



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA OF THE USA CODE OF CONDUCT WITH YOUTH – NATIONAL EVENTS

This Code of Conduct sets forth YMCA of the USA's expectations of staff and volunteers related to interaction with Youth at YMCA of the USA's National Events. These National Events include:

- YMCA of the USA National Judicial Competition;
- National Gymnastics Championship & Invitational
- YMCA Long Course National Championship
- YMCA Short Course National Championship
- YMCA Youth Governors Conference
- YMCA National Diving Championship

Should you have any questions about this Code of Conduct or need to inquire about behaviors not addressed here, please contact: **Lindsay Mondick**.

YMCA of the USA promotes a safe environment for youth in these National Events that is free from abuse. No form of abuse will be tolerated. Forms of abuse include, without limitation, the following:

- **Physical abuse** is injury that is intentionally inflicted upon a youth.
- **Sexual abuse** is any contact of a sexual nature that occurs between a youth and an adult or between two youths. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or the other youth.
- **Emotional abuse** is mental or emotional injury to a youth that results in an observable and material impairment in the youth's growth, development, or psychological functioning.
- **Neglect or Negligent Treatment** is the failure to provide for a youth's basic needs or the failure to protect a youth from harm.

For staff, confirmed abuse will result in immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. For volunteers, confirmed abuse will result in expulsion from participation the National Event as future National Events.

All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior with youths or allegation of abuse will be taken seriously. YMCA of the USA will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse are made that require investigation.

YMCA of the USA will not retaliate against any staff member or volunteer that makes a report or participates in an investigation of suspected child abuse.

The following are requirements of all staff and volunteers participating in YMCA of the USA National Events:

1. Youths will be treated with respect at all times.
2. Youths will be treated fairly, regardless of race, sex, age, or religion.
3. Staff and volunteers will adhere to uniform standards of displaying affection as outlined by YMCA of the USA Child Protection policies.
4. Staff and volunteers will avoid affection with youths that cannot be observed by others.
5. Staff and volunteers will adhere to uniform standards of appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions as outlined YMCA of the USA Child Protection policies.
6. Staff and volunteers will not stare at or comment on youths' bodies.
7. Staff and volunteers will not date or become romantically involved with youths.
8. Staff and volunteers will not use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of youths.
9. Staff and volunteers will not have sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography in their possession during YMCA of the USA National Events.
10. Staff and volunteers will not have secrets with youths and will only give gifts with prior permission of YMCA of the USA.
11. Staff and volunteers will comply with YMCA of the USA Child Protection Policies regarding interactions with youths outside of our programs.
12. Staff and volunteers will not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with youths.
13. Staff and volunteers are prohibited from working one-on-one with youths in a private setting. Staff and volunteers will use common areas when working with individual youths.
14. Staff and volunteers will not abuse youths in anyway including, but not limited to, the following:
 - *Physical abuse* - hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, unnecessary restraints
 - *Verbal abuse* - degrading, threatening, cursing
 - *Sexual abuse* - inappropriate touching, exposing oneself, sexually oriented conversations
 - *Mental abuse* - shaming, humiliation, cruelty
 - *Neglect* - withholding food, water, shelter

15. YMCA of the USA will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one youth by another youth. In addition, YMCA of the USA will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, we will take steps needed to eliminate such behavior.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- *Physical bullying* – when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
- *Verbal bullying* – when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
- *Nonverbal or relational bullying* – when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- *Cyberbullying* – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
 - Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
 - Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
 - Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
 - Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
 - Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person’s willingness to participate.
 - Sexualized bullying – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. This policy applies to all youths, staff and volunteers.

16. All staff and volunteers must follow state specific mandatory reporting requirements. Staff and volunteers should be trained to be aware of and understand their legal and ethical obligation to recognize and report suspicions of mistreatment and abuse. Staff and volunteers will:

- Be familiar with the symptoms of child abuse and neglect, including physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse.
- Know and follow organization policies and procedures that protect youths against abuse.
- Report suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities as required by state mandated reporter laws **within 24 hours**. An additional report will be made to Safe Sports concerning any suspect abuse at sports events.
<https://fs22.formsite.com/usaswimming/form10/index.html>
<https://usagym.org/pages/education/safesport/report.html>

- Follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken.

17. Staff and volunteers will report concerns or complaints about other staff, volunteers, adults, or youths to **Erin Reuland** or Praesidium’s Anonymous Helpline at 855-347-0751.

18. YMCA of the USA cooperates fully with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse. Staff and volunteers participating at our National Events shall cooperate to the fullest extent possible in any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by YMCA of the USA or persons given investigative authority by the YMCA of the USA. Failure to cooperate fully may be grounds for termination of employment for YMCA of the USA employees and expulsion from current and future National Events.

19. In order to participate in YMCA of the USA National Events, staff and volunteers must not have engaged in or been accused or convicted of youth abuse, indecency with a youth, or injury to a youth.

Acknowledgment of Code of Conduct

I will be participating in the following National Event(s):

- YMCA of the USA National Judicial Competition;
- National Gymnastics Championship & Invitational
- YMCA Long Course National Championship
- YMCA Short Course National Championship
- YMCA Youth Governors Conference
- YMCA National Diving Championship

I confirm that I have taken the following child abuse prevention and reporting training(s) by one of the two YMCA of the USA approved vendors within the year:

- The Center for Safe Sport training **OR**
- Praesidium’s Athlete Protection training **AND**
- Praesidium’s Duty to Report: Mandated Reporter Requirements and Best Practices training

I have read and agree to comply with this Code of Conduct as well as YMCA of the USA’s Child Abuse Prevention Policies.

Printed Name

YMCA OF THE USA

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