



## EXPECTATIONS FOR INTERACTING WITH MINORS

This document provides an overview of expected behaviors for adults participating in a program/activity /event/interaction/etc. involving minors (hereafter “program”) at Brown University. If you have any questions, please contact [minorprotection@brown.edu](mailto:minorprotection@brown.edu).

Per the [Brown University Code of Conduct](#), “Members of the Brown University community are responsible for sustaining the highest ethical standards of the University, and of the broader community in which they function.” This is especially true for those engaging with minors.

Adults who interact with minors must actively foster respectful and appropriate environments in which minors are able to thrive. Adults are expected to serve as positive role models for minors - acting in a responsible, respectful, and caring manner. Adults must:

1. Treat all minors fairly, consistently, and with respect, regardless of their actions, behaviors, health, or other perceived or actual identities, and abide by [Brown University’s Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#);
2. Maintain high standards of personal and professional behavior when working with or around minors;
3. Report any instances of actual or suspected prohibited actions or any instances that pose a risk of creating an unsafe environment for minors.
4. Consult with the [Department of Public Safety](#) when uncertain about the appropriateness of a situation that took place with or in the presence of a minor.

### **Appropriate Boundaries**

Adults must maintain appropriate boundaries and act professionally when in the presence of minors. At all times, adults must:

- disclose to the leadership overseeing the minors program (i.e., program director, activity organizer, Pre-College professional staff, etc.) any pre-existing relationships with minors in the program immediately and abide by these standards while affiliated with the program, despite any pre-existing personal relationships;
- never meet with minors outside of established times for program-related activities;
- never invite minors to a location or discussion that is not associated with program-related activities;
- never be alone in-person or virtually with a single minor unless it is essential to the activities of the program;
- hold any one-on-one interactions in a public space that has windows with clear visibility into the room or in a space where the door can be left open, or if online: record the interaction or have another student, staff member, or instructor present;
- never transport minors in any non-University vehicle unless there is an extreme emergency (i.e., life-threatening situation);
- abide by the University’s [Privacy Policy](#) and [FERPA Policy](#);
- never take or use photographs or videos of minors for personal use, including posting them on social networking sites or publishing them in any other form;
- never exchange personal gifts with minors or their parents/guardians/family members;
- never discuss tobacco, alcohol, or illicit drugs in the presence of minors unless it is essential to the activities of the program; and
- never use, sell, or make available tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs, weapons, or explosives to minors.

### **Communication**

Adults must maintain appropriate and professional communications with and about minors, whether in person, in writing, online, or via video/phone. At all times, adults must:

- restrict communication to subjects and topics with minors solely related to educational and program administrative purposes;
- use specific and concrete language to avoid misinterpretations or confusion on the part of a minor;
- avoid communication via text messaging, social media networks, and websites unless there is an

essential educational or programmatic reason to do so and only in connection with an educational program;

- never berate, degrade, harass, or intimidate minors;
- always issue appropriate levels of praise and criticism (i.e., use words with care and avoid excessive praise or criticism of any minor);
- never disclose confidential information about themselves to minors or seek to learn confidential information about minors;
- never use language that encourages minors to keep information from other program personnel, participants, or their parents/guardians/families (e.g., “this is just between the two of us”); and
- never use profanity in the presence of minors.

### **Physical Contact**

Adults must not, under any circumstances, touch minors in a manner that is or could be interpreted as inappropriate. At all times, adults must:

- ask for permission before initiating any touching with a minor and respect any concerns raised by the minor;
- limit physical contact to purposes that are consistent with the program’s mission and/or for a clear educational, developmental, or health-related purpose;
- only engage in physical contact in the open and in the presence of another staff member; and
- never engage in any abusive conduct of any kind toward, or in the presence of, a minor.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

Adults are prohibited from engaging in sexual or romantic activity, behaviors, or gestures with or in the presence of minors. At all times, adults are prohibited from:

- making romantic or sexual comments, telling sexually explicit jokes/stories, discussing sexually explicit material, or disclosing private information about sexual activity to or in the presence of minors;
- referencing or showing sexually explicit material (e.g., literature, videos, or other media) of any kind;
- assisting in any way to provide minors with access to such material (adults must also prohibit this conduct between or among minors);
- engaging in any physical contact with minors that is or could be interpreted as romantic, intimate, or sexual - including, but not limited to, giving/receiving back rubs, giving/receiving massages, tickling, or caressing;
- showering, bathing, undressing, or being in a state of undress in the presence of minors; and
- being present when a minor is showering, bathing, undressing, or in a state of undress.

### **Reporting**

Rhode Island law requires any person who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that any child has been abused or neglected or is the victim of sexual abuse by another child must report it within twenty-four hours.

Make a report:

- To the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Family Services (RIDCYFS) Child Protection Hotline at 1-(800) RI-CHILD or 1-800-742-4453 (callers may remain anonymous); then
- To Brown's Department of Public Safety at 401-863-3322 and confirm the report was also made to RIDCYFS. Additionally, the Department of Public Safety will inform the University's Title IX Coordinator, if applicable, for the purposes of investigation, support, and Clery reporting.

### **Questions**

For questions on this document, University-wide minors standards, and non-time-sensitive concerns, contact the Minors Protection Office at [minorprotection@brown.edu](mailto:minorprotection@brown.edu). For emergency situations contact the Department of Public Safety at 401-863-4111.

### **University Policies to Review**

While adults participating in minors activities are required to be familiar with all applicable University policies, these policies in particular should be reviewed:

### **Code of Conduct**

### **Disclaimer**

**Privacy Policy**

**FERPA Policy**

**Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy**

**Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Relationship and Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking Policy**

**Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Policy**

I acknowledge I have read, reviewed, and agree to abide by the principles, standards, and policies in this document.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_