Kiwanis

# YOUTH PROTECTION GUIDELINES (updated October 2014)

*All adults working with youth under the age of 18 at any Kiwanis event are expected to read/understand, agree to, and abide by these guidelines.*

**Education:** Every Kiwanis club is expected to inform and educate its members on these guidelines, best practices, and inform them to do when they become aware of youth in potentially harmful situations. Every member must be provided a copy of these guidelines and receive educational training annually.

Every Kiwanis district is expected to provide an educational forum or workshop at every district-produced convention and conference on guidelines and best practices for adults working with youth, using materials provided by Kiwanis International.

**Chaperone:** A chaperone is defined as a Kiwanis member, faculty member, parent, legal guardian, or person who is in loco parentis, twenty-one (21) years of age or older, that has been approved by the school or agency and registered with the school or agency to accompany the youth members at the specific event.

**Criminal History Background Checks:** Criminal history background checks may be required for all adults working with youth. If conducted the background check should conform to applicable local and state/provincial laws and requirements. In the absence of any other requirement to do so, Kiwanis clubs are required to have a clear background check, by any provider, of any member serving as advisor to any Service Leadership Program club, program or activity. Kiwanis International's criteria shall be followed to determine if the background check is considered 'clear'. Approved background checks shall be valid for no more than ten years. Clubs are strongly encouraged to ensure confidential background checks for all adults who will be working directly with youth outside of the school or who may not have undergone a background check.

Kiwanis International requires clear background checks conducted by its provider for all adults working with youth at all Kiwanis International-sponsored events. These include the Key Club International Convention, the Key Club Governor and Administrator training conference, and the Key Club International Leadership Conference, and any Key Leader weekend. A district may also require background checks for other adults working with youth as part of district programs or events. (See Kiwanis International Policy B and Procedure 197 for complete information regarding criminal history background checks.)

**Overnight Stays:** While attending a Kiwanis event that requires overnight stay in a hotel or camp/conference setting, adult chaperoning must include no fewer than one adult male for each ten or part of ten youth males, and one adult female for each ten or part of ten youth females. Except for a parent sharing a sleeping room or other sleeping quarter (e.g., tent) with his/her own child, no adult should share a hotel or dormitory sleeping room or other sleeping quarter with a youth. In the event that sleeping quarters consist of multiple beds, such as a bunkhouse or camp cabin, adults may share the sleeping quarters with youth members of the same gender, provided that two or more adults are present.

**Transportation:** Adults transporting youth in a vehicle should do so with a second adult in the vehicle. If a second adult is not available the "rule of threes' is recommended: at least three people in the car at all times. All transportation decisions should be made in accordance with local laws and school policies.

*These policies can be found in Kiwanis International Policies and Procedures as Procedure 432.*

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**Medications:** The possession of prescription and non prescription medications by youth at a Kiwanis event should be permitted only by the written permission of the parent/guardian.

**Use of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco:** While attending any Kiwanis event that is produced primarily by or for the benefit of youth, adults are expected to refrain from consumption of alcoholic beverages and/or use of tobacco products during any portion of the event.

**Reporting:** If a Kiwanian observes troubling behavior involving a youth at a Kiwanis event or becomes aware of a situation that is illegal or potentially unsafe for a young person at a Kiwanis event, he or she must immediately contact the appropriate personnel at the event as well as provide notification to law enforcement personnel as appropriate. If the Kiwanian becomes aware of the troubling behavior after the event, he/she must contact leaders of the event and provide notification to law enforcement personnel as appropriate. All local, state, provincial and federal laws regarding reporting must be followed.

**Personal Information:** All documents bearing personal information of any youth attending a Kiwanis event, including registration forms, medical information forms, permission to treat forms, etc. should be treated as confidential. Processes that protect this information must be created, including minimizing the number of people who have access to any such documents. The documents shall be maintained a minimum of three years or longer as may be required by applicable state/provincial laws and regulations. After the maintenance period has expired, the documents shall be destroyed in a way that maintains confidentiality, such as shredding. The disposal and destruction of all confidential information shall conform to applicable state/provincial laws and regulations.

**Youth and Social Media:** For any social networking site that involves requesting a connection (such as inviting someone to be a friend on Facebook), adults should never initiate such connections with youth. If a youth requests such a connection from a Kiwanian, he/she should use their best judgment in responding. Adults should treat their interaction with youth on social networking sites as though the interaction were occurring in public, in front of other adults and young people. In other words, if it would not be appropriate to say something to a young person in public, it should not be said as a comment on a social networking site either. Kiwanians should refrain from interactions that can be seen as excessive (such as constantly "liking" or commenting on a person's posts on Facebook). Prior to posting any media online, such as photographs, obtain permission from any and all individuals (or parents for minors) that appear in that media; it could be illegal to do otherwise. (See Kiwanis International Policy B for complete social media guidelines.)

**Behavioral or Health Issues:** Kiwanians are often seen by a young person as an adult to trust with personal and/or sensitive information. Kiwanians should refrain from counseling youth and should instead find, or assist the young person in finding, appropriate expert assistance.

**Conflicts with Other Rules:** Whenever these guidelines conflict with local school policies or rules, or local state/provincial, or national laws or regulations, the highest applicable standards for conduct shall prevail.

*These policies can be found in Kiwanis International Policies and Procedures as Procedure 432.*