

Wisdom Projects

Peace, Healing, and Justice For All



Regulations for Safety and Wellness

Note: This document runs 4 (four) pages.

Disclaimers

Some staff may have medical training, but Wisdom Projects does not provide medical or legal advice or make diagnoses.

Wisdom Projects' work is purely educational and cultural.

When working for Wisdom Projects, everyone must maintain confidentiality and adhere to privacy guidelines for HIPAA (protecting health information), FERPA (protecting student information), and MPIPA (protecting personal employee and consumer identifying information in Maryland).

Mission

Regardless of our job title or role, everyone's mission, job duties, and employment responsibilities are to organize ourselves and enrollees to educate for peace and nonviolence integrated with STEM and the arts. To do this, we are all program assistants who help with the set-up and clean-up of programs. We must also all participate fully in the core work of managing the program experience and behavior of children, youth, and young adults under the age of 24. Daily lessons when open are central to our mission.

Mindset, Department, and Communication

Do No Harm. We must never, ever do anything that harms anyone in any way. We do not shrink from our responsibility to speak up when we feel community members may be harming themselves or others. However, before you speak up, de-escalate and carefully ascertain what happened and try to assess whether what happens merits the response or action that you are deliberating.

Supportive. Our mission requires being unfailingly supportive. This means maintaining a consistently helpful, kind, compassionate, vigilant, active, and watchful demeanor in our engagement with communities. We try not to allow anything that someone does to provoke us towards toxic engagement.

No Judging, Blaming or Shaming. We engage in a nonjudgmental manner that strictly avoids blaming and shaming in overt or covert ways. Remember: This is different from feedback or directions that a head or heads of the organization must give employees.

Open to Feedback, Directions, and Growth. Everyone must be consciously and intentionally open to feedback, directions, and growth. Everyone must take care to be humble and listen to and follow the feedback and directions of job heads or supervisors because they must set and keep the policies, practices, and regulations of the organization and they may face grave legal consequences if they do not uphold parameters for the effective work of the organization.

Clear and Non-Confusing. We value open, clear, plainspoken, straightforward, and forthright communication that avoids creating confusion. If questions are asked, we answer them directly and clearly and we encourage this kind of straightforward, transparent engagement as a cornerstone of our community counseling.

Comparing/Contrasting. While we all have the same mission, everyone's roles and responsibilities are different and it is imperative that no one compares/contrasts roles, responsibilities, or salaries.

Credibility. We maintain our credibility by not joining in or encouraging harmful activities of any kind, including through subtle endorsement with community members so that we do not send mixed messages and work at cross purposes.

Personal versus Private. We talk-through the complexity of personal versus private notions in our work with community members. Everything is personal because we feel and sense things deeply within ourselves, and we recognize that we must demonstrate care and friendliness in our engagement. At the same time, we talk with community members about the matters that are private in their lives and in our lives, and the need to keep many matters private, uphold consent, and maintain boundaries. We do not try to force community members to reveal information that they deem private unless they wish to share. Talking through this complexity is one of the cornerstones of how we build trust in our engagement.

No Passive-Aggressive Behavior. Oftentimes, when we work with people who are undergoing challenges, we may become subconsciously annoyed with them and this negativity may show up covertly in our engagement. We are careful to become conscious of our subconscious feeling and to avoid passive-aggressive behavior in our engagement.

No Gaslighting. We strictly avoid gaslighting (whether subtle or pronounced) and all forms of emotional manipulation. We never implicitly or explicitly make someone question their sanity or emotional stability. We encourage admitting error clearly and we do not create situations where blaming makes someone a guilty party. We engage based on factual and actual problems, not imagined and manipulated matters.

Monitoring and Managing Mood. We monitor the tone of our voices, the positioning of our bodies, and the attitude and expression of our faces so that we always counsel in supportive, encouraging ways. Speak up and tell your supervisor or colleagues what may be going on with you so they can be understanding if something is challenging you. Without that communication, they may not have the information needed to be compassionate.

Pleasant Engagement. All employment contracts require a pleasant and positive mood and attitude when we come to work. Again, this does not mean socializing or even becoming close friends with anyone. Rather, it means not letting one's life experiences or emotions influence our mood, attitude, or communicate so that we do anything that may negatively affect others as we work.

No Bias. We never, ever discriminate and move from bias, be it explicit or implicit. [Click here](#) for our nondiscrimination policy.

Welcoming, Timely, and Responsive. We make community members feel welcome in a session. We arrive on time or a bit early, begin on time, end on time whenever possible (if there is a set time for engagement), and we schedule and perform timely follow-ups and check-ins.

Fighting and Play-Fighting. We encourage a zero-tolerance on verbal and physical fighting, including play-fighting (in the case of children) because play-fighting (instead of playing safely and lovingly) gets confusing and dangerous.

Four Principles of Universal Respect & Care. We live in societies in which there is often little understanding or valuing of the ways that mistakes, trials, and errors can be essential to growing and learning for children and adults. We often do not have restorative, non-judging, and non-blaming values and practices to guide us when mistakes occur. That is why, in 1990, Miss tree turtle developed a mantra, which is a four-point corollary that aims to ground our sense of humanity as we respect and care for each other:

- We can all be good people.
- We all make mistakes.
- We can change.
- Change requires work.

Cot Usage

Cots provide an opportunity for children and other community members to rest and de-escalate with supervision. It is imperative that everyone using cots are monitored and supervised at all times with someone sitting by the cots that are in use and looking at the person using them to vigilantly monitor their behavior. Take in mind that the following has occurred on the cots in the past:

- Individuals lying on their stomachs have stopped breathing and needed respiratory assistance and repair. Make sure that individuals are never lying on their stomachs for longer than a few seconds.
- Individuals with blankets covering their heads have stopped breathing and begun to suffocate when asleep or unconscious, requiring emergency intervention. No one can lie on cots with their heads covered whatsoever. Heads and faces must be seen at all times without exception.
- Individuals have urinated or defecated while sleeping. Those asked to monitor the person using the cot must be sensitive to odors that may indicate someone needs to use the bathroom. If the odors are adverse, then wake the person up and escort them (meaning, actually walk them to the bathroom door, but do not go inside with them). Flatulence may involve defecating on oneself even to a small degree, especially when sleepy, so make sure that monitors direct flatulent persons swiftly to the bathroom.
- Individuals have touched or dug into their anuses while asleep and placed themselves and other at grave risk of bacterial infection or other harm. The person monitoring the individual using the cot must see what hands are going at all times. The person who has used a cot must either hand sanitize thoroughly after using the cot or wash and dry one's hands thoroughly.
- Individuals on cots have masturbated in ways that lead to dangerous sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. Hands must be seen or known where they are at all times and no undulating or quick-fast motions should be tolerated at any time.

Heads and Faces Seen and Uncovered at All Times

Heads and faces must be seen and uncovered indoors at all times so that we can very clearly see who someone is and assess the state of their health by sight as it pertains to their head and breathing. No hoods, hats, or head coverings are allowed indoors for serious safety reasons.

Exceptions:

- Approved religious head coverings: It is the responsibility of the head of the organization to approve such coverings, and, generally, the head approves religious coverings that do not cover the face.
- Approved medical grade masks: Children and adults exhibiting illness should immediately be given a N95 or KN95 masks stored at the job site to mitigate the experience of illness for ourselves and others.

No Objects in the Mouth

Choking is a very serious hazard. We do not under any circumstances allow anyone—youth and adults—to chew gum or suck on or have anything in our mouths at work. Doing this puts the organization at grave risk and liability.

Exceptions:

- Meal service that has clear stipulations for when the eating of food should begin and end.
- Snack time that has clear stipulations for when the eating of snacks should begin and end.
- Drinking of water time with clear stipulations for when water intake should begin and end.

Disruptions

Daily lessons are the cornerstone requirement of our grant-funded mission.

No one should ever disrupt the teaching and learning of lessons.

Instead of blurting out, raise hands to participate or contribute.

Everyone must participate when called upon to do so. Leave the organization immediately if you do not wish to participate in the organization's activities. You should not be with us (and you should definitely not be paid money) if you do not wish to participate.

During lessons, learners must be focused and attentive, working to control themselves and their bodies to avoid disruptions.

Those who one-on-one with a child should stop and talk to the child before the lesson every single day and advise them of the need for the following:

- Be quiet and still during the lesson.
- Do not raise your hand unless you actually have something to contribute.
- Listen before raising your hand and let the teacher finish their words.
- Lessons are not playtimes and serious attention is required.
- If the child is not feeling well, they may lie on the cot with the head of the organization or the main day's supervisor or teacher's permission.

Staff should not play with, dance with, or talk with children during the lesson. To minimize disruptions, if you wish a child to be quiet, instead of counseling them in an extended fashion, place your finger to your lips to indicate the need for quiet, and do not keep talking to them. If they need peer counseling, then take them to the quiet/calm zone. If they refuse, ask for assistance for the head, the main teacher, or the supervisor.

Head Counts

All children, adults, and staff must be accounted for every day at all times. At the beginning, end, and before and after every section of the day, all workers must do their own headcounts to make sure all youth and adults are seen and counted. Use the counters to gain objective counts.

Gloves and Sanitization

Wear nitrile gloves for all set-up, clean-up, and meal service. Hand-sanitize when entering the building. Hand-sanitize after all set-up, clean-up, and meal service.