SAMPLE

Child Protection Policy

**This is a sample and not a legal document. Make edits and additions as relevant to your organization, program or project.*

In order to provide a safe environment for children and adults, *ORGANIZATION NAME requires all employees and volunteers working with children to comply with the "Requirements of Employees and Volunteers" and the "Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures" that make up this, the "Child Protection Policy" adopted by *ORGANIZATION. In so doing, those individuals will be asked to comply with at least the Basic Screening Procedures and possibly more depending on the level of interaction with a child and review the attached "Guidelines and Procedures" as part of their orientation and training. All employees will be under the supervision of the Executive Director as well as any program director for which they may work/volunteer.

1. Requirements for Employees and Volunteers

I. Complete and sign a written application for volunteers opportunities or employment
II. Provide at least 2 personal references for volunteers and at least 2 employment references for employees
III. Complete a personal interview with the Executive Director, Program Director, or authorized hiring committee.
IV. Comply with all application review and reference check processes that will be conducted by the appropriate program staff person(s). (All required background checks will be completed prior to work with youth and shall be documented in a personnel file prior to an individual beginning service.)
V. Successfully complete a volunteer/employee training as well as educational sessions as directed annually
VI. Successfully pass all criminal record/background checks
VII. Van Driving Policy (use where applicable) Those driving a 12+ passenger rented vehicle must complete and pass a Defensive Driving Course/Van Driving Court/Submit a driving current Motor Vehicle Report, provide a current NC Driver's License, and a copy of valid driving insurance

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2. Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures

I. At no time shall one employee or volunteer be alone with a child. The only exception to this policy would be in a situation in which the contact occurs in a public place or other persons are able to clearly witness the interaction by being in and out of the area where the employee or volunteer is working with the child. If a situation unexpectedly does not meet this criterion, then alternatives must be put into place so the event is in compliance.

II. Volunteers and employees must read the "Child Protection Policy", agree to it by completing and signing the appropriate application form(s), and submitting to the appropriate level of screening and training as listed in Part 1. of this policy.

For On-Site Activities/Programs

I. Each building that houses classrooms with minors present will have a Hall Monitor present during Program hours.

II. Restroom Use: Children shall be accompanied to the restroom by a teacher/tutor/parent-volunteer coordinator who will wait outside the door for the child. The child's teacher shall be informed of their destination at the time of exiting and returning to the classroom.

For Off-Site Activities/Programs when youth, employees and/or volunteers are participating in a *ORGANIZATION sponsored event

I. As each facility will be different, it will be the responsibility of the executive or program director to determine how best to use the facility and comply with *ORGANIZATION policies.

II. Overnights: Males and females shall be segregated during sleeping time. If it is deemed necessary for adults to share sleeping accommodations with the children, a minimum of two adults, the same sex as the children being chaperoned, shall sleep in each area and adults may not be present while minors are changing clothes or using restroom facilities. Chaperones must seek a private space for changing clothes, bathing, etc.

III. All volunteer and staff persons who drive and/or chaperone on off-site trips involving children shall be in conformance with all aspects of the Child Protection Policy.

3. Reporting and Responding to Reports of Suspicious/Inappropriate Activity

Reporting and Responding must be handled with graciousness and confidentiality. In order to maintain an environment free of destructive acts toward all children, youth, staff, and volunteers of *ORGANIZATION must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation act, omission, or situation thought to be in violation of this policy. All questions or concerns of any suspected abusive behavior or harassment shall be directed to the Executive Director, Program Director, or the appropriate program staff.

In the event anyone personally witnesses an occurrence in violation of this policy, that person will be asked to complete a written Incident Report. Anyone who should witness such an occurrence should consider the following recommendations on how to handle the situation to insure the security of the potential victim involved and to protect again physical, emotional or psychological injury, to all persons involved.

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- Personally secure the safety of the victim.
- Report the incident immediately to the appropriate staff/volunteer
    - Director of *ORGANIZATION or Program Director
    - Parent/Volunteer Coordinator
    - Head Tutor
- Do not leave the victim alone to report the incident
- Do not personally confront the alleged/accused violator of the policy
- Allow the designated person to provide you with instructions for reporting of the incident to the appropriate person(s)
- Once the victim is being cared for, the reported will document the incident on an Incident Report Form (provided by *ORGANIZATION)
- All information shall be treated in a confidential manner. Except in the case of a response to a report of suspicious activity, and then only to the extent necessary to comply with policy/procedures as well as all applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- Documents shall be kept in a secure storage/double locked.

Suspicious/Inappropriate Activities Include (but are not limited to):

- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a child, youth, volunteer or staff.
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any adult and child, youth, staff or volunteer
- Infliction or physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a child, youth, volunteer or staff
- Physical neglect of a child, children, youth, volunteer or staff including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of *ORGANIZATION and its' program(s)
- Causing mental or emotional injury to a child, children, youth, volunteer or staff
- Possessing obscene or pornographic materials at *ORGANIZATION or any *ORGANIZATION program/function
- Possessing, advocating the use of, or being under the influence of any illegal drugs
- Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol while leading or participating in a children's or youth function or while engaging in activities while representing *ORGANIZATION, whether on-site or at a *ORGANIZATION function off-site

4. **Consequences of Violation**

- Any person accused of violating this policy, whether staff or volunteer, will immediately be suspended from participation in all *ORGANIZATION activities/work. Such suspension shall continue during any investigation by *ORGANIZATION or law enforcement and child protection agencies.

- Any person found guilty of violating this policy shall be prohibited from future participation in all *ORGANIZATION activities/programs. If the person is an employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment.

- Failure to report an incident in a timely manner shall be considered a procedural violation of this policy and shall be grounds for termination of employment and dismissal from any current or future participation in all *ORGANIZATION activities.

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CONSUMER RIGHTS

All youth/volunteers/employees involved with (*ORGANIZATION) and/or its' programs shall be afforded the following rights:

1. The right to a responsible expectation of privacy when/where applicable
2. The right to confidentiality of all consumer records. Parent/legal guardian consent is required prior to or obtainment of any confidential information except as permitted by law and interpreted by agency counsel
3. The right to access Youth/Personnel Records for the purpose of review, correction or addition
4. The right not to be subjected to any research activities considered to be outside of the routine plan of services, without the informed consent of the youth/volunteer/employee and parent/legal guardian
5. The right not to be subjected to sexual advances, sexual harassment, or sexual offenses of any nature
6. The right not to participate in public performance/appearances (on behalf of the agency) against the wishes of the youth/volunteer/employee or, if applicable, his/ her guardian.
7. The right to be free from the expectation of soliciting funds on behalf of the agency
8. The right to have his or her identity protected in the context of agency reports, statistical analyses of case summaries published as a result of participation in programming/services.
9. The right not to be filmed or taped without the informed consent of the consumer and/or legal guardian
10. The right to not be subjected to humiliation or retaliation in response to behavior or any other situation

SPECIAL PROTECTIONS:

In addition to the above listed rights, the following additional protections shall apply to youth involved with *ORGANIZATION.

1. Youth shall be free from coercion with regard to religious activities
2. Youth shall be permitted to express opinions appropriately on issues concerning their involvement in programming
3. Youth shall receive care in a culturally sensitive and appropriate manner
4. Youth shall not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, sex, creed or national origin
5. Consumers shall be entitled to a quiet atmosphere for sleep at night, access to facilities for adequate hygiene and grooming, the opportunity to outdoors daily
6. No youth shall be advised to leave, be assisted in leaving, or be transported from any *ORGANIZATION facility/*ORGANIZATION sponsored activity without the facility's/parental authority

SPECIAL PROTECTIONS (detailed):

1. RELIGIOUS PREFERENCES:

*ORGANIZATION shall at all times recognize and respect the religious preferences of youth and their parents/guardians. The program shall make every effort possible to support residents in their religious preference. At no time shall it be acceptable for a youth to be mocked, criticized or otherwise "singled-out" on the basis of his or her religious preference.

2. ETHNIC and CULTURAL PRESERVATION:

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*ORGANIZATION shall at all times recognize and respect ethnic and cultural differences among youth. We shall recognize and respect ethnic and cultural differences among youth. We shall make every effort possible to support clients in the preservation of their ethnic and cultural identities. At no time shall it be acceptable for clients to be mocked, criticized or otherwise "singled-out" on the basis of their cultural heritage.

3. DISCRIMINATION:
*ORGANIZATION does not discriminate against consumers in admissions or programming on the basis of race, color, creed, sex or national origin.

4. MEDICAL CARE:
Emergency medical care will be attended to by staff, with permission from parent and/or guardian. Costs for any services will be the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian/custodian.

5. UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCES:
*ORGANIZATION is not a locked program. However, under no circumstances shall staff suggest to a youth to leave or assist a youth in leaving the facility or location of a *ORGANIZATION sponsored event without approval from the parent/guardian.

CONTRABAND AND MISCONDUCT

A. CONTRABAND:
No program participants, volunteers, or staff of *ORGANIZATION shall be permitted to posses or store firearms, knives, or any other weapon (legal or illegal) or items which staff determines are dangerous to persons or property during *ORGANIZATION sponsored programs or events. In all cases, items which are illegal or which have been obtained illegally shall be considered contraband.

Any gang paraphernalia is deemed contraband.

B. CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES:
No program participants, volunteers, or staff of *ORGANIZATION shall be permitted to consume, have possession of, or store alcohol, controlled substances or drugs (unless prescribed by a physician and the client is approved to be "self-medicating") during *ORGANIZATION sponsored programs or events. Any substance which staff determines to be actually or potentially harmful (whether legally classified as a controlled substance or not) will be restricted from youth's possession while at *ORGANIZATION or a *ORGANIZATION sponsored event.

C. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT:
Sexual activity between youth, volunteers, and employees at *ORGANIZATION is not permitted.

D. PORNOGRAPHY:
Pornographic material such as literature, posters, etc., shall not be permitted in *ORGANIZATION or at any *ORGANIZATION sponsored event.

E. THREATENING or VIOLENT BEHAVIOR:
Consumer shall not be permitted to engage in threatening or violent behavior that endangers the safety of other clients or staff.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

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SEARCHES:

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a youth/employee/volunteer has contraband on his/her person or within the program/offices of *ORGANIZATION, staff shall conduct a search of the person and/or premises in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Program staff shall notify the youth/employee/volunteer and parent/legal guardian (when applicable) of the policy on search and seizure at the time of acceptance to a *ORGANIZATION program/activity/employment or volunteer work.

2. The following searches by program staff are authorized:

    A. Program staff may search a person and/or his or her possessions at the time of entry to the facility.
    B. Program staff may search a person and his or her possessions when the person/youth/volunteer/employee is returning to the facility from an off-site visit or after the person has received visitors when it is reasonable to believe the client may have items in his/her possession that are dangerous, illegal or otherwise prohibited in the program/facility.
    C. Program staff may search a person or the person's possessions if they have substantial and reliable cause to believe that the person has been drinking or using drugs and may have contraband articles or substances in his/her possession. Situations justifying such a search may include, but are not limited to, the following:

    1. Drinking, drug abuse or possession of contraband articles or substances have been witnessed by program staff or reported by another reliable informant.
    2. When in appropriate changes in behavior are observed or reported, such as slurred speech, ataxia, and odor of alcohol or disruptive behaviors (excluding expected changes due to prescribed psychotropic medication).
    3. When a stolen item has been seen by facility employees, reported by another reliable informant, or is clearly indicated by surrounding circumstances and no criminal charges are anticipated.

3. Scope of Searches. The procedures outlined in this section are intended for internal security, to protect the facility from civil liability and to provide and inventory of personal property and are not intended for purposes of criminal prosecution.

    A. Searches by program staff shall be conducted only on the facility premises or at *ORGANIZATION sponsored events where *ORGANIZATION is directly responsible for youth/volunteers or employee behavior/actions.
    B. Searches by program staff may include facility building and grounds.
    C. No body cavity searches will be conducted by staff of *ORGANIZATION.
    D. At least two program staff shall be present during a search. An employee of the same sex as the person being searched shall be present during each search and all searches shall be documented and maintained in the agency's official records.
    E. Documentation shall include:

        1. The reason for and scope of the search.
        2. The search procedures followed.

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3. A description of any property seized and an account of the disposition of seized property.
4. Names and titles of all persons present. Date, time, location of search.

When searching a person instead of a space, staff shall:

1. NOT touch the person on any part of his/her body.
2. Ask person to empty all pockets and show staff the empty pocket lining.
3. Ask person to remove sock and shoes.
4. Ask person to remove all outer-layer clothing (coats, sweatshirt etc). Staff will not ask to remove clothing if bare skin or underwear will be exposed.
5. Any search, which would require touching the client, is to only be done by law enforcement personnel or legal guardian.

Disposition of Seized Property:

A. If personal property seized in a search includes firearms or ammunition, the Program Manager or his/her designee shall contact the client's legal guardian and the Executive Director. The local law enforcement agency will be contacted regarding disposition of firearms.
B. If personal property seized in a search includes on-prescribed controlled substances (contraband), the Program Manager or his/her designee shall contact the client's legal guardian and the Executive Director. Disposition of controlled substances shall be handled in accordance with law enforcement.
C. If personal property seized in a search includes alcoholic beverages, the Program Manager or his/her designee shall contact the client's legal guardian and Executive Director. Alcoholic beverage shall be destroyed.
D. If personal property seized in a search includes dangerous items (e.g. knives, scissors, razors, glue) or other items prohibited by the facility, such items shall be stored for return to the parent/guardian at the time of discharge.
E. Items belonging to a consumer, which are seized during, a search of the consumer's possessions, with the exception of the items specified in 6(b) and 6(c), shall be given to the parent/legal guardian upon request.

Use of the search procedures specified in the section shall be subject to internal and external human rights review at all times.

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