ACS YOUTH INTERACTION GUIDELINES

In addition to adhering to the ACS Volunteer and Participant Code of Conduct Policy, volunteers interacting with minors are expected to have the knowledge and skills to keep youth safe and minimize the risk of potential abuse or harm.

As a general matter, ACS expects the following minimum guidelines to be observed at all ACS Youth Events.

Note: State and local laws & regulations may require adherence to additional guidelines depending on the location of the ACS Youth Event.

DOs:
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from minors.
- Avoid being entirely alone with a minor; whenever possible, have another adult present when you are in the presence of minors in an unsupervised setting or, if not possible, ensure the space is open and accessible to others (e.g., keep your office door open when meeting).
- Be aware of how your actions and intentions might be perceived or interpreted.
- Listen and speak with minors respectfully and provide appropriate praise and positive reinforcement.
- Be friendly with minors within the context of the program or activity while maintaining appropriate boundaries.
- Treat all minors, regardless of characteristics including but not limited to age, background, culture, gender, race, religion, or ability with respect and dignity.
- Consult with the host or organizers of the ACS Youth Event when uncertain about any situation involving minors.
- Immediately report any emergencies involving a minor.
- Immediately report any known or suspected abuse or neglect of a minor.

DON’Ts:
- Don’t get drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behavior or conversations with minors.
- Don’t distribute or administer any medication of any kind unless trained and/or specifically authorized to do so.
- Don’t use profanity, inappropriate gestures, or share inappropriate material or content with minors.
- Don’t exchange personal contact information with minors or contact them without express consent from their parent/guardian, including social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.)
- Don’t give personal gifts to, or do special favors for, a minor or do things that may be seen as favoring one minor over others.
- Don’t ever become romantically involved with a minor.
- Don’t touch minors in a manner that a reasonable person could interpret as inappropriate.
- Don’t strike, hit, or use any punishment towards a minor involving physical pain or discomfort.
• Don’t be alone with a minor in unmonitored places, especially bathrooms and locker rooms.
• Don’t engage in any sort of action or conduct that is sexually suggestive.
• Don’t transport a child in a vehicle without prior written consent from a parent/guardian.
• Don’t use, provide, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of youth.
• Don’t take pictures of minors and/or post them on any social media without consent from a parent/guardian.

Effective September 2024