

Programs and Activities with Minor Participants

Program Staff Conduct for Interacting with Minors

Program staff should comply with the following code of conduct when interacting with minors in a University program:

- Do not spend time alone, either on or off campus, with a Minor away from others. If one-on-one interaction is required, meet in open, well-lit rooms or spaces with windows observable by other adults from the Program.
- Do not engage in any sexual actions, make sexual comments, tell sexual jokes, or share or view sexually explicit material with or within the vicinity of Minors.
- Do not touch Minors in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate.
- Do not shower, bathe, or undress with or in the presence of a Minor.
- Do not engage in any abusive conduct of any kind toward, or in the presence of, a Minor, including but not limited to verbal abuse, hitting, punching, poking, or restraining, except as required to protect a Minor or others from harm. All incidents involving such conduct, whether or not required to protect a Minor or others from harm, must be documented and disclosed promptly to the Program Director and the Minor's parent/guardian.
- Be aware of the impact of your words and language on Minors.
- Do not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on duty or when responsible for a Minor's welfare.
- Do not meet with Minors outside of established times for Program activities. Any exceptions require parental authorization and must include more than one adult from the Program.
- Do not engage or converse with Minors through email, text messages, social networking websites, or other forms of social media at any time except and unless there is an educational or programmatic purpose and the content of the communications is consistent with the mission of the Program and the university.
- When transporting Minors in a Program, more than one adult from the Program must be present in the vehicle, except when multiple Minors will be in the vehicle at all times through the transportation. Avoid using personal vehicles if possible.
- Do not tell children "this is just between the two of us" or use similar language that encourages Minors to keep secrets from their parent/guardians.

Source: With permission from the Vanderbilt University Protection of Minors Policy