

Policy Regarding Minors on Campus

North Park University is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children who participate in University Programs sponsored by the University or programs run by outside organizations on the campus of North Park. This policy affirms that commitment by setting forth screening, training and conduct requirements for faculty, academic or athletic appointees, staff, student employees, volunteers and others who staff University programs that serve children. Under this policy a “child” or “minor” is any person under the age of 18.

I. Reporting of known or Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

All University faculty, staff, student employees and volunteers are “mandatory reporters” under Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. The University requires all mandated reporters to immediately report to the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS: 1.800.25.ABUSE) if they have reasonable cause to believe a child known to them in their official capacity may be abused or neglected. In addition, before making report, any mandated reporter who intends to make such a report must promptly notify the head of their academic unit or immediate supervisor (unless this person is unavailable) that a report has been made, as well as the underlying circumstances that caused the report, and document in writing that the report has been made. Questions regarding reporting obligations or the circumstance under which a report is required may be addressed to Kim Edstrom Schiller, Office of Title IX, keschiller@northpark.edu.

The University prohibits retaliation against any person who in good faith makes or participates in making a report of child abuse or neglect under this policy. The University also prohibits the intentional filing of false reports of child abuse or neglect.

II. Requirements for University Programs and Programs Conducted on University Premises

In addition to the reporting obligations set forth above, this policy describes screening, training, and conduct requirements for University affiliated programs and programs conducted on University premises or with University resources, regardless of University affiliation.

A. Covered Programs

“Covered Programs” are those designed to serve children. “Covered programs” include University programs, activities, workshops, preparatory experiences, including lessons, laboratories, open houses, and events whether for academic, athletic, recreational or other purposes and whether on or off University premises. By way of example, covered programs include but are not limited to, day or overnight camps of any nature for children, including camps conducted by University athletic coaches, schools operated by the University and creative or instructional activities involving children. Camps and programs conducted or operated by University athletic coaches and other employees in their personal capacities are considered covered programs where the coach’s employee University affiliation is identified and/or where such programs use the University’s name, University premises, facilities or resources. (register programs for university knowledge and approval with Kim Edstrom Schiller, keschiller@northpark.edu).

Programs or services that serve children conducted or provided on behalf of, by, or for the University or a covered program are also covered programs. Such entities/contractors must be required by contract to comply with this Policy, and to demonstrate that the appropriate screening and training in accordance with Sections II.B and II.C of this Policy have been conducted prior to commencing services.

Covered Programs that include overnight stays or use of University housing by children shall have the following additional measures in place; (1) identification to be worn by faculty, academic appointees, staff, student employees and volunteers and, if appropriate, participants; (2) enforced curfews; (3) participants must comply with alcohol, drug and smoke-free campus policy as a condition of participation; (4) participants must comply with a code of conduct for participants; (5) full-time residential supervision; and (6) use of non-University registered vehicle is prohibited. By participating in the program or activity, every participant, as well as the participant's parent or guardian, is deemed to have agreed to comply with this policy.

Exclusions: Covered programs do not include:

1. University undergraduate, graduate, and professional or continuing education academic programs to which minor students are admitted and enrolled for academic credit.
2. Regularly scheduled classes or activities designed for enrolled students or individuals accepted for College enrollment.
3. University faculty/staff residential properties
4. Single instance visits by adolescents to meet with faculty or academic appointees to discuss academic, intellectual or career interest.
5. Single guest lecturers or one-time participation in academic or research activities by academic guests.
6. University performance of single events such as fairs, festivals, convocations, tours, open houses, or other activities that are generally open to persons of all age groups and at or at which children may be present or participate, or University events at which children will be accompanied at all times by a parent or legal guardian, except for any such event that involves overnight stays or use of locker rooms. In those instances, the sponsoring unit may instead adopt measures designed to ensure the safety of participating children, including but not limited to: a requirement that volunteers must work in public places and not be alone with children; that , to the extent that supervision of minors occurs as part of the event, the supervisor first must have undergone a criminal history and registered sex offender check, and that before the event, the program must record the names and address of the volunteers, check the names against the national sex offender registry, and exclude any volunteers with positive results.

B. Screening Requirements

All persons, including faculty, academic appointees, employees, students and volunteers who supervise a covered program or have direct contact with children in a covered program are subject to the screening requirements described in this section. “**Direct Contact**” means to provide instruction, care, supervision, guidance to or oversight and/or control over children through a covered program. The screening normally will include, at a minimum, University student discipline records and criminal history and registered sex offender checks, records of which must be created and maintained for a minimum of ten years.

The director or official who has overall supervisory responsibility for the covered program may, in addition to the initial screening described above, require additional screening at regular intervals based on the nature of the program, requirements under applicable law, contractual obligations or other relevant factors. The director or official responsible for a covered program is responsible for assuring that all persons who work in or volunteer in support of a covered program have been screened as required and have subsequently been cleared to work or participate in the covered program.

If the initial or subsequent screening indicates a criminal record or registered sex offender status, the director or official responsible for the covered program, after consulting with, as appropriate, the offices of Security, Human Resources and Title IX, will decide whether to hire or retain the person and whether they may participate in any covered program. All screening will be conducted, and all information and results will be used, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, and applicable policies and procedures.

Individuals who are charged with criminal offenses involving minors while working in a North Park University program with minors must disclose such information to the program supervisor and the coordinator of [Office of Title IX](#) immediately.

C. Training Requirements

Covered programs will require all faculty members, academic appointees, staff, student employees, volunteers and other persons participating in or serving in the programs to participate in training on their status as mandated reporters and to review this policy. [DCFS](#) offers an on-line training module, the annual successful completion of which can satisfy this requirement, so long as the certificate or completion is submitted to the [Office of Title IX](#)

D. Conduct Requirements

Persons working for, participating in or involved with a covered program should create an open, welcoming education environment and ensure that the safety and welfare of participating children is a paramount and shared responsibility. Indeed, positive, appropriate interactions with youth support their personal and educational development, make them feel valued, and provide the safe, caring connections that

serve as protective factors for youth. Conversely, inappropriate and harmful interactions can put youth at risk for adverse emotional and physical outcomes. In this regard, persons working for, participating in or involved with a covered program shall not, in connection with the program:

1. Engage in abusive conduct of any kind toward, or in the presence of, any child
2. Administer force upon a child with or without an implement or tool for the purpose of discipline (i.e., corporal punishment)
3. Touch a child in an inappropriate or illegal manner
4. Engage in the use or possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs in the presence or vicinity of children
5. Photograph any child without the express, written consent of the child's parent or guardian. A release form is available for this purpose if needed.
6. Possess, produce, access or make available to children, any sexually-explicit or otherwise inappropriate images, material or media

The University recognizes that, except as may be authorized by a head of covered program based on legitimate pedagogical reasons, it is best practice for persons in a covered program to refrain from being alone with a child at any time in connection with the program. The director or head of a covered program for which such one-on-one time is so authorized must at all times structure the program as to permit observation. Under no circumstances will persons be alone with a child in settings where they and the child are not directly observable at all times.

Overnight visits, including unofficial or official visits, for admissions or athletics

Any person who suspects or becomes aware of a violation of these or other applicable conduct requirements must immediately report it to, as appropriate, the head of his or her academic unit or immediate supervisor and provide the underlying circumstances that compelled the report. Under such circumstances, the head of the academic unit or supervisor must immediately report the matter to [Security](#) and/or the [Office of Title IX](#). Notifying the University does not necessarily satisfy reporting obligations, which require mandated reports to make an immediate report to [DCFS](#). Upon receiving a report or others becoming aware of such violation, the University will take prompt steps to assure the safety of children and to comply with all applicable legal reporting requirements.

III. Policy Violations and Reporting

All covered programs are subject to audit to determine compliance with this policy by the Office of [Security](#) and [Title IX](#).

Any faculty member, academic appointee, staff, student employee, student or volunteer who violates this policy will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer status and exclusion from the University's premises.

IV. Questions Regarding this Policy

Questions regarding this Policy may be directed to the Office of Title IX, keschiller@northpark.edu