

Affidavit Regarding Conduct and Contact with Minors

Name _____ Event _____

Guidelines for the Discipline of Minor Youth:

I understand and accept the following:

- Under no circumstances may a staff member hit a child
- Staff may not use abusive, profane, or derogatory language with youth
- Staff need to ask for help
- A staff member who encounters a particularly difficult child will seek the assistance of supervisory or administrative staff (event director or conference outdoor ministries staff person)
- In all dealings with youth, staff should strive to respond to as opposed to react to children

Guidelines for Minor and Staff member Contact:

I understand and accept that when touching youth, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Only on the hand, shoulder, or upper back
- Never against a child's will except in the case of clear and present danger to the child or others.
- Never against a child's discomfort, whether expressed verbally or nonverbal
- In the company of other adults and/or in full view of others
- Never when it would have the effect of over-exciting a child
- Never in a place on a child's body that is normally covered by a swimsuit, unless for a clear medical necessity, and then only be and/or with the supervision of the medical staff, and in the case of a medical emergency when the medical staff is not available, only with the supervision of two other adults if at all possible
- Regarding hugging:
 - Any hugs should be initiated by the youth
 - Staff who feel a youth "needs" a hug may offer a hug and must request and receive the youth's clear permission
 - Hugs should be "half hugs" or "side hugs"; any "full" hugs should be initiated only by the youth, be very brief and in full view of others

Staff Volunteer Responsibility:

I understand and accept that I am a care-taker of children.

I understand that there is a clear power difference between myself and youth (money, mobility, authority, experience, knowledge, different set of rules).

I understand that inappropriate sexual contact with or physical abuse of a youth can have severe emotional and psychological effects on that youth that can last a lifetime. These reactions can be so severe; they can require intensive professional intervention which can be disruptive to the victim's life as well as time consuming and expensive.

I understand that endangering a youth in any way, including inappropriate sexual contact, also puts myself, other volunteers and staff, conference staff, The Minnesota Conference and Pilgrim Point Camp itself at legal risk.

State Laws Pertaining to Child Abuse:

I am aware of the following:

- Definition of a “mandated reporter” and that I, as a residential staff, am included in that definition
- Purpose of the law
- That a report is based on suspicion of abuse, not proven abuse
- Summary of procedure (report immediately to event director and to conference staff person, and together to proper authorities as soon as feasible)
- Possible legal penalties for not reporting
- We cannot promise to keep secrets

Guidelines for Staff:

I understand and accept the following

- There is no “hazing” of youth by other youth or staff
- Youth will not be subjected to “initiation” rites that are abusive in any manner
- During clothing change times, there will either be double coverage by adults or youth will be given as much privacy as possible while I am nearby, within hearing of all conversations
- Younger children should be encouraged to change their own clothes as much as possible
- No youth will be alone with a staff member in their quarters or elsewhere
- Private conversations with youth should be held apart from but within full view of others
- A staff member will, under no circumstances, share a bed or sleeping bag with a youth
- Staff will set limits with children who “cling” or hang on them
- Tickling is unacceptable
- Pillow fights and wrestling matches and the like can become over-exciting in short order and are not to be permitted
- Sleep-outs and group overnights need a minimum of two adult staff, with at least one adult present of the same gender as the youth
- Staff sleeping together during the event is grounds for dismissal
- Romantic lives of staff cannot, under any circumstances, be shared with youth
- Staff should stay in their cabins or rooms and especially not be in other cabins or rooms, after lights out except on specific business
- Staff working with adolescents need to be aware of the tendency for this age to develop hidden or secret romantic fantasies
- Whatever is done with youth should be done in the open, and with company

Other instructions:

I agree to the following:

- To watch for signs of stress in myself and others as a way of maintaining a safe environment at the event
- To help other staff who seem at risk for hurting or abusing youth
- To alert the director or conference staff persons to dangerous or “at-risk” situations between youth and staff
- To ask for more supervision, intervention, or support whenever needed for myself or others
- To seek help myself if I feel at risk for hurting, overexciting, or abusing a youth

Furthermore, I am attesting, by signing below under penalty of perjury, to the fact that I have read over, understand, and accept the rules, guidelines and standards of conduct outlined in this document.

Signed: _____ Date: _____