

Diocese of Spokane
Agreement for Youth Volunteers working with Minors*
Protection of Children and Youth

Each Student worker/Youth Volunteer working with minors* in parishes, programs and organizations of the diocese must acknowledge in writing having received and read the following Code of Conduct, and by doing so, agrees to abide by the agreement.

***Minor is anyone who is 2 years or more younger than the Youth Volunteer**

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. These children depend on the community at large to keep them protected and safe. As a student Worker/Youth Volunteer I have a role and responsibility in promoting a healthy and safe environment for children as well as for my peers and the adults of our community.

I pledge in word and example that as a volunteer **I will:**

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, and dignity.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at Church activities.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth.
- Cooperate fully in an investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

As a volunteer **I will not:**

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Bring a weapon, including but not limited to: guns or knives of all kinds including pocket knives, in the proximity of the children and/or youth while volunteering.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or legal drugs that impair my judgment or mental acuity at any time while volunteering.
- Engage in any behaviors with minors that can be misconstrued as sexual in nature, and thus the behaviors that are to be avoided, include but are not limited to:
 - ◆ Inappropriate or lengthy embraces*
 - ◆ Kissing
 - ◆ Touching bottoms, chests, legs or genital areas
 - ◆ Spanking, striking, shaking or slapping
 - ◆ Showing affection while in an isolated location
 - ◆ Wrestling or tickling
 - ◆ Piggy-back rides
 - ◆ Massages including but not limited to: back rubs, neck massage etc.
- Make comments that relate to physical or body development.
- Humiliate, ridicule, bully or degrade anyone.
- Discuss or use vocabulary, recordings, films, games, computer software, internet sites or any other form of interaction or entertainment that I would not use comfortably in the presence of parents.
- Show or discuss sexually explicit or pornographic material
- Single out persons, especially children, for special attention or personal gifts.
- Touch a child or youth or have them touch me, in a sexual or other inappropriate manner
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and or/youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

*When dealing with a child who inadvertently misplaces their hands on me, I will deal with this gently by taking their hands and moving them to a more appropriate spot or just gently hold them while I kneel down to the child's level and continue the discussion at eye level. If a child initiates physical contact, such as a hug, I will limit the response and provide an alternative positive contact such as giving the child a "high five".

I understand that as a volunteer working with children and/or youth, I could be subject to a thorough background check including criminal history. I agree to participate in all training as requested by my supervisor, principal, pastor/or parish administrator. I understand that any action inconsistent with the Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal as a volunteer with children and/or youth.

Youth Volunteer Printed Name:

_____ Date _____

Signature: _____

Parent signature: _____

Developed: November 2009
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