



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
OFFICE OF YOUTH PROTECTION

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

(EXCERPTED FROM SAFE ENVIRONMENT GUIDE FOR GRAND KNIGHTS AND FAITHFUL NAVIGATORS AT WWW.KOFC.ORG/SAFE)

REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE WITHIN KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS PROGRAMS

1. **REPORT** SUSPECTED ABUSE TO **LAW ENFORCEMENT**
2. **NOTIFY LOCAL DIOCESE** OF SUSPECTED ABUSE
3. **NOTIFY KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS** OF SUSPECTED ABUSE AT **1-844-KOFC-SAFE (1-844-563-2723)**

GENERAL POLICIES

- A Knights of Columbus "youth activity" is an activity whose principal subjects are minor children, e.g., Columbian Squires, Basketball Free Throw, etc.
- All youth activities sponsored by the Knights of Columbus shall require the presence of at least one member, typically the council's Youth Director, who has been background checked and trained through the Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program.
- Youth leaders/members should never supervise youth participants alone. At least two youth leaders/members should be present at every council youth program and/or activity.
- Youth leaders/members, when counseling a youth participant, should always be in the same room as others or visible to others.
- Youth leaders/members should not give gifts to youth participants without approval from their grand knight or faithful navigator, as well as notification of the parent(s).
- Youth leaders/members should always be aware of other adults present at Knights of Columbus youth programs and they must be alert for signs of possible misconduct.
- Youth leaders/members should notify their grand knight or faithful navigator and/or call the Knights of Columbus at 1-844-KOFC-SAFE when they recognize a policy violation or other possible misconduct that may impact child safety.
- Youth leaders/members should make all youth programs and activities open to parents and guardians.
- **Youth leaders should NOT initiate, encourage or engage in one-on-one contact with youth participants outside of authorized Knights of Columbus youth programs and activities.**

POLICIES FOR YOUTH LEADER/MEMBER-PARTICIPANT INTERACTION

Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions	Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Side Hugs - Shoulder-to-shoulder or "temple" hugs - Pats on the shoulder or back - Handshakes - High-fives and hand slapping - Verbal praise - Pats on the head when culturally appropriate - Touching hands, shoulders and arms - Arms around shoulders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full-frontal hugs - Kisses - Showing affection in isolated area - Lap sitting - Wrestling - Piggyback rides - Tickling - Any type of massage given by or to a youth - Any form of affection that is unwanted by the youth or staff or volunteer - Compliments relating to physique or body development - Touching bottom, chest or genital areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive reinforcement - Appropriate jokes - Encouragement - Praise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Name-calling - Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving youths in the personal problems or issues of staff and volunteers - Secrets - Cursing - Off-color or sexual jokes - Shaming - Belittling - Derogatory remarks - Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate youths - Derogatory remarks about the youth or his/her family

POLICIES FOR TRAVEL AND OVERNIGHT PROGRAMS

- Youth leaders/members should make all overnight youth programs and activities open to parents and guardians.
- Youth leaders/members, other than the youth participant's parent or guardian, should not share a sleeping area with a youth participant.
- All off-site and overnight activities must be pre-approved by a grand knight or faithful navigator, and the parents.
- Youth leaders/members should always protect their own privacy while showering, dressing, sleeping, and toileting.
- Youth leaders/members should always respect youth participants' privacy while showering, dressing, sleeping and toileting.
- Youth leaders/members should not enter rest room, dressing or sleeping facilities when in use by youth participants, except in cases of a dire safety or health concern.
- Youth leaders/members should enforce curfews with a room check conducted by two youth leaders/members/parents, both male and both female, as appropriate.
- Youth leaders/members should not allow youth participants to have members of the opposite sex, except a parent, in their sleeping area at any time.

Office of Youth Protection: oyp@kofc.org 203-752-4558 • Member Helpline: youthleader@kofc.org 203-800-4940
855-845-3502 (fax)

1-844-KOFC-SAFE (1-844-563-2723)



POLICIES FOR MONITORING RESTROOMS

- Youth leaders/members should be aware that most incidents of youth-to-youth abuse occur in restrooms, and they should conduct frequent restroom checks.
- Youth leaders/members should scan restrooms before allowing youth to enter.
- Youth leaders/members should never allow fewer than three youth participants to travel to a restroom facility together.
- Youth leaders/members should allow only as many youth as there are restroom stalls to use the restroom at the same time.
- Youth leaders/members should avoid sending youth of different ages into restrooms at the same time.
- Youth leaders/members should remain within earshot of restrooms while in use by youth.
- Youth leaders/members should require youth to ask permission before using a single-stall restroom or restroom out of earshot of the group.
- **Youth leaders/members should not use restrooms at the same time as youth.**

POLICIES FOR MONITORING FREE TIME

- Youth leaders/members should require youth to remain within their line of sight.
- At least two youth leaders/members should supervise youth at all times.
- Youth leaders/members should conduct periodic check-ins and sweeps of entire activity area.

POLICIES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE INTERNET

- Youth leaders/members should only communicate via email or home (not cell) phone with youth participants.
- Youth leaders/members should limit all communication with youth participants to Knights of Columbus youth programs-related topics.
- Youth leaders/members should copy parents or guardians on all email and phone communications with youth participants.
- Youth leaders/members should never encourage youth participants to contact them via text message or on any other social media platform.
- **Youth leaders/members should never send inappropriate, vulgar or pornographic texts or material to youth.**

POLICIES FOR PREVENTING YOUTH-TO-YOUTH ABUSE

- Youth leaders/members should always supervise youth in order to mitigate risk of youth-to-youth abuse.
- Youth leaders/members should not leave an older youth alone and in charge of younger youth.
- Youth leaders/members should strictly prohibit hazing inside or outside of youth programs and activities.
- Youth leaders/members should strictly prohibit bullying, including but not limited to, derogatory name calling, singling out one youth for different treatment, ridicule or humiliation.
- Youth leaders/members should strictly prohibit games such as "Truth or Dare."
- Youth leaders/members should consistently document and report all instances of bullying, hazing, inappropriate sexualized behavior and suspected abuse between youth.

POLICIES FOR OUTSIDE CONTACT WITH YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

- Many cases of organizational abuse occur off-site and outside of regularly scheduled activities.
 - This contact outside of regularly scheduled activities may put everyone at increased risk.
 - **Knights of Columbus strongly recommends that youth leaders do not have outside contact with youth participants.**
- However, if off-site contacts are unavoidable, Knights of Columbus has determined that the following forms of outside contact are appropriate and inappropriate:

Appropriate Outside Contact	Inappropriate Outside Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking groups of youths on an outing - Attending sporting activities with groups of youths - Attending functions at a youth's home with parents present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking one youth on an outing without the parent's written permission - Visiting one youth in the youth's home without a parent present - Entertaining one youth in the home of staff or volunteers - A lone youth spending the night with staff or volunteers

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