

High Risk Activity Management and Procedures

One-on-One Interactions Between Employees, Volunteers, and Participants

While The Family YMCA does not allow one-on-one interactions under ordinary programming structure, we acknowledge they may occur as part of this organization's programming in unavoidable circumstances or pre-authorized situations. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the organization clearly communicates expectations for employees and volunteers and gives examples of appropriate behavior when one-on-one interactions absolutely need to occur. In those situations where one-on-one interactions are authorized or unavoidable, employees and volunteers should observe the following guidelines to limit the risk of abuse or false allegations of abuse:

- Meet participants in or move to a public place where you are in full view of others.
- Avoid physical affection during one-on-one interactions. If unavoidable, ensure physical and verbal interactions align with this organization's established policies and are limited to the task at hand.
- If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others.
- Inform other employees and volunteers that you are alone with a participant and encourage them to randomly drop in or pass by the interaction.
- To the extent possible, ensure one-on-one interactions occurring behind closed doors are scheduled in advance or are communicated with the supervisor.
- Ensure one-on-one interactions are documented, especially if behind closed doors. Keep documentation of these meetings (such as in shared calendar, case notes, etc.).
- Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

Supervising and Monitoring Bathroom and Shower Procedures

Bathrooms are high risk locations for sexual activity between participants, and adult offenders can use the privacy afforded in bathrooms and during shower time to abuse a participant. Consequently, bathrooms and shower time require close monitoring, and these practices must be carefully managed. Shower time also present increased risk, because participant may be nude or partially nude and participants may engage in horseplay. When supervising bathroom use, adult employees and volunteers should first quickly scan the bathroom before allowing participants to enter to ensure the bathroom is vacant.

For Group Bathroom Breaks:

- Require employees and volunteers to take groups of two or more participants to the bathroom – following the “rule of three” or more.
- If the bathroom only has one stall, only one participant should enter the bathroom while the others wait outside with the employee or volunteer.
- If there are multiple stalls, only send in as many participants as there are stalls available for use.
- Minimize participants of different ages using the bathroom at the same time.
- Require employee to stand outside the bathroom door but remain within earshot.

For single use restrooms:

- Require participants to ask permission to use the bathroom.
- Require all employee to frequently check bathrooms.
- Require all managers and/or on-duty supervisors to frequently check bathrooms and ensure employee are monitoring bathrooms correctly and at the established intervals.

For shower time:

- Only one participant can be in a shower stall at any given time.
- If there are multiple stalls, only send in as many participants as there are stalls.
- Ensure shower doors/curtains do not extend all the way to the ground so employee and volunteers can easily glance into the bathroom to see how many feet are in each shower stall.
- Require employee and volunteers to stand outside the shower area but remain within earshot.
- Prohibit employees and volunteers from using the bathroom at the same time as participants.
- When necessary to assist young participants in the stalls, employees and volunteers will keep the stall door open.
- Participants who require assistance with personal care activities should have this noted within their file and include the level of assistance necessary.
- Employees and volunteers who are authorized to provide assistance with personal care activities need specific training on appropriate diapering and toileting procedures.

Monitoring Locker Rooms and Changing Areas

Locker rooms and changing areas are high-risk locations for sexual activity between participants, and adult offenders can use the privacy afforded in locker rooms to abuse a participant. Consequently, locker rooms require close and regular monitoring, and these practices must be carefully managed. Locker rooms also present increased risk, because participants and adults may be nude or partially nude and participants may engage in horseplay.

Our locker room and changing areas procedures:

- Require employees and volunteers to stand within earshot of locker room when in use by participants.
- Require employees to intermittently & briefly check the locker room so users know the locker room is monitored.
- Encourage employees to provide participants with a strict time limit of how long they can be in the locker room to limit opportunity for inappropriate interactions and activities.
- Discourage the use of locker rooms by participants of different ages at the same time.
- Prohibit the use of locker room horseplay such as towel snapping.
- When possible, arrange lockers to minimize unnecessary privacy.
- Require all employees (including maintenance) and volunteers to also watch for suspicious or inappropriate locker room conduct.

Supervising Playground and Recreational Activities

Playgrounds and recreational activities can allow mixed age groups of participants to have access to one another and create increased opportunities for inappropriate interactions between participants. Employees and volunteers can become distracted by a participant who does not behave properly in less structured situations. They may get involved in conversations with each other or step away to tend to personal business, such as phone calls. Playgrounds may have blind spots or equipment which obstruct supervision.

To reduce risk, procedures for playgrounds and recreational activities require:

- Minimum employee/volunteer to participant ratios, which should mirror other activity ratios and consider: age and number of participants present; special or unique participant needs; type of structures and equipment and the number of distinct activities occurring simultaneously;
- Size and configuration of playground/recreation area, i.e. barriers to supervision, whether physical boundaries like fences exist, geography and location, whether other outside groups will also be present. Definition of specific authorized areas and boundaries, including: if and how outside groups can be cleared from activity areas during programming; if outside groups or mixed ages are using facilities at the same time, delineate boundaries so that different groups do not intermix.
- Specific instructions on how to monitor barriers to supervision (such as storage sheds, playhouses, tunnels, and shrubs): identify in advance any blind spots or equipment that obstruct line of sight supervision and designate them off limits or plan regular walk throughs of those areas; station employees and volunteers near playground equipment such as tunnels and slides in order to reduce the appearance of privacy.
- Employees and volunteers assigned to specific areas to supervise, i.e. zone monitoring: ensures recreation supervisors are adequately spaced around the whole area; they should continuously move within their assigned zone; position them around the perimeter of the recreation area to ensure ample supervision and that children remain in approved spaces.
- Active supervision: o employees and volunteers should position themselves to be able to see and hear all participants to whom they are assigned; anticipate what participants will do and redirect when necessary; listen and notice changes in sound or absence thereof, remain engaged with participants rather than socializing with other employees/volunteers.
- Reviewing boundaries and rules with participants prior to the activity, including that they are to remain in line of sight of employees and volunteers at all times and how to report inappropriate behaviors.
- Specific bathroom procedures to be defined, ensuring there are enough supervisors to maintain ratios at all times.
- Employees and volunteers periodically scan and conduct name to face roll calls for each age group and whenever moving from one activity or space to another.
- Prohibiting employees and volunteers using cell phones for personal business.
- Means of communicating with other recreation supervisors, including inside employees if possible, so they can get assistance when needed without exceeding ratios.
- An emergency plan for responding to incidents.
- Supervisors conduct periodic check-ins and assessments of the activity period and of the entire activity area.

Transportation Activities and Transporting Participants

General guidelines:

- Require written parent/guardian permission from all participants on the trip. Employees take these permission forms and medical releases with them on the trip.
- Supervisors should provide advance approval for any long-distance or overnight trips.
- Use the “rule of three” when transporting participants: At least two employees must transport a single participant, or at least two participants must be present if transported by a single employee.
- Require employees to have a list of the participants on the trip. The employees take roll when boarding the bus, when leaving the bus, periodically throughout the trip, and then again when boarding the bus.
- Specify employee-to-participant ratios. When possible, do not count the driver in the supervision ratio.
- Employees will sit in seats that permit maximum supervision. Employees should not share seats with participants.
- Consider structures around seating assignments such as age, staff separation, and gender. Discourage mixed age groups or developmental levels from sitting together. When possible, high-risk participants are seated by themselves or in close proximity to an employee.
- Prohibit drivers from making unauthorized stops.
- Participants may not be brought to the employee’s home or the home of any employee’s family member.
- Where applicable, require employees to document the beginning and ending time of the trip and the mileage, names of the participants being transported, other employees and volunteers who are involved in transportation, purpose of the transportation, and the destination.
- Require documentation of any unusual occurrences.

When public transportation is used (in addition to the transportation procedures listed above):

- Participants should remain in one area of the bus/train, if possible.
- Employees and volunteers that are assigned to a group should remain with that group.
- When transporting participants overnight, employees must remain awake.

When transporting participants in employee personal vehicles (in addition to procedures listed above):

- Employees must notify supervisors of all transportation activities.
- Employees must follow established organization policies on physical interactions with participants while in vehicles.
- When possible, employees should avoid engaging in sensitive conversations with participants.

Transition and Free Times for Employees and Volunteers

Transition time and free times can be the busiest part of programming at an organization. Participants rely on the practical supervision techniques of employees and volunteers to help keep participants safe as they move around. Below are sample procedures organizations can implement in their programs to ensure safeguarding is always at the forefront.

Transition time and free time procedures:

- Require participants to remain in line of sight of employees and volunteers at all times.
- Specify the employee-to-participant ratio.
- Specify narrow authorized areas in the program areas.
- Ensure that all employees and volunteers are assigned specific areas or groups to supervise (“zone monitoring”).
- Follow established organization bathroom policies and procedures.
- Require periodic attendance checks for each age group.
- Require supervisors to conduct periodic check-ins and sweeps of the entire activity area.
- Allow use of a cell phone or two-way radio as an alternative form of communication to be used during an emergency.

I understand the above list of procedures is to be adhered to in the different areas of high risk activities.

Employee Signature

Date

18, parent/guardian signature

Date

If under