



## Child Protection Policy

### Child Protection

Sunday Friends is committed to providing safe environments conducive for growth and learning. Sunday Friends requires that all staff and volunteers abide by these standards of conduct. Failure to follow the code of conduct may be considered to be misconduct. Consistent with the mission of Sunday Friends, staff and volunteers will act with compassion, honesty, respect, accountability, and integrity.

### Child Protection Policy

1. To protect Sunday Friends staff, volunteers, and program members, at no time in a physical or virtual space of Sunday Friends may a staff member or volunteer be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others (open blinds, unlocked doors, lights on, in view of windows, virtual meeting or breakout rooms). As staff/volunteers supervise children, they should space themselves in such a way that other people can see them.
2. Staff/volunteers in charge of children will follow program requirements for supervision. All children will receive developmentally appropriate supervision.
3. **Restroom supervision:** Staff and volunteers will make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff and/or volunteers will stand in the open doorway of the restroom while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for children and protection for staff /volunteers (not being alone with a child).
  - a. If a child requests assistance going to the bathroom, attempt to locate their parent or guardian.
  - b. If the parent or guardian cannot be located, assist the child with other staff/volunteers. The doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone. Always send children in threes (known as the rule of three), and with staff/volunteers.



4. No type of abuse will be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal and potential reporting to appropriate authorities. Staff and volunteers shall not abuse children in any way, including, but not limited to:
  - a. physical abuse—striking, spanking, shaking, slapping
  - b. emotional abuse—verbal or written: humiliating, degrading, threatening, withholding kindness, bullying, cyber-bullying
  - c. sexual abuse—touching or speaking inappropriately
  - d. neglect—withholding food, water, or basic care
  
5. Staff and volunteers will observe each child upon his or her arrival each time the program meets, being aware of any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, and so on, and of any changes throughout the program time. The concern should be brought to the attention of the Executive Director before addressing the parent or child. Questions or comments will be then addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Staff and volunteers will document any questionable marks or responses.
  
6. Staff and volunteers will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally, regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, economic level of the family, or disability.
  
7. Staff/volunteers are not to transport children in the program in their own vehicles or allow youth participants old enough to drive to transport younger children in the program without branch executive approval.
  
8. Staff and volunteers may not be alone with children they meet in physical and virtual spaces of Sunday Friends. This includes online meetings, babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in cars, and inviting children to their homes. Any exceptions, including prior relationships, require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to prior approval of the Executive Director. Under no circumstances should staff initiate outside contact.
  
9. Staff and volunteers may not initiate contact with minor participants outside of work/volunteer purposes nor shall staff and volunteers accept requests for social networking with minors they meet at Sunday Friends programs or activities. If a member under the age of 18 finds your personal social networking profile and



requests to be linked as a friend, you must respectfully decline. This includes all social network apps/sites. When communicating with minors regarding Sunday Friends' activities, a parent or guardian will always be included in the communications.

10. Sunday Friends staff, volunteers, and all persons and organizations affiliated with Sunday Friends shall not post any pictures or video of minor children in Sunday Friends' programs, activities or spaces of operation, on their own social network pages. Posting pictures or videos of minor children that are taken outside of our programs may also cause concern if they are deemed to be inappropriate or in violation of Sunday Friends' policies or code of conduct.
  - a. Before posting any pictures or video of minor children in Sunday Friends' programs, activities, or spaces of operation, approval must be obtained from Sunday Friends staff to ensure all members represented in the image or video have granted their permission on the Sunday Friends' Photo/Media Release Form.
11. Staff or volunteers should not receive from nor give personal gifts to youth.
12. Staff may not date participants who are under the age of 18.
13. Staff and volunteers will respect children's rights not to be touched or looked at in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Please practice requesting consent for informal greetings, such as a hug. Other than medical emergencies, or in parent approved special needs situations, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit (most of the torso). Refer to the table below for what is deemed as appropriate and inappropriate for physical and verbal interactions as well as electronic communications.



Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Side hugs</li> <li>• Shoulder-to-shoulder hugs</li> <li>• Pats on the shoulder or back</li> <li>• Handshakes</li> <li>• High-fives and hand slapping</li> <li>• Verbal praise</li> <li>• Pats on the head when culturally appropriate</li> <li>• Touching hands, shoulders, and arms</li> <li>• Arms around shoulders</li> <li>• Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-frontal hugs</li> <li>• Kisses</li> <li>• Showing affection in isolated area</li> <li>• Lap sitting</li> <li>• Wrestling</li> <li>• Piggyback/shoulder rides</li> <li>• Tickling</li> <li>• Allowing a youth to cling to an employee's or volunteer's leg</li> <li>• Any type of massage given by or to a youth</li> <li>• Any form of affection that is unwanted by the youth or the staff or volunteer</li> <li>• Compliments relating to physique or body development</li> <li>• Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas</li> </ul>

Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive reinforcement</li> <li>• Appropriate jokes</li> <li>• Encouragement</li> <li>• Praise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name-calling</li> <li>• Inappropriate jokes</li> <li>• Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving youth in the personal problems or issues of staff and volunteers</li> <li>• Secrets</li> <li>• Cursing/profanity</li> <li>• Off-color or sexual jokes</li> <li>• Shaming</li> <li>• Belittling</li> <li>• Derogatory remarks</li> <li>• Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate youth</li> <li>• Derogatory remarks about the youth or his/her family</li> </ul>



Appropriate Electronic Communication	Inappropriate Electronic Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending and replying to emails and text messages from youth ONLY when copying in a supervisor or the youth's parent</li> <li>• Communicating with youth through "organization group pages" on Facebook or other approved public forums</li> <li>• "Private" profiles for staff and volunteers which youth cannot access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating comments</li> <li>• Sexually oriented conversations</li> <li>• Private messages between staff and volunteers with youth</li> <li>• Posting pictures of organization participants on social media sites</li> <li>• Posting inappropriate comments on pictures</li> <li>• "Friending" participants on social networking sites</li> <li>• Taking pictures of participants</li> </ul>

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**By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the Child Protection Policy at Sunday Friends. I will also agree to follow the rules set in the aforementioned policy at all times while volunteering, working, or otherwise engaging with any program hosted by Sunday Friends.**

**Printed Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_