

# STANDARDS FOR INTERACTING WITH YOUTH

## Addendum: Virtual Interactions with Youth

This addendum describes the minimum expectations that we hold for personnel who have virtual interactions with youth in a University youth program. Virtual interactions may include the use of technology (e.g., e-mail, smart phones, text, learning management systems, online communications platforms, social media, etc.) to carry out program activities.

The [University Standards for Interacting with Youth](#) apply to **any** interaction between youth and youth program personnel, whether had in person, online, or via other technologies. Specifically in virtual settings, as youth program staff you are expected to:

- Limit virtual contact to purposes consistent with the program’s mission and/or for a clear educational, developmental, or health related purpose, in the presence of another staff member, and with the consent of the youth.
- Conduct all virtual interactions in a manner that promotes safety and complies with the general contact guidance outlined in the Standards, including:
  - Observing the Rule of Three in online meetings and all other virtual communications.
  - Using only program-sponsored email, phone, video conferencing, or social media platforms.
  - Avoiding text and electronic one-on-one communication between a single staff person and a youth. Instead, use technologies and platforms which are accessible by multiple staff members (e.g., a shared email inbox or a group chat functionality) and/or a youth’s parent.
  - Not engaging in purposeful communication or contact including phone or electronic communication or social networking with youth outside of sanctioned program activities.
- Treat all youth equitably, including ensuring equitable access to and support for any technology needed to fully participate in program activities.
- Proactively address harassment, bullying or other inappropriate conduct of youth participants.
- Never share sexually explicit online content with youth.
- Never record youth’s images or interactions with youth, except if explicitly allowed by your program and with all requisite consents in place. This includes video recordings of online interactions, screen captures, screenshots, or creating other photo or video records of youth.
- Be mindful of your online presence and the content shared publicly via your social media or other platforms.
- Ensure online and virtual interactions are conducted via safe, known platforms that limit risks to youth participants.

### CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATING THE ADDENDUM FOR VIRTUAL INTERACTIONS

In the case of violations of the Addendum for Virtual Interactions, the University and \_\_\_\_\_ will adhere to existing policies and procedures for corrective action. Actions taken will first and foremost consider the need to ensure the safety of youth participating in the program.

### \_\_\_\_\_ SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS REGARDING VIRTUAL INTERACTIONS

**CONFIRMATION OF UNDERSTANDING**

I have read the \_\_\_\_\_ Addendum for Virtual Interactions and I agree to abide by the standards as stated. I understand violations of the Addendum for Virtual Interactions may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. I acknowledge I am aware of my responsibilities and have received a copy of the Addendum for Virtual Interactions.

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_