriate medical assistance. If the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, then Campus Police will be asked to transport the child to the hospital, along with a staff member.
- When possible, 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.

• When participants in a program are staying in the university’s dorms or other lodging facilities, staff and volunteers should stay out of rooms of the participants, unless necessary for camp or program business. In addition, staff and volunteers should not allow participants to enter their dorm rooms or their homes.

• Staff and volunteers should not engage in or allow participants to engage in activities with aggressive physical contact or any other activity that may threaten or harm a participant or staff member/volunteer.

If any of the following occur during a program, staff or volunteers should report the incident immediately to the person in charge of the program (for example, Program Director, Coach, Athletic Director, Extended Campus Executive Director, etc.), and record the incident.

  • A participant is injured.
  • A participant seems distressed in any manner.
  • A participant seems to have an infatuation with you, acts inappropriate with you, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.
  • A participant engages in inappropriate behavior towards another participant in the program.

**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 done 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, deviant 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 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 his/her supervisor.

What to do if abuse by staff or volunteer is suspected:

The University 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 person in charge of the program (for example, Program Director, Coach, Athletic Director, Extended Campus Executive Director, etc.), who will take steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other children at risk.

• The individual in charge of the program will report the matter to the Director or Department Head of the unit which sponsors the program (e.g., Athletic Director, Conference Services, Extended Campus Executive Director, etc.). The Director or Department Head will work with Legal Counsel and Campus Police, if appropriate, 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 individual in charge of the program is the subject of the allegation, the report will be made to that individual’s supervisor.

• If there is a complaint against a member of staff, the Program Director will also conduct a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

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.

All persons responsible for programs involving minors (those under 18 years of age) shall discuss these guidelines with their staff and volunteers. In addition, each staff member and volunteer should sign a copy of the Guidelines, acknowledging that the Guidelines have been reviewed with him/her and that he/she has been given a copy of the Guidelines.

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

________________________________________
Printed Name

________________________________________  ________________
Signature                                      Date