

Standards To Protect Children & Prevent Abuse

It is expected that West Virginia University faculty, staff, students, volunteers and all Members of the University Community will exhibit exemplary behavior always. This is even more important when interacting with non-enrolled minors (under 18 years of age) who are using West Virginia University facilities or involved with West Virginia University programs, activities, or events. The conduct with minors list below denotes specific expectations to govern behavior for faculty, staff, students, volunteers and all Members of the University Community.

General Safety

1. **Rule of 3 (Two Deep Leadership):** At least two unrelated adults who have had the appropriate background check should be with youth at any given time. Care should be taken to avoid or minimize any situation from happening in which individual minors are alone with a single adult. This rule includes all transportation to/from activities, accompanying a child to the bathroom, and giving a minor a ride home.
2. **One-on-One Meetings:** with a child or young person are best held in a public area, ensure that it is in a place where you can be seen by several individuals. Never place yourself in the situation where you are alone with a child and there is no one else around to witness your interaction with the youth. Meet in open, well illuminated spaces or rooms with windows observable by other adults from the program—unless the one-on-one interaction is expressly authorized by the program director, dean, or department chairperson or is being undertaken by a health care provider.
 - Abuse typically occurs in locations that are more private and out of sight such as locker rooms, bathrooms, shower areas, dormitory rooms, and classroom spaces after hours.

The Greater the Visibility, The Lower the Risk

1. Minors will be treated with respect always.
2. Minors will be treated fairly regardless of race, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation or gender expression.
3. Appropriate speech and language will be used around minors at all times.
4. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers will not discuss their sexual encounters with or around minors or in any way involve minors in their personal problems or issues.
5. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers will not date or become romantically involved with minors.

6. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers will not use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of minors.
7. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers will not have sexually oriented materials, including printed or Internet pornography, in the presence of minors.
8. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers will not have “secrets” with minors.
9. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers will dress appropriate attire.
10. Programs and activities involving minors on or off campus should be held, where feasible in open and well-illuminated areas that are easy to access and monitor.
11. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers will not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with minors.
12. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers shall not abuse minors in anyway including the following:
 - 12.1. *Physical abuse:* hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, unnecessary restraints
 - 12.2. *Verbal abuse:* degrade, threaten, cursing
 - 12.3. *Sexual abuse:* inappropriate touch, exposing oneself, sexually oriented conversations
 - 12.4. *Mental abuse:* shaming, humiliation, cruelty
 - 12.5. *Neglect:* withholding food, water or shelterOr any other abusive means not listed above.
13. Program participants are prohibited from engaging in the following:
 - 13.1. Hazing
 - 13.2. Bullying
 - 13.3. Derogatory name-calling
 - 13.4. Games of “truth or dare”
 - 13.5. Ridicule or humiliation
14. All Members of the University will report concerns or complaints about other staff, volunteers, adults, and minors in accordance with West Virginia University, Board of Governors Rule 1.7 Child Protection.