

Writing a Child Protection Policy

Using a written Child Protection Policy is part of a broader program to reduce the likelihood of child sexual abuse incidents in your organization including:

- Written Child Protection Policy.
- Thorough screening of all staff and volunteers.
- Camp**Safe** training in sexual abuse prevention for anyone with access to children.
- National and state fingerprint background checks of existing and prospective employees, volunteers and staff members.

The following is a **sample** Child Protection Policy. Your organization should review it and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization's unique needs.

***Disclaimer:** KidSafe Foundation provides this sample guideline solely as a courtesy. By using this guideline, you agree that KidSafe Foundation will not be responsible for the completeness, reliability or quality of this information and that you should make whatever investigation you feel is necessary or appropriate before adopting a Child Protection Policy. You acknowledge that KidSafe Foundation does not recommend, endorse, sponsor, warrant, guarantee or otherwise support or promote any Child Protection Policy that you may choose to adopt. You also agree that KidSafe Foundation will not be responsible or liable for any loss or damage of any sort incurred as the result of your having received this information or your decision to adopt, or to not adopt, a Child Protection Policy.*

SAMPLE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY*

Child Protection Policy of [Name of Camp]

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to prevent the occurrence of child sexual abuse at [Name of Camp]. The following policy and procedures are hereby adopted to foster the protection of children, youth, staff employees, and volunteers.

Statement: This organization prohibits, and has ZERO TOLERANCE for, any child sexual abuse.

[Name of Camp] prohibits, and does not tolerate, child sexual abuse or any sexual misconduct in the workplace, during any camp-related activity, as well as during non-working hours.

[Name of Camp] provides reporting procedures for staff, volunteers, board members, clients, and victims of sexual abuse or misconduct to report such acts.

Any person associated with [Name of Camp] who violates this policy will be discharged, reported to the proper authorities, and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

* Our main source for this Sample Policy was the Glatfelter Healthcare PracticeSM, "Sexual Abuse & Misconduct - Protection of Minors/Youth".

Writing a Child Protection Policy

[Name of Camp] is a **mandatory reporter** of the crimes of child sexual abuse, molestation, and sexual misconduct. As mandatory reporters, any person associated with this organization who fails to report such crimes will be discharged, reported to the proper authority, and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Definitions and Examples

The following definitions or examples of sexual abuse, or misconduct may apply to any and / or all of the following persons – children, youth, camp staff, volunteers or third-party vendors.

Sexual abuse or misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- Child sexual abuse – any sexual activity, involvement, or attempt of sexual contact with a person who is a minor (under 18 years old). There is no such thing as consent from a camper.
- Sexual activity with another who is legally incompetent or otherwise unable to give consent.
- Physical assaults or violence, such as rape, sexual battery, abuse, molestation or any attempt to commit such acts.
- Unwanted and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, brushing, tickling, and / or massaging someone’s neck or shoulders.
- Material such as pornographic or sexually explicit images, posters, calendars, or objects.
- Unwelcome and inappropriate sexual activities, advances, comments, innuendoes, bullying, jokes, gestures, electronic communications or messages (e.g. email, text, social media, voicemail), exploitation, exposure, leering, stalking or invasion of sexual privacy towards campers or other staff.
- A sexually hostile environment characterized as comments or conduct that unreasonably interferes with one’s work performance or ability to do one’s job or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Tip: While not discussed in this document, your organization should develop and communicate a policy on sexual harassment between people who work at your camp. There are many free sources and sample policies online when you search for “Suggested language for policy on sexual harassment.”

- Direct or implied threats that submission to sexual advances will be a condition of participation in camp activities or continued employment or affiliation with the camp.

Reporting Procedure

Any staff member, volunteers, board members, clients and victims of child sexual abuse or misconduct must immediately report any suspicion of child sexual abuse or misconduct to a member of the camp’s Child Protection Team. It is not required to directly confront the person who is the source of the report, question or complaint before notifying any of the members of the Child Protection Team.

Similarly, any staff member, volunteers, board members, clients and victims of sexual abuse or misconduct must immediately report circumstances creating a sexually hostile work environment to one's supervisor or to a member of the [Name of Camp] senior staff. The Senior Staff includes the Director or one of the people reporting directly to the Director.

[Name of Camp] will take every reasonable measure to ensure that those named in complaint of misconduct, or are too closely associated with those involved in the complaint, will not be part of the investigative team.

Tip: Your organization should develop and write a specific step by step reporting procedure including immediate steps to take to ensure the child's safety, a list of designated staff to include in crisis intervention, and listing hotline numbers for your area.

Anti-Retaliation and False Allegations

[Name of Camp] prohibits retaliation made against any staff employee, volunteer, board member or other person who lodges a good faith complaint of child sexual abuse or misconduct or who participates in any related investigation. Knowingly making false or malicious accusations of child sexual abuse or misconduct can have serious consequences for those who are wrongly accused. [Name of Camp] prohibits making false or malicious sexual misconduct allegations, as well as deliberately providing false information during an investigation. Anyone who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination of employment and criminal prosecution.

Actual and Perceived Actions

Anyone who works with children is potentially vulnerable to allegations or charges of sexual or physical abuse. In order to protect the safety of all campers, and to protect one's self from allegations of abuse, staff members, volunteers, board members, and clients should be aware of not only how they act but also how people may perceive those actions.

The following acts or omissions are violations of this Child Protection Policy and will not be tolerated or accepted under any circumstances. Should any of these actions be observed at any time, they should be reported to the appropriate person immediately.

- 1) Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of, or in association with, a minor.
- 2) Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a minor.
- 3) Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor
- 4) Infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor.
- 5) Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to the activities of the program.

- 6) Mental or emotional injury to a minor.
- 7) The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any time.
- 8) The presence, possession, or being under the influence of, any illegal or illicit drugs.
- 9) The consumption of, or being under the influence of, illegal or illicit drugs or alcohol while on site or leading or participating in any program activity.

Investigation and Follow-up

[Name of Camp] will take all allegations of child sexual abuse seriously and will promptly, thoroughly and professionally respond.

[Name of Camp] will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or other regulatory / protective services agencies. [Name of Camp] will make every reasonable effort to keep the matters involved in the allegation as confidential as possible while still allowing for a prompt and thorough investigation.

Reporting to Law Enforcement or Appropriate Child Protective Services

[Name of Camp] is committed to following the state and federal legal requirements for reporting allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse or misconduct to appropriate law enforcement and child protective services organizations. It is the policy of [Name of Camp] not to attempt to investigate or assess the validity or credibility of an allegation of sexual or physical abuse as a condition before reporting the allegation to proper law enforcement authorities or protective services organizations.

Screening

As part of its child sexual abuse prevention program, [Name of Camp] is committed to maintaining a diligent screening program for prospective and existing employees, volunteers and others that may have interaction with children and youth associating with, or serviced by, [Name of Camp]. The camp may utilize a variety of methods of screening and selection, including, but not limited to, applications, personal interviews, criminal background checks and personal and professional references.

Supervision of Youth

To provide a safe environment for minors, [Name of Camp] strives to have a minimum of two adult staff members supervise, or be in attendance with, minors during camp-related activities. The purpose is to avoid one-on-one interactions between adults and minors that are not easily observable by others.

Acknowledgement Form: Child Protection Policy

I _____ (name) acknowledge that I received and read the Child Protection Policy and / or had it explained to me. I understand that it is my responsibility to

Writing a Child Protection Policy

abide by all rules contained in the policy. I also understand how to report incidents of sexual abuse or misconduct as set forth in the policy, including prohibitions concerning retaliation against any employee or volunteer exercising his or her rights under the policy. I acknowledge that I will be alerted when changes and updates are made to the Child Protection Policy and will be responsible for reading and complying with these updates.

I further acknowledge that I have taken, and passed, the Camp**Safe** Training for sexual abuse prevention.

_____	_____	_____
Camp Staff Printed Name	Camp Staff Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Witness Printed Name	Witness Signature	Date

*Provided by Camp**Safe** based on work by the following:*

- ♥ The American Camp Association – www.acacamps.org.
- ♥ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures” – <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventingchildsexualabuse-a.pdf>.
- ♥ RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) – www.rainn.org.
- ♥ Glatfelter Healthcare PracticeSM, “Sexual Abuse & Misconduct - Protection of Minors/Youth” – <https://www.glatfelterhealthcarepractice.com/Portals/1/abuse-prevention/Sexual-Abuse-and-Misconduct-GHP.pdf>.
- ♥ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Child Welfare Information Gateway, “Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect” – <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/manda.pdf>.