

Standards of Behavior for Youth Program Personnel

University of Northern Iowa (Updated February 2024)

Youth Program Personnel taking part in a UNI Youth Program are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the following standards of behavior. These standards have been established to help maintain a supportive, engaging, safe, and meaningful experience for all.

Expectations for Youth Program Personnel:

- **Awareness.** Youth Program Personnel must be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their interactions with Youth, including their responsibilities under UNI Policy 13.21.
- **Appropriate Boundaries.** Youth Program Personnel must maintain appropriate boundaries at all times.
 - Program staff shall not, under any circumstances, engage in any physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse. Nor shall they engage in covert or overt sexual behaviors, including seductive speech, gestures, depictions, or physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses a Youth in any way, or exposes a Youth to such treatment by another individual.
 - Youth Program Personnel must prohibit any and all of the above-stated conduct between or among Youths.
 - Youth Program Personnel shall not tell a Youth to keep secrets from other program personnel, participants, and/or their parent/guardian (e.g., use of language similar to "this is just between the two of us").
 - Youth Program Personnel must not shower, bathe, or undress with or in the presence of Minors. Plan ahead to ensure there are separate accommodations available for adults and minors, and make alternative arrangements, if necessary.
- **Electronic Communication.** Youth Program Personnel must restrict electronic or social media communication with youth to University program-related business purposes, whether conducted through email, text message, social networking websites, internet chat rooms, or any other form of electronic communication. Ensure all electronic communication with Youth is open and transparent, meaning at least three individuals (e.g., a fellow colleague, the minor's parent/guardian, multiple participants, etc.) are included on all communications. Maintain professional boundaries by only using professional and/or programmatic accounts to communicate with minors.
- **Physical Contact.** Youth Program Personnel shall not, under any circumstances, touch Youth in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate or allow inappropriate touching between or among Youth.
- **One-on-One Interactions:** Youth Program Personnel must only engage in one-on-one interactions with a Youth when necessary. Youth Program Personnel must not engage in, nor have the appearance of engaging in inappropriate one-on-one interactions. Youth Program Personnel must not meet with Youth outside of established times for program activities and must not provide transportation for a Youth in any vehicle when no other program staff or participants are in the vehicle, except in the event of an emergency or with written parental consent.
- **Drugs, Alcohol Use, and Other Prohibited Items.** Youth Program Personnel should never, under any circumstances, promote the use of, possess, use, or be under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol in the presence of Youth. Youth Program Personnel must not use any type of weapon or explosive device in the presence of Youth. Youth Program Personnel must never make available illicit drugs, alcohol, weapons, or explosive devices to Youth.
- **Gift Giving.** Youth Program Personnel should never give a gift to an individual Youth without notice to the parent and institution.
- **Reporting.**
 - Suspected child abuse must be reported as outlined in [UNI's Duty to Report Child Abuse Policy](#).
 - [Clery crimes](#) must be reported as outlined in [UNI's Clery Act Compliance Policy 7.08](#).
 - Actual or suspected discrimination or harassment must be reported as outlined in [UNI's Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy 13.02](#).

By signing my offer letter or volunteer agreement, I agree that I, as a Youth Program Personnel of a UNI Youth Program, have read these standards of behavior and agree to accept and follow them. I also accept the consequences if I choose not to follow them.