Presence and Protection of Minors on Campus
The State of Higher Education

• The majority of college students are adults.
• But….most colleges have significant interaction with minors on campus.
• In light of recent scandals, there are concerns of increased legal, moral, and social duties owed to minors on college campuses.
Do you know where the concerns are?

• Unclear “ownership” of events
• Age of the individual/mixed groups
• No participation release/medical release
• Inadequate supervision
• Staff qualifications
• Transportation risks
• Shared space/private space
• Emergency response/missing children
• Legal requirements for reporting abuse and neglect
UofM Way of Protecting Minors
Who is a Minor?

Under Tennessee law a minor is “a person under the age of 18 years.”

(Tenn. Code Ann. § 1-3-105).
University-sponsored Programs and Activities

• A University-sponsored program/activity is any program or activity on University owned or controlled property that the University operates or sponsors and in which University students, faculty or staff engage through their University roles.

• Examples of University-sponsored programs/activities include, but are not limited to, workshops, sport camps, academic camps, conferences, any activity involving an overnight stay including overnight pre-enrollment and recruiting visits/activities, and other similar activities. One-time, short term events such as informational sessions, exhibitions open to the general public, and school-day field trip visits from primary/secondary schools or third-party programs are not included.
University-sponsored Programs and Activities Requirements

• Departments must receive divisional level approval for the program or activity.
• **Everyone** interacting with and supervising minors must have undergone:
  • A criminal background check,
  • A sex offender registry check within three (3) months of the start of the program, and
  • Acknowledge receipt of the guidelines governing participation in such programs.
• Employees must complete the Minors on Campus training in Learning Curve. Volunteers must be provided a copy of the training.
General Rules

All programs or activities on University property must have rules and procedures in place that address the following (if applicable to the program):

- Transportation
- Emergency management plans
- Appropriate supervision of minors
- Appropriate physical contact and communication with minors based on their ages
- Appropriate written forms, ex. permission slips, medical contact information, and liability waivers, volunteer form
- Access to first aid and appropriate medical treatment, as well as rules allowing for only self-administration of any necessary medications.
General Rules

Overnight programs must also have in place the following additional rules:

• Curfews
• Code of conduct for participants
• Substance free housing and facilities
• Residential supervision
General Rules

Programs must ensure appropriate staff-to-participant ratio according to the guidelines of the American Camp Association. For overnight programs, maintain adequate staff-to-participant ratio with one adult of each sex in attendance.

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<th>Ages</th>
<th>Day Camps</th>
<th>Overnight Camps</th>
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Practical Pointers
General Guidelines: General

• University representatives should not accept gifts from a minor or give gifts to a minor without the knowledge of such minor's parent or guardian.

• Never take responsibility for administering medication to a minor. The minor should be able to self-administer the medication.
General Guidelines: Code of Conduct

• Consider having a Code of Conduct which includes such information as:
  • Basic rules of conduct such as prohibitions against abusive/profane language or conduct, bullying, and hazing
  • Appropriate attire
  • Social media and cell phone use
  • Food and beverages
  • Curfews (for overnight programs)
General Guidelines: Physical Interaction

- Show prudent discretion before touching another person, especially a minor - be aware of how physical touch could be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, control, or celebration under the circumstances.

- Under no circumstances should a person be alone with a minor in settings where they and the minor are not directly observable at all times.

- Always make sure to have a two-adult presence during all interactions.

- If you are alone and approached by a camp participant, move quickly to an area where you can be viewed by others.
General Guidelines: Communication

• Communication in any medium that is outside the role of the professional or volunteer relationship (teacher, coach, host, etc.) should be avoided.

• E-mail exchanges between a minor and a University representative should be made using a memphis.edu e-mail address.

• Use of text messaging or any form of social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to communicate with minors should only be done for group conversations directly related to the relevant program, event, or activity.
General Guidelines: Overnight Programs

• Require separate accommodations for adults and participants.
• For co-ed overnight programs, maintain adequate staff-to-participant ratio with one adult of each sex in attendance.
• Ensure adequate separation of shower and bathroom facilities.
• Provide a schedule of different times for youth and adults to shower.
• Respect the privacy of participants, as well as your own, in settings where there is changing of clothing, taking showers, and other areas where privacy is expected.
Guidelines for Working with Minors

• Do:
  • Maintain the highest standards of personal behavior
  • Interact with appropriate praise and positive reinforcement
  • Treat all minors in a group consistently and fairly, and with respect and dignity
  • Be friendly, while maintaining appropriate boundaries
  • Maintain discipline and discourage inappropriate behavior
  • Be aware of how actions and intentions may be perceived
  • Consult with other adult supervisors when you feel uncertain

• Don’t:
  • Don’t spend significant time alone with one minor away from the group
  • Don’t engage in inappropriate touching
  • Don’t use inappropriate language
  • Don’t give personal gifts or do special favors
  • Don’t share information about your private life
  • Don’t strike or hit a minor
  • Don’t relate to minor as if they were peers
  • Don’t date or become romantically involved with a minor
  • Don’t provide drugs or alcohol to minors
Reporting Abuse or Neglect

• Per state law, every member of the University community has a duty to report to University Police Services if he/she has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse or neglect based on:
  • Information shared with him/her by the child or any other individual; or
  • His/her own observations or knowledge.
Definition: Abuse or Neglect

- Non-accidental infliction of physical or mental trauma or injury or failure to protect a child from another person who perpetrated physical abuse on a child

- Sexual abuse or exploitation including penetration or external touching of a child’s intimate parts, oral sex with a child, indecent exposure or any other sexual act performed in a child's presence for sexual gratification, sexual use of a child for prostitution, and the manufacturing of child pornography

- Failure to provide for a child’s physical survival needs to the extent that there is harm or risk of harm to the child’s health or safety

- Psychological harm which is a repeated pattern of caregiver behavior or extreme incident(s) that convey to children that they are worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered, or only valued in meeting another's needs and may include both abusive acts against a child and failure to act.
Signs of Neglect

- Physical signs may include:
  - Poor hygiene
  - Inappropriate or ill-fitting clothes
  - Being left alone or with people unable to provide proper supervision
  - Obvious lack of necessary medical treatment

- Behavioral signs may include:
  - Chronic hunger or sleepiness
  - Delayed language development
  - Clinging behavior or development of indiscriminate attachments
  - Frequent complaints of feeling unwell
  - Frequent tardiness or absence from school
Signs of Physical Abuse

• Physical signs may include:
  • Bruises, welts, or swelling
  • Springs or broken bones
  • Burns
  • Lacerations or abrasions
  • Bite marks
  • Unexplained or repeated injuries

• Behavioral signs may include:
  • Attempts to hide injuries
  • Difficulty sitting or walking
  • Wariness of physical contact with adults
  • Reluctance to go home
  • Depression or self-mutilation
  • Fear of parent(s) or caregiver(s)
Signs of Sexual Abuse

• Physical signs may include:
  • Difficulty walking or sitting
  • Torn, stained, or bloody clothing
  • Genital pain or itching
  • Sexually transmitted diseases
  • Pregnancy

• Behavioral signs may include:
  • Precocious sexual knowledge or behavior
  • Extremes – hostile and aggressive or fearful and withdrawn
  • Self-mutilation
  • Substance abuse
  • Running away
Reporting Abuse or Neglect

• The duty to report is triggered by reasonable suspicion or belief.
  • There is no requirement that there be actual evidence of abuse.
  • No individual should try to investigate the matter for him/herself.
  • Any doubt as to whether or not to report should be resolved in favor of making the report to ensure that the appropriate professionals in child protective services can assess the report and evaluate the safety of the child.

• Contact University Police Services immediately – 901.678.HELP(4357)

• In an emergency or for crimes in progress, call 911 immediately.
Reporting Abuse or Neglect

• Failure to report information related to suspected child abuse as soon as possible to the designated officials may result in discipline up to and including termination for employees and suspension for students.

• Failure to report abuse is a violation of the law and a Class A misdemeanor, carrying a sentence of up to three months imprisonment, a fine or both. Those who report and “act in good faith” are immune from any civil or criminal charges which may result. The reporter has the right to remain confidential and anonymous.
Keep Kids Safe!