Minors on Campus

Training for Authorized Adults
MTSU Policy I:01:07

2016
Our Commitment

We are committed to providing appropriate supervision of minors who are involved in programs and activities sponsored by MTSU or occurring on MTSU property.

All programs involving minors on campus must abide by MTSU Policy I:01:07 Minors Participating in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Using University Facilities, and Tennessee law related to reporting suspected child abuse.
The Policy

Individuals, age 18 and older, paid or unpaid, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or oversee minors in program activities are “Authorized Adults” and have responsibilities for the care of minors.
The Law—Mandatory Reporting

According to Tennessee law, all persons must report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Failure to report child abuse or neglect is a violation of the law.

Tennessee Code Annotated § 37-1-403
Authorized Adults’ Responsibilities

• Pass a background check and provide updates in cases of a subsequent arrest or conviction;
• Be familiar with procedures for a medical or natural emergency;
• Be familiar with and enforce the program and university rules; and
Authorized Adults’ Responsibilities

Make all reasonable efforts to ensure the safety of minors participating in programs and activities covered by this Policy, including removal of minors from dangerous or potentially dangerous situations, irrespective of any other limitation or requirement.
Contact with Minors

One-on-one contact between an authorized adult and a minor should be avoided to the extent possible.

Authorized Adults also shall not have any direct electronic contact with minors without another adult being included in the communication.
Authorized Adults Must **NOT:**

In the case of supervising minors overnight, to the extent possible, an Authorized Adult should not enter a minor’s room, bathroom facility, or similar area without another authorized adult in attendance. In these circumstances, the adults should be of the same gender as the minor(s).
Authorized Adults Must **NOT:**

- Engage in abusive conduct of any kind toward, or in the presence of, a minor.
- Strike, hit, administer corporal punishment to, or touch in an inappropriate or illegal manner any minor.
- Pick up minors from or drop off minors at their homes, other than the driver’s child(ren), except as specifically authorized in writing by the minor’s parent or legal guardian.
Authorized Adults Must NOT:

Provide alcohol, tobacco, tobacco products or illegal drugs to any minor. Authorized Adults shall not provide prescription drugs or any medication to any minor unless specifically authorized in writing by the parent or legal guardian as being required for the minor’s care or the minor’s emergency treatment.
Authorized Adults Must NOT:

Make sexual materials in any form available to minors or assist them in any way in gaining access to such materials.
Reporting Obligations

If a participant discloses any type of assault or abuse occurring at any time previous to or during the program, or an Authorized Adult has reason to suspect that the participant has been subject to such assault or abuse, the Authorized Adult, as a mandated reporter, must inform the Program Director immediately, unless the Authorized Adult believes that the Program Director may be involved in the allegations of assault or abuse.
Reporting Procedure

Together, the Program Director and authorized adult must call 1-877-237-0004 (The Tennessee Department of Children’s Services Child Abuse Hotline) if the situation requires an emergency response. If the Program Director is unavailable, is suspected to be involved in the allegations of assault or abuse, or if the Program Director or his/her designee does not call 1-877-237-0004, the authorized adult should immediately call 1-877-237-0004 if the situation requires an emergency response.

If a situation is felt to present immediate danger to a minor, University Police should be called as soon as possible, 615-898-2424, followed with a call to 1-877-237-0004 (The Tennessee Department of Children’s Child Abuse Hotline).
Reporting Procedure

If the report relates to a past event where there is no immediate threat to a minor (e.g., the report is based on a past event and the alleged abuser is not known to be currently in contact with minors), the Program Director or the Authorized Adult must provide written notification within 48 hours of filing the oral report to the Department of Children’s Services at this site: https://www.tn.gov/dcs/article/report-child-abuse.

In addition, the Program Director will contact University Police if that has not already occurred.
Reporting Procedure

The Program Director should notify the appropriate senior administrator, Office of the University Counsel, and the Title IX Coordinator as soon as practical, but this notification should not unreasonably delay the notification requirements outlined in the slides above.
Identifying Suspected Child Abuse

Child abuse and neglect occurs when a child is mistreated, resulting in injury or risk of harm. Abuse can be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual.

Tennessee Department of Children’s Services
http://www.tn.gov/youth/childsafety/whosouldreport.htm
Types of Abuse

- **Physical Abuse** is non-accidental physical trauma or injury inflicted by a parent or caretaker on a child. It also includes a parent's or a caretaker's failure to protect a child from another person who perpetrated physical abuse on a child.

- **Physical Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child's physical survival needs to the extent that there is harm or risk of harm to the child's health or safety.

Tennessee Department of Children’s Services
http://www.tn.gov/youth/childsafety/whosouldreport.htm
Types of Abuse

- **Sexual Abuse** includes penetration or external touching of a child's intimate parts, oral sex with a child, indecent exposure or any other sexual act performed in a child's presence for sexual gratification, sexual use of a child for prostitution, and the manufacturing of child pornography. Child sexual abuse is also the willful failure of the parent or the child's caretaker to make a reasonable effort to stop child sexual abuse by another person.

- **Emotional Abuse** includes verbal assaults, ignoring and indifference or constant family conflict. If a child is degraded enough, the child will begin to live up to the image communicated by the abusing parent or caretaker.

Tennessee Department of Children’s Services
Possible Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

- The child begins acting in unusual ways ranging from disruptive and aggressive to passive and withdrawn.
- The child loses his/her appetite, overeats, or may report being hungry.
- There is a sudden drop in participation in activities.
- The child may act in stylized ways, such as sexual behavior that is not normal for his/her age group.
- The child may report abusive or neglectful acts.

The above signs indicate that something is wrong but do not necessarily point to abuse.

Tennessee Department of Children’s Services
http://www.tn.gov/youth/childsafty/whosshouldreport.htm
Commit

- Take your responsibilities as an Authorized Adult seriously.
- Be familiar with MTSU policies that relate to your program, particularly [Policy I:01:07 Minors Participating in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Using University Facilities](#).
- Follow all rules related to contact with minors.
- Report suspected abuse.
QUESTIONS?

• Consult [MTSU Policy I:01:07 Minors Participating in University-Sponsored Programs or Programs Using University Facilities](#) for more details.

• Direct any further questions to the Program Director.