

Appendix 11

Volunteer Code of Conduct

This Volunteer Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for all volunteers serving in The Foursquare Church's children and youth ministry programs, as detailed in the 2025 Child and Youth Protection Manual (CYPM). Volunteers must adhere to these standards to ensure a safe, nurturing, and God-honoring environment for minors, protect themselves from false accusations, and uphold the church's commitment to child safety (1 Thessalonians 5:23). All volunteers must read, sign, and follow this code, as required by Section 1.2 of the CYPM.

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Commitment to Safety:

As a volunteer, I commit to protecting the spirit, soul, and body of every minor in The Foursquare Church's care, fostering their spiritual, emotional, and physical health, and releasing them into God's calling for their lives.

General Expectations:

1. **Respect and Dignity:** I will treat all minors with respect, dignity, and Christ-like love, avoiding any behavior that could be perceived as harsh, threatening, or demeaning (Section 1.2.B).
2. **Zero Tolerance for Abuse:** I understand that abuse of any kind (physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect) is prohibited and will result in immediate dismissal and reporting to authorities (Section 1.2.A).
3. **Compliance with Policies:** I will adhere to all CYPM policies, including screening, supervision, and reporting procedures, as outlined in Sections 1 and 2.
4. **Accountability:** I will report any concerns about inappropriate behavior or policy violations by minors, other volunteers, or staff to my ministry leader immediately (Section 1.5).

Physical Interactions (Section 1.2.B.1):

5. **Appropriate Contact:** I will use only approved physical interactions, such as side hugs, handshakes, or high-fives, ensuring all contact is age-appropriate, initiated by the minor when possible, and observable by others.
6. **Prohibited Contact:** I will avoid inappropriate physical interactions, including full-frontal hugs, kisses (except culturally appropriate cheek kisses), tickling, lap-sitting (for minors over 3), or touching private areas (except for authorized personal care, e.g., diaper changing).
7. **Restraint:** I will use physical restraint only in emergencies to prevent harm, applying the minimal force necessary and reporting the incident to my ministry leader (Section 1.2.B.1).

Verbal Interactions (Section 1.2.B.2):

8. **Encouraging Communication:** I will use positive, strength-based language, offering praise, encouragement, and scriptural guidance.

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9. Prohibited Communication: I will not engage in name-calling, cursing, shaming, or sexually oriented conversations (except in approved, age-appropriate group settings with parental notice). I will avoid discussing my personal issues or commenting on minors' bodies.

Electronic Communications (Section 1.2.C):

10. Supervised Platforms: I will use only approved, public ministry platforms (e.g., GroupMe, Remind) for communication with minors, avoiding private messages unless in emergencies (e.g., locating a minor).
11. Parental Consent: I will obtain parental permission before posting photos of minors or engaging in electronic communication, respecting any parental requests to discontinue contact.
12. Professional Tone: I will keep all electronic communications professional, programmatic, and within designated "office hours."

Supervision and Monitoring (Section 1.3):

13. Two-Adult Rule: I will ensure at least two fully screened adults are present with minors at all times, avoiding one-on-one interactions unless observable and interruptible (Section 1.2.B).
14. Ratios: I will maintain required adult-to-minor ratios (e.g., 1:4 for toddlers, 1:20 for youth) and understand that junior helpers do not count toward these ratios (Section 1.3.A).
15. High-Risk Areas: I will actively monitor high-risk areas (e.g., restrooms, playgrounds) using line-of-sight supervision and zone monitoring to prevent inappropriate behavior (Section 1.3.C).

Reporting Responsibilities (Section 1.5):

16. Immediate Reporting: I will report any suspected or disclosed abuse, significant policy violations, or concerning behaviors (e.g., bullying, sexualized behavior) to my ministry leader immediately, following CYPM protocols (Section 1.5.D).
17. No Investigations: I will not attempt to investigate abuse allegations but will ensure the minor's safety and report to authorities if required by law.
18. Confidentiality: I will maintain confidentiality, sharing information only with my ministry leader, authorities, or Foursquare's legal team (213-989-4210) as needed.

Additional Guidelines:

19. Substance Use: I will not use or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco products in the presence of minors, nor provide such substances to minors (Section 1.2).

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20. Outside Interactions: I will avoid interactions with minors outside ministry programs unless approved by parents and my ministry leader, ensuring they occur in public, observable settings (Section 1.2).
21. Training Compliance: I will complete Foursquare's Child and Youth Protection Training by Praesidium and participate in ongoing training as required (Section 1.4).

Acknowledgment:

I have read and understand the Volunteer Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its standards. I acknowledge that failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from volunteer service. I commit to protecting minors and upholding The Foursquare Church's mission to create safe, nurturing environments.

Volunteer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Ministry Leader Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Notes for Use:

- *This form should be signed by all volunteers upon acceptance and retained in their confidential file at the local church.*
- *The code is designed to be distributed alongside training materials available at <https://Foursquare.church/CYPM>*
- *For additional guidance, refer to the CYPM or contact Foursquare's legal team at (213) 989-4210.*