

# Kiwanis®

## YOUTH PROTECTION GUIDELINES (effective October 2016)

*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 educate its members on the Kiwanis Youth Protection Guidelines. Each year, a club should provide members with a copy of the Guidelines with educational training—informed them of the highest standards of conduct and awareness.

In addition, every Kiwanis district is expected to help inform and educate. During every district-produced convention and conference, the district is expected to provide an educational forum or workshop regarding the Guidelines and best practices for adults who work with youth. Districts should use materials provided by Kiwanis International.

Every member should attend a training annually—whether offered by the club or district, or via the online tool.

**Chaperone:** A chaperone is defined as a Kiwanis member, faculty member, parent, legal guardian, or person who is *in loco parentis* (in the place of a parent), 21 years of age or older, who 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:** Kiwanis clubs are required to have a clear criminal history background check—conducted and verified by Kiwanis International—of any member serving as a Kiwanis advisor to any Service Leadership Program club (Aktion Club, Circle K, Key Club, Builders Club and K-Kids). Kiwanis International's criteria shall be followed to determine whether the background check is considered 'clear.' Background checks shall be valid for no more than two years. SLP clubs that petition to charter will only be approved once the appointed Kiwanis advisor has a clear criminal history background check conducted by Kiwanis International. Clubs are strongly encouraged to ensure confidential background checks for all adults who will work directly with youth outside of the school and/or who may not have undergone a background check. The criminal history background check should conform to applicable local and state/provincial laws and requirements.

Kiwanis International requires clear criminal history 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, the Key Club International Leadership Conference, and any Key Leader weekend.

All district chairpersons and committee members for all Service Leadership Programs are required to have a clear criminal history background check conducted by Kiwanis International. A district may also require criminal history 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 10 or part of 10 youth males, and one adult female for each 10 or part of 10 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

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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:** When transporting youth, the best practice is having three people in the car at all times with documented approval from the parent or guardian for the transportation arrangements. When both of these conditions cannot be met, one of them should be. All transportation decisions should be made in accordance with local laws and school policies.

### **Use of Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco, Marijuana, and Other Substances**

While attending any Kiwanis event that is produced primarily by or for the benefit of youth, adults are expected to refrain from using or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and/or marijuana products, even if prescribed for medicinal use. In addition, the use and/or possession of illegal drugs or the improper/illegal use of legal drugs is prohibited.

**Medications:** The possession of prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medications by youth at a Kiwanis event should be permitted only with the written permission of the parent/guardian.

**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 and 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 for 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) who appear in those media; it could be illegal to do otherwise. (See Kiwanis International Policy B for complete social media guidelines.)

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**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.