

FOOTHILLS AREA YMCA

Child Abuse Prevention Code of Conduct

To protect YMCA staff, volunteers, and program participants, **at no time during a YMCA program may a staff person be alone with a single child** where they cannot be observed by others. Staff should space themselves so that they are visible to and by other staff members.

This organization takes every allegation of abuse or misconduct seriously and will fully cooperate with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse or misconduct. Employees and volunteers shall cooperate with any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by the organization or persons given investigative authority by the organization.

Cooperation with investigations includes, but is not limited to:

- Promptly acknowledging and responding to requests for information;
- Making oneself available for meetings with investigating officials;
- Providing full, accurate, and truthful information;
- Keeping confidential information learned or transmitted during the investigation, unless directed by legal authorities, and
- Preserving relevant information and documents.

An employee or volunteer's failure to cooperate with an investigation will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the organization.

Supervision and Safety

- Staff shall never leave a child unsupervised.
- **Restroom Supervision:** Staff must ensure the restroom is unoccupied by unknown or suspicious individuals before allowing children to enter. Staff should stand in the doorway while children use the facilities, ensuring privacy for the child and protection for staff. If assisting younger children, the restroom door must remain open.
- No child, regardless of age, should enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. Always send children in pairs and, whenever possible, with a staff member.

- Private activities such as diapering, changing, or showering must be conducted in pairs whenever feasible. When not feasible, staff must remain visible to others.
- Staff must perform a daily health check upon each child's arrival, noting any visible injuries, fever, or unusual marks. Any concerns must be documented and reported to a supervisor.

Prohibited Conduct

Staff shall not engage in or tolerate any form of abuse, including:

- **Physical abuse:** striking, spanking, shaking, or slapping.
- **Verbal abuse:** humiliating, degrading, or threatening.
- **Sexual abuse:** inappropriate touching or sexual comments.
- **Mental abuse:** shaming, withholding affection, or exhibiting cruelty.
- **Neglect:** withholding food, water, or basic care.

Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and may result in ***immediate termination and/or notification to proper authorities.***

Guidance and Discipline

Staff must use positive guidance techniques, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement. Physical restraint may be used only in situations necessary to protect the child or others from harm, and must be documented in writing.

Professional Conduct and Appearance

- Staff must appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired.
- Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents, or staff.
- Staff must portray a positive role model for youth by demonstrating respect, patience, loyalty, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing personal details, or any form of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
- Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours is prohibited.

- Smoking or tobacco use in the presence of children or parents during working hours is prohibited.
Staff must be free from any physical or psychological conditions that could negatively affect a child's well-being.

Boundaries and Outside Contact

- Staff may not be alone with children they meet through YMCA programs outside of YMCA activities. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, or social contact at home. Any exceptions must have written approval in advance.
- Staff may not transport children in their personal vehicles.
- Staff may not date program participants under the age of 18.
- **Children may only be released to an authorized parent, guardian, or adult listed on the YMCA authorization form.**

Reporting Responsibilities

- Staff are required to read and sign all YMCA policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse.
- Staff must complete all required child abuse prevention and reporting training as instructed by their supervisor.
- The YMCA requests that reports be made immediately if any suspected abuse or neglect is witnessed. Reports should be made to your supervisor and/or the appropriate authorities.

I understand that any violation of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service.

Employee/Volunteer Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____