



GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Because our society is filled with pain, problems, and litigation caused by improper conduct of adults working with children and youth, it is imperative that those working with children have meaningful guidelines for conduct - to protect both themselves and those under their care. As an Helping Our Families volunteer, you want parents and others to feel comfortable and confident with you. Here are some practical guidelines:

1. **NEVER leave a child alone - or a group of children - for whom you are responsible.** Provide adequate supervision at all times, no matter what.
2. **NEVER be the only adult serving in a room with a child.** ALWAYS have at least one other person 18 or older with you.
3. **ALWAYS ask a child permission before touching** him/her anywhere when responding to an injury or problem. This is especially true for any area that would normally be covered by a T-shirt and shorts. If an injury is within this area, make sure another adult works with you as you provide care.
4. **Physical and verbal attacks are inappropriate** and should not ever be used as discipline. -time out- or -sit-in-that chair- may be helpful methods with children.
5. **Kids need to be touched appropriately.** However, keep hugs brief and shoulder-to-shoulder-or -side-to-side. Always keep your hands at (not below) the shoulder level. No kisses, ever. Small children who like to sit on laps, encourage them to sit next to you.
6. **When taking small children to the bathroom** - take another adult along or leave the door open.
7. **Be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse; be aware of the legal requirements in your locality for reporting child abuse.** In nearly all places, a volunteer can be held legally responsible for failing to report suspected or actual child abuse.
8. **Be loving, kind, firm, and always thoroughly professional as a caregiver.** Working with children and youth is not only a privilege; it is also a deep responsibility that must be approached with utmost care.
9. **The Volunteer Screening Rule.** All volunteers must complete the screening process.
10. **The six-month rule.** Do not recruit a volunteer who has not been in your community for less than six months.
11. **The two-person rule.** Have at least two adults present at all times.
12. **The glass window rule.** If the door to a classroom does not have a glass in or around it, the door should be left open, so that the teacher is in full view.

I, the undersigned volunteer, have read the guidelines listed above and agree to abide by them. I will obtain a copy of this signed form and keep it for reference.

DATE _____ SIGNED _____
(VOLUNTEER)

DATE _____ SIGNED _____
(PARENTS, IF VOLUNTEER IS UNDER 18)