

Oregon State University Youth Programs are dedicated to offering physically, psychologically and emotionally safe environments for all youth. Ensuring comprehensive safety requires more than simply following a list of policies and precautions; we must adopt a shared set of values and practices defining a “culture of responsibility” (CoR) for youth safety.

NOTE: This is an abbreviated training worksheet. For full details, please see the OSU Youth Program Policies and Guidelines manual here: <http://oregonstate.edu/precollege/support-services>

Culture of Responsibility (CoR) Principles

- **Sharing:** All program members (*program leaders, staff, volunteers and youth participants*) share responsibility for assuring safety at all times.
 - Safety is part of daily conversation in designing, delivering, and enhancing programs.
 - CoR safety principles (**Sharing, Understanding, Acting**) are communicated as an integral aspect of each program.
- **Understanding:** All program members understand their expectations, responsibilities and opportunities to create a safe environment.
 - It is each member's responsibility to address unsafe practices and procedures.
 - Members understand that safety is situational. Ongoing training allows the adaptability necessary to be prepared, attentive and responsive.
- **Acting:** All program members act to resolve safety concerns in a timely fashion.
 - Members practice open, honest communication and are aware of reporting pathways to address safety concerns without repercussions.
 - Program members hold each other to high standards of practice and engage in challenging conversations to elevate program safety.

Supervision Guidelines

- The **recommended supervision ratio** for on-site programs is one staff or volunteer for every ten youth (1:10). If the youth participants are younger than 3rd grade (or 8 years old), the recommended ratio is one staff or volunteer for every five youth (1:5).
- Faculty, staff, and volunteers should **avoid situations where they are alone with one, unrelated youth**. Another faculty, staff and/or volunteer should be made aware prior to an unavoidable one-on-one event. A “Two Deep” policy where two or more adults are present with youth at all times is highly recommended.
- Youth should be within **visual and/or hearing supervision of volunteers or staff at all times**. Exceptions to visual supervision include bathroom or changing room use. Under these circumstances staff or volunteers should respect youth privacy but remain within hearing supervision by waiting nearby. Send youth to bathroom in groups of 3-5 to reduce risk.
- To avoid youth-youth abuse, **youth should not be left alone with another unrelated youth for more than a few minutes**. For example, avoid prolonged periods in bathrooms or changing rooms where youth are not under visual supervision. Groups of 3-5 youth are safer than 2.

Appropriate Behavior and Boundaries

- Share your enthusiasm! This is your chance to inspire future scientists and engineers—make the most of your time with them.
- Model respectful behavior for the participants, other staff and volunteers. Avoid inappropriate adult conversations and topics, including adult-oriented jokes or discussion of sexual interactions.
- Disciplinary measures never include use of physical punishment or failure to provide necessities of care, such as food, water or shelter. Nor should punishments single out an individual for group ridicule.
- Observe the physical and emotional state of youth each time they participate in a program. Signs of injury or suspected child abuse must be reported (see section below).
- Bullying, hazing or secret initiations are never allowed. Maintain adult-youth boundaries. Staff should ensure that programs are psychologically and emotionally safe for everyone, in addition to physically safe.

“Gray Area” Boundaries

Below is a list of frequently encountered areas of concern related to appropriate boundaries. None of these areas is always a definite indication of a problem. In fact, when done publicly and with proper supervisor approval, many would be considered well-intentioned and positive. However, when done without proper consideration and approval, they can be indicative of an adult or youth forming the beginnings of an inappropriate relationship.

- **Social media** communication with youth: Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, etc.
- **Cell phone** communication, including texting.
- **Discussing personal issues** and information with youth or within earshot of youth. This includes any subject that one would normally discuss with a same-age friend: i.e. relationships, finances, family, gossip-type information, etc.
- **"Holding contracts" with youth.** Holding a contract with a youth means agreeing to keep a secret with a youth, however innocuous it may seem. Example: Staff A observes Youth X taking an extra snack despite instructions that it is one snack/camper. Staff A responds by saying "It's a good thing only I saw you, Staff B would be really mad." Two things happen as a result. First, Staff A now has leverage with which to manipulate Youth X and Youth X now knows that Staff A is willing to operate outside the authority of the other staff. This is one of the most common precursors to deviant behavior by adults and youth.
- **Physical contact.** This issue has a great deal of complexity and requires some training. Training points include public/private contact, gender awareness, age awareness, frequency and the "needy" youth, awareness of one's own needs, the role of horseplay, etc.
- **Consistent application of authority among youth.** It is human nature to relate more closely to some youth than others. However, it becomes a boundary issue when adults apply their authority inconsistently and some youth receive consideration not available to others.

Media Policy

Advances in technology are enabling new forms of social interaction that may extend beyond the appropriate use of cameras or recording devices. The following policies are meant to ensure the appropriate use of digital media:

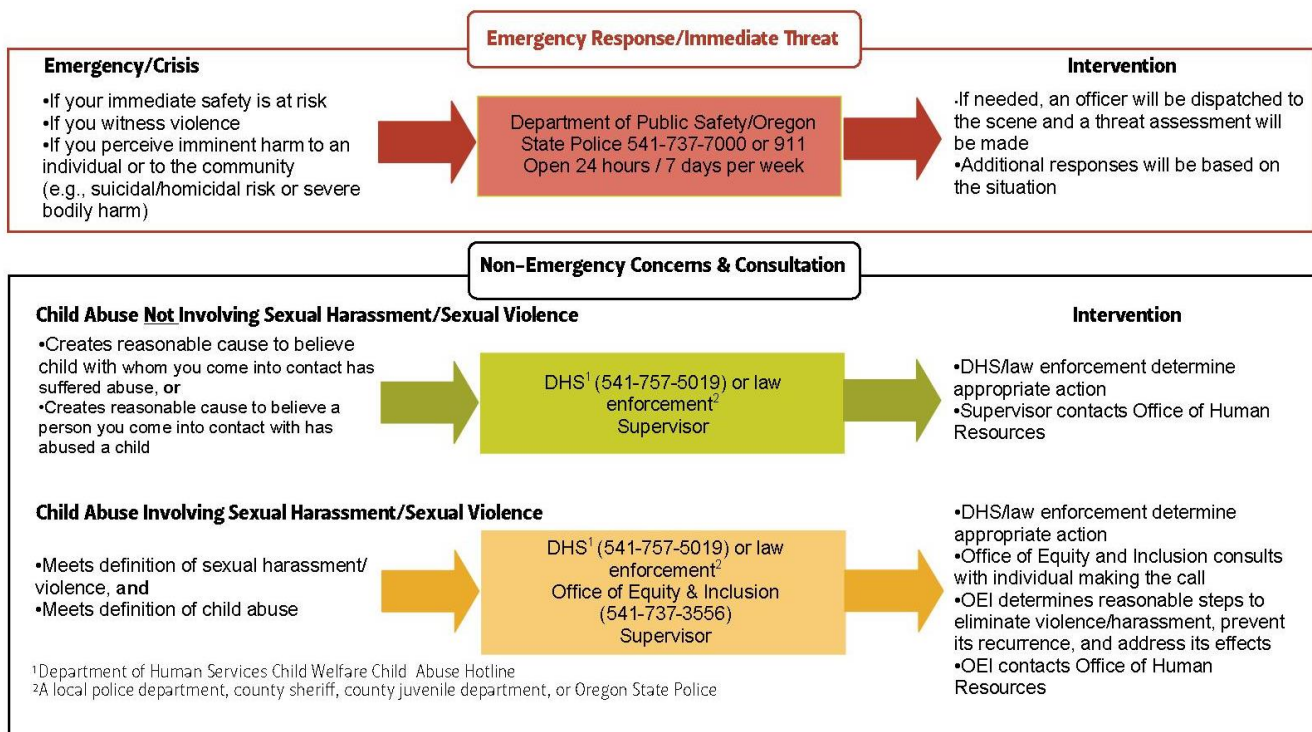
- **Inappropriate use of cameras, imaging, cell phones or digital devices is prohibited.** It is inappropriate to use any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in showers, restrooms, changing rooms or other areas where privacy is expected by participants.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

All OSU Youth Program staff, volunteers and contractors are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This means we are required to report suspected abuse to appropriate agencies immediately upon witnessing or being notified of suspected abuse. For information and training on mandatory reporting, see the Office of Human Resources webpage: <http://oregonstate.edu/admin/hr/policy/child-abuse>

As part of our CoR Principles, timely and diligent reporting of suspected abuse is critical for ensuring safe environments. Trust your instincts; if you see suspected evidence of abuse, report it immediately to your supervisor (Amas Aduviri) and the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Welfare child abuse hotline: 541-757-5019.

Reporting Resources and Responsibilities



Youth Program Scenarios: What would you do in these situations?
Please discuss with your supervisor to plan for appropriate responses.

- 1) One of your students is monopolizing your attention and is clearly developing a crush on you.**
- 2) One of your students is withdrawn and not participating in the activities.**
- 3) You arrive at an activity and two of your students are missing.**
- 4) A student smashes their finger in a door while fooling around.**
- 5) One of your students left her backpack at the last activity and wants to go back and get it.**
- 6) The teacher chaperone for your group does not participate in activities.**
- 7) One of your students constantly wants hugs.**
- 8) One of your students is using foul language and misbehaving and won't stop when you ask them to.**

Volunteer training for low-risk events (Rev 5-26-15)

High school volunteers conducting research in College of Pharmacy labs.

Please read the following policies and procedures, then sign and return the form to [supervisor name].

- 1) Share your enthusiasm! This is your chance to engage future scientists and engineers.
- 2) Model respectful behavior for the participants and other volunteers. If a participant has a behavior issue, notify their teacher/chaperone for disciplinary action.
- 3) In case of accident or emergency:
 - If there is a serious injury or imminent threat, call 911 immediately.
 - Notify Angie Mettie or Patty Beaumont immediately, and they will make an accident report.
- 4) Try to avoid being alone with a participant.
- 5) Avoid physical contact with youth unless necessary for the station activity (for example, helping a student to focus a microscope).

Responding to Suspected Child Abuse

OSU youth program volunteers are required to report suspected child abuse. This includes any assault, physical or mental injury (other than accident), rape, incest, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, maltreatment or subjecting the child to risk of harm to their welfare. If you witness or suspect child abuse:

- 1) Notify your supervisor.
- 2) Call the Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Welfare **child abuse hotline**: 541-757-5019 and/or OSU Department of Public Safety: 541-737-3010.
- 3) If the abuse was sexual in nature, also notify the OSU Office of Equity and Inclusion: 541-737-0868.

Note: registered sex offenders are not allowed to participate in OSU youth programs.

_____ I am NOT a registered sex offender and I am not required to register on any state sex offender list. Misrepresentation on this point is subject to discipline through the Student Conduct and Community Standards Office, which may impose sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion from OSU.

The date of my last criminal background check was _____

I understand that this background check needs to be current every two years.

By signing here, I acknowledge that I understand and will abide by the above policies and procedures.

NAME: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

PHONE: _____ Date _____

Please return form to the Department Chair with a copy to your supervisor.