



Keeping Campers Safe:

GUIDANCE FOR EXTENSION VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for volunteering to be an Adult Advisor/Chaperone for a 4-H camping program! In Wisconsin Administrative Code (ATCP) 78, adults in overnight residential camping programs must receive training on camper sexual abuse prevention. In many of your volunteer trainings, we have covered the elements included in the administrative code. This handout is a reminder of that content and some key points to ensure that campers and volunteers are kept safe.



Key Points:

- If you see something, say something.
- There are many people that can support you if you have questions or concerns.
- We ALL play a role in keeping youth safe in 4-H programs.

Observable & Interruptible:

- Observable & Interruptible means that others can see, hear, or have knowledge of your interactions with youth and can interrupt if a concern arises.
- Rule of Three – there should always be at least three people present (i.e.: one adult and two youth; three youth; or two adults and one youth)
- In case of personal care situations (restrooms, health care), adults should be aware of the length of time youth are out of sight. If you have concerns about safety or the time that youth have been out of sight, consider making verbal contact with them (knock, announce you're at the door) before physically entering the space to check on them.

Respect Privacy of Youth:

- Adults must respect the privacy of youth in changing areas, showers, and other personal care areas, whenever possible. Adults should only enter the space when they are worried about the health or safety of youth.
- Adults in must change and shower privately.

Appropriate Physical Contact with Youth:

- Physical touch is sometimes needed as a teaching tool. Ask youth for permission before touching them.
- If youth look or say they are uncomfortable, stop touching them immediately, unless it is an emergency situation.

Appropriate Supervision for Overnight Programs:

- House youth of different genders separately. Siblings of different genders maybe housed together with parental permission.
- Two authorized adults should conduct room checks together when possible.
- House youth with similar age groups. Siblings of different ages may be housed together with parental permission. Youth who are 18 and over should be housed with other youth who are 18 & over whenever possible.
- Youth must not leave the camp facility unless accompanied by an authorized adult.

Communication (Electronic, Social Media):

- Communications with youth participants should be observable and interruptible.
- Adults should not communicate one-on-one with youth through social media or other electronic channels. Include another adult (parent, staff, or volunteer) or an entire group of youth.
- Do not interact with program participants through personal accounts on social media. Youth participants can follow the program's or activity's public-facing social media accounts.

If You Observe Red Flag or Other Inappropriate Behaviors:

- Interrupt the interaction/behavior.
- Report behaviors of concern to the youth activity director or Extension staff

In Building Safe Spaces and Supporting You, Supporting Youth trainings, you learned about inappropriate behaviors that adults should avoid in Extension programs. For a reminder of this information, visit <https://go.wisc.edu/3873t3> to access the trainings.

Appropriate Interactions for Youth and Adults

Keeping campers safe includes not only their interactions with adults, but also with their peers at camp. Making sure that interactions and behaviors at camp are safe between campers is important.

Youth participants in 4-H programs agree to the Code of Conduct or program-specific behavior expectations. In addition to those agreements, youth participants are prohibited from:

- Actual or threatened violence toward any individual or group, including violence communicated online
- Engaging in sexual activity during youth activities (e.g.: kissing, touching of private areas, or other sexual acts).
- All forms of sexual violence (sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation)
 - Sexual harassment can include verbal, physical, or visual harassment. Examples include: making comments of a sexual nature, mimicking sexual acts, or displaying sexual images on a personal device.

Red Flag Behaviors:

These behaviors are undesirable behaviors that need attention and correction. Red flag behaviors are not necessarily abusive or against the law in singular or infrequent occasions. These can be exhibited by youth or adults.

Missing or ignoring cues about others' personal boundaries	Paying noticeably more attention to one youth participant
Isolating themselves and another person from the group	Insisting on frequent physical touching
Talking about sex, sexual activity, or using sexualized phrases	Relating closely to youth and acting distant among peer-aged adults
Making comments about someone's physical appearance or other traits	Using recording devices in showers, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected.
Engaging in abusive conduct toward, or in the presence of, youth.	Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

Reminder – if you encounter any prohibited or red flag behaviors, interrupt (if possible) and immediately report the incident to the youth program director or an Extension staff person.

