



**Working with Minors:
Information for Those Participating in University-
Run or Affiliated Programs or Activities Involving Minors**

The University of Memphis community has a strong interest in how our society cares for children and the most vulnerable among us and wants to do what it can to prevent the victimization of child and adolescent minors and promote their safety. To further this goal, this packet contains important information that individuals must review if they are participating in a University sponsored or affiliated program/activity.

You are receiving this information because you have been identified as someone who is hosting a program for the participation of minors on campus at the University of Memphis, or in a UofM contracted space. This packet includes a few reminders related to policy and “do’s and don’ts” while you are hosting minors at the UofM. Please ensure that you follow all UofM policies while on our campus, and that all participants in your program do the same, which includes the Participation of Minors on Campus Policy: https://www.memphis.edu/eduinitiatives/pdfs/mocpolicy_4_21.pdf.

Key policy reminders include:

- All programs must be registered and reviewed in advance.
- Minors must be supervised at all times while on campus.
- All supervisory ratios must be followed, per the policy.
- All supervisors must have the appropriate background check on file.
- Participants must adhere to the Minors Code of Conduct and all applicable university policies throughout the program.

Additional program resources are available online. Additional program reminders follow.

GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH MINORS

Do:

- Maintain the highest standards of personal behavior at all times when interacting with minors.
- Whenever possible, try to have another adult present when you are working with minors in an unsupervised setting. Conduct necessary one-on-one interactions with minors in a public environment where you can be observed.
- Listen to and interact with minors and provide appropriate praise and positive reinforcement.
- Treat all minors in a group consistently and fairly, and with respect and dignity.
- Be friendly with minors within the context of the formal program or activity while maintaining appropriate boundaries.
- Maintain discipline and discourage inappropriate behavior by minors, consulting with your supervisors if you need help with misbehaving youth.
- Be aware of how your actions and intentions might be perceived and could be misinterpreted.
- Consult with other adult supervisors or colleagues when you feel uncertain about a situation.

Don't:

- Don't spend significant time alone with one minor away from the group or conduct private interactions with minors in enclosed spaces or behind closed doors.
- Don't engage in inappropriate touching or have any physical contact with a minor in private locations.
- Don't use inappropriate language, tell risqué jokes, or make any sexually suggestive comments around minors, even if minors themselves are doing so.
- Don't give personal gifts to, or do special favors for, a minor or do things that may be seen as favoring one minor over others.
- Don't share information with minors about your private life or have informal or purely social contact with minor program participants outside of program activities.
- Don't strike or hit a minor, or use corporal punishment or other punishment involving physical pain or discomfort.
- Don't relate to minors as if they were peers, conduct private correspondence or take on the role of "confidant" (outside of a professional counseling relationship).
- Don't date or become romantically or sexually involved with a minor. Don't show pornography to minors or involve minors in pornographic activities.
- Don't provide alcohol or drugs to minors or use them in presence of minors.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

EVERY PERSON HAS AN OBLIGATION TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE!

Mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect.

Tennessee Code Annotated 37-1-403(i)(1) requires all persons to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. "Any person who has knowledge of or is called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition, shall report such harm immediately if the harm is of such a nature as to reasonably indicated that it has been caused by brutality abuse, or neglect or that, on basis of available information, reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect."

What to do if you suspect that a minor has been abused or neglected or is otherwise unsafe.

If you know, suspect, or receive information indicating that a minor has been abused or neglected, or if you have other concerns about a situation involving the safety of minors, follow the procedures below.

- **Emergencies**

In case of an emergency, immediately call University of Memphis's Police Services emergency number at 901.678.HELP(4357) or 911.

- **All Other Reports of Known or Suspected Abuse or Neglect of Minors**

Anyone participating in a University-run or affiliated program or activity involving minors who knows, suspects, or receives information indicating that a minor has been abused or neglected, or who has other concerns about the safety of minors **MUST** inform University Police Services who will determine appropriate next steps.

- Anyone who knows or suspects abuse or neglect of minors may also notify the Memphis Police Department, Shelby County Sheriff's Office or the Tennessee Child Abuse Hotline at 877-237-0004.

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.

Questions

If you have any questions about your obligations or what you should do in a situation that makes you uncomfortable, contact University Police Services.