



Social Support Agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin

Code of Good Youth work Practice for Volunteers

Volunteers who work with young people have a responsibility to ensure that their welfare is of paramount importance.

Volunteers must act in the best interest of the young person at all times.

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- **Good practice contributes towards raising the standards of youth work through the creation of a healthy and safe environment for young people.**
- **Volunteers should be open and welcoming towards young people and should respect their rights and dignity.**
- **Buildings and facilities used for youth activities must be suitable, safe and secure.**
- **The use of alcohol or drugs is not permitted during youth work activities.**
- **All volunteers must be carefully selected and garda vetted. Training in Child Protection must be completed by all volunteers . Other training opportunities should be availed of.**
- **Make sure that adequate and appropriate supervision is in place before organising youth work activities. There must a ratio of one adult to every eight young people with a minimum of two for any activity.**
- **Consent Forms must be obtained from parent/guardian before organising activities for young people ensuring that medical information and dietary requirements are included. Consent must also be obtained if contacting young people via mobile phones/computers and when taking photo's/videos.**
- **Keep a record of the names, addresses and contact numbers of the parents/guardians of the young people as well as young people and leaders present at every activity.**
- **An accident and incident book must be available at all activities.**
- **All activities organised for young people must have adequate insurance cover.**
- **Give equal time and attention to all young people.**
- **Maintain appropriate boundaries when dealing with young people.**
- **Volunteers should be sensitive to the potential risk to personal safety and of false allegation, which may arise if requested to meet alone with a young person.**
- **Casual visits to homes of young people should be avoided. Do not visit a young person's home on your own. All visits to homes should have a clear purpose.**
- **Comments and jokes of a racial or sexual nature are inappropriate and are to be avoided.**
- **An agreed Code of Discipline should be followed when dealing with disruptive behaviour. Corporal punishment of young people is not permitted in any circumstances.**
- **Particular care must be taken when planning residential trips away. Care must also be taken to ensure that the privacy of young people is respected in places such as swimming pools, showers, toilets and changing rooms.**
- **Do not give lifts in cars to individual young people. In the event of an emergency, where it is necessary to make a journey alone with a young person, a record of this should be kept and the young person's parent or guardian must be informed.**

- **The use of modern social media such as Facebook, Twitter, the internet , mobile phones and similar devices should be monitored to prevent bullying and other inappropriate behaviour.**