



Best Practices for Activities Involving Minors

University Operations

The University risk management committee reviews campus activities that may involve minors and develops policy and procedures to minimize the risks to children on campus.

The University risk management committee maintains an inventory of programs and activities involving minors on campus.

The Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Officer is responsible for reviewing and monitoring all programs involving minors on campus.

Any program involving minors on campus may be suspended or terminated for failure to comply with University policies and procedures.

Program Operations

All programs involving minors on campus must identify a program manager on the program registration form.

The Program Manager must:

- Select program staff (both paid and volunteer) with appropriate experience, qualifications and training based upon the age of the participants and the nature of the program.
- Ensure background checks are completed on all Authorized Adults (paid and volunteer) over the age of 18 before working in covered programs.
- Evaluate the ratio of adult program supervisors (18 years of age or older) to program participants. The number of chaperones recommended is determined by age and special needs.
- Attend all trainings coordinated by the Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Office.



- Plan for and require the proper care and supervision of youth participants.
- Develop registration materials that include the details of the programs and requirements for participation.
- Schedule all program and camp activities with no unsupervised or one on one contact with youth. One on one contact with youth is prohibited, except in music programs involving private instruction, clinical programs, or similar programs in which the parent or guardian of the youth has been informed of the one-on-one instruction, been given the option to be present and has given written consent to the one-on-one contact. There must be authorized adults present for all activities in which youth are present.
- Design program and camp elements to minimize escalation of competition into conflict and/or fighting.
- Develop and document a general safety plan and include the plan in staff and participant orientation. For higher-risk activities (water activities, strenuous sports, use of special equipment, etc.) more specific planning and training should be documented.
- Establish procedures for managing the situation if a participant is missing/absent/unaccounted for during program activities (e.g. who should be informed, at what point should security or police authorities be advised, when parents will be advised).
- Develop an incident reporting plan to assure completion of incident reports to document emergencies, medical incidents, and participant misconduct.
- Develop a protocol for staff to have access to contact information for parents or guardians, medical/health information, consent for emergency medical treatment and liability waivers of participants in the event of an emergency—both at and away from the main program area.

Program Orientation

Program managers must provide orientation training for youth program staff and volunteers to include:

- Responsibilities of duties and expectations
- Provide appropriate crisis/emergency responses.
- Discuss inclement weather procedures.



- Provide program and camp leader contact information to be used in event of any medical or emergency incident.
- For other than key staff, provide an orientation on medical and emergency protocols including the names of key staff to contact for any medical or emergency incident.
- Provide orientation on applicable university policies, regulations, and guidelines; and local, state and federal laws concerning health, safety, and public order.
- Confidentiality and University responsibility/liability
- Obligation to report abuse or suspected abuse, neglect, unlawful discrimination and harassment

Youth participants and their parents/guardians must be informed about expectations for conduct and safety.

- Brief participants on standards of conduct and expectations and possible sanctions (e.g., hazing, horseplay, pranks, etc.).
- Provide an overview of applicable university policies
- Discuss inclement weather procedures.
- Inform participants about who to see or contact if they have an emergency (i.e. accident, injury, loss, policy issues, etc.).

Background Checks

All faculty, staff, students, or volunteers must have an approved background check on file prior to:

- Interaction with youth in a public/group setting when University activity is specifically offered for children
- Supervisory responsibilities for youth participants or youth programs
- Involvement in an overnight youth program



- Unsupervised or one-on-one contact with a youth participant
- Interaction involving physical contact (i.e. sports, dance, etc.)
- Performing driving responsibilities for youth programs (which requires a motor vehicle record check prior to picking up keys to the vehicle for use in the program)
- Involvement by anyone for whom state law requires a criminal background check (mandatory reporters such as teachers, medical professionals, etc.)
- All Authorized Adults who are also FSU employees shall not be eligible to participate in a covered program unless they have undergone a satisfactory background check within three (3) calendar years of the start of the covered program. A new employee background check, if completed by FSU within three (3) calendar years of the start of the program, is sufficient for this purpose.
- All Authorized Adults who are not FSU employees, shall not be eligible to participate in a covered program unless they have undergone a satisfactory background check within one (1) calendar year of the start of camp and every three (3) years thereafter.
- All background checks shall have all the following components: (a) Statewide felony and misdemeanor check in all states where the person has resided during the last seven years; (b) Social Security Number trace; and (c) National Sex Offender Registry Check.
- While the Vice Chancellor for Legal, Audit, Risk Management and Compliance has discretion to determine whether a background check report disqualifies an Authorized Adult member, the following types of convictions will normally render an individual ineligible to work or volunteer in a Covered Program:
 - Drug distribution activity or felony drug possession, sexual offenses, including stalking, crimes of violence involving physical injury to another person, child abuse, molestation, child pornography or other crimes involving child endangerment, including neglect and abandonment, murder, kidnapping, and any other crime involving moral turpitude.



Program managers must verify employee/volunteer eligibility to interact with youth programs or camps by contacting Human Resources for a Background Check Request for screening. No employee/volunteer shall begin involvement with the youth program or camp until the Program Director has received approval.

Health and Medical Information

1. Obtain medical health forms to collect participant information regarding special medical considerations (i.e., food allergies, insect stings or bites, allergic reactions, activity restrictions, injuries sustained prior to program participation that might be aggravated or re-injured while participating in program activities, possession or use of prescription medication, allergic reactions to medications).
2. Follow up to ensure that restrictions are appropriately applied (e.g., providing those alternative foods and other preventative measures are taken to avoid exposure when allergies are noted and ensuring that arrangements are made to prevent specific contacts in the case of severe allergies).
3. Establish rules related to securing participants' medical information, medication, scheduling dispensation, refrigeration, or storage needs, and return of the medication to the participants or parents at the end of the session.

Housing

1. When overnight supervision is required, no Authorized Adult may enter a youth's room, bathroom facility, or similar area unless accompanied by an Authorized Adult.
2. Separate accommodations for adults and youths are required other than the youths' parents or guardians.
3. Establish the curfew and communicate to participants; determine process to account for all participants at curfew, lights out, or other pre-determined times in the day or evening.



4. Brief participants on safety provisions specific to the facility in which they are housed (i.e., prohibitions to sitting in windows, on ledges, and railing of high-rise buildings).

Transportation

1. Establish rules for participant transportation to and from the program assembly location at the beginning and end of the program (e.g., parental permissions required for transporting of children to and from the program by non-parent/non-guardian; person(s) to whom small children may be released).
2. Assess transportation needs for participants during program/camp.
 - Review weather conditions prior to and during travel.
 - Arrange for appropriate loading and unloading sites for the buses, vans, and/or cars to avoid participant loading/unloading in or around traffic.
3. When using university vehicles, comply with the following:
 - Drivers must comply with University policy and successfully complete all required vehicle training.
 - Driving responsibilities for youth requires a motor vehicle record check prior to picking up keys to the vehicle for use in the program or camp.
 - Provide orientation on the university motor pool policy and related rules.
4. Personal vehicles must not be used to transport participants youth programs or camps. The University will not reimburse an employee, or other private owner, or their insurer for any deductible or liability claim paid by their personal auto insurance policy, or for any damage to the vehicle.



Behavioral Expectations for Adults Supervising Minors

Minors will be always treated respectfully, regardless of their actions or behavior.

Minors will be treated fairly, regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or any other basis covered by the University's Nondiscrimination Policy.

Adults participating in a campus activity involving minors will not do any of the following in the presence of minors:

- Use profanity
- Tell off-color jokes or banter suggestively
- Discuss personal problems or sexual experiences
- View sexually suggestive materials or make those materials available to minors
- Comment on other peoples' bodies
- Use alcohol or narcotics or offer alcohol or narcotics to minors

Adults participating in a campus activity involving minors will not permit any of the following interactions between minors:

- Bullying
- Hazing
- Derogatory name-calling
- Ridicule or humiliation
- Truth or Dare, or similar games
- Sexual touching

Physical Contact with Minors

The campus understands that physical contact between non-related adults and minors can be essential to the minor's well-being and self-esteem. The following types of contact may be permitted:

- Handshakes
- High-fives and hand slapping
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Side hugs
- Feeding and grooming of babies and toddlers (including diaper changes)



- Holding hands while escorting children below the age of 8
- Other brief contact intended to comfort distressed children below the age 12 so long as another adult is witnessing it
- Teaching a physical technique that literally requires hands-on instruction, such as fingering on a musical instrument or positioning for an athletic activity, so long as it is conducted either in the open or in an interior space (1) with doors and windows open and (2) in a building open to the public at the time of the touching
- Assisting disabled minors who need assistance with a major life function, so long as at least one other person is present and observing
- Any contact to aid an injured minor or a minor in imminent danger of physical harm (such as a struggling swimmer)
- Separating minors involved in an altercation

The following are types of contact that should *not* be permitted:

- Frontal hugs
- Kisses
- Lap sitting
- Massages or rubs
- Piggyback rides
- Tickling
- Touches on the buttocks, chest, or groin (except when changing diapers)
- Wrestling
- Any intended affection unwanted by the minor
- Any touching conducted in private (i.e. no other adults or children present)

Physical or sexual abuse of minors will not be tolerated.

Disciplining Minors

No adult associated with a campus activity involving minors should ever use physical punishment to manage a minor's behavior. This prohibition should extend to, but not be limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, or hitting.



Non-Program Contact with Minors

In-Person Meetings

Employees and volunteers who are part of a campus activity involving minors should not meet in person outside the activity with any individual minor unless another adult who is part of the activity (preferably the employee's or volunteer's supervisor) has been made aware and has approved of the meeting in advance.

Employees and volunteers supervising a campus activity involving minors may meet *groups* of program participants outside the activity provided:

- The employees or volunteers have written permission from the parents/guardians of each minor participating in the outside activity
- The outside activity is held in a public place such as a restaurant, museum, or stadium.

Telephonic and Electronic Communication

Employees and volunteers may communicate through electronic media to *groups* of program participants. However, unless they copy or otherwise include another adult connected to the activity (preferably their supervisor), employees and volunteers participating in a campus activity involving minors should not:

- Send text messages to or respond to text messages from an individual minor involved in the program
- Send emails to or respond to emails from an individual minor involved in the program
- Communicate via the personal page of an individual minor on social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter
- Call an individual minor involved in the program on the telephone

Exceptions should be allowed for employees communicating to individual middle school or high school age minors for business purposes only, provided those employees:

- For emails, use only their uncfsu.edu email address
- For texts and phone calls, use University-owned devices to the greatest extent possible
- Are willing to share records of their communications with minors sent or received via personal devices



Gifts

Adults participating in a campus activity involving minors may give a token gift (under \$25 value) to all minors involved in the activity. However, no adult participating in a campus activity involving minors should be allowed to give an individual minor in the program a gift (regardless of value) without *prior* approval from both:

- The parent or legal guardian of the minor
- The program supervisor