



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

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HRS-F

4 October 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Standing Operating Procedure Guidance & Discipline, Touch, and Accountability of Children/Youth for the Army National Guard Child, Youth and School Services Program within the 54 States, Territories, and District of Columbia

1. PURPOSE: To provide written standards and policies for ARNG CYSS personnel and to ensure the safety and well being of children in the CYSS program.
2. SCOPE: This SOP applies to all persons, paid and non-paid (CYPCs, other paid staff, and volunteers), in contact with children and youth within the CYSS programs.
3. REFERENCES:
 - a. AR 608-10, Child Development Services, 15 July 1997.
 - b. AR 608-18, The Army Family Advocacy Program, 30 October 2007.
4. RESPONSIBILITIES: CYPCs will ensure that all persons in contact with children/youth in CYSS programs read this SOP and sign the Statement of Understanding and Acknowledgement of the Appropriate Guidance & Discipline, Touching, and Accountability of Children/Youth in CYSS Program SOP (encl 1).
 - a. LCYPCs are responsible for ensuring that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the touch policy and follow appropriate practices.
 - b. LCYPCs are responsible for reporting inappropriate touching to the local authorities.
 - c. CYPCs are responsible for modeling appropriate touching.
 - d. All CYPCs will read this SOP immediately upon employment and annually thereafter and will sign a statement that they have read and understand the policy.
5. PROCEDURE: This policy will be read by all CYSS personnel to include CYPCs and volunteers and will be recorded in the employee's or volunteer's individual file.
 - a. **Guidance and Discipline:** The National Guard CYSS guidance/discipline shall be handled in a manner stated in AR 608-10. Helping a child to understand and decide

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what to do, rather than what not to do, is the basis for child guidance. Our role is to meet children's individual needs, thereby assisting them in becoming confident, secure individuals with good problem solving and thinking abilities.

(1) Children/youth need to know the rules of their environment, the choices they are allowed to make, and the consequences of their choices or actions.

(2) Children/youth need to be taught the difference between the positive and negative consequences of their actions.

(3) Children/youth need to be talked with after they've done something inappropriate. They need to know you care about them. The child needs to understand why his/her actions were not acceptable.

(4) "I" messages should be used rather than "No" and "Don't" messages, (e.g., "I like to see...").

(5) A child/youth should never be called "bad." It is not the child/youth who is bad, but the choices the child/youth made were inappropriate. Children/youth act out due to anger, frustration, or when problems in their environment exist, just as adults do. Children/youth need to learn how to control these feelings and to understand that these feelings are normal and not "bad."

(6) Discipline will be constructive in nature, including such methods as diversion, separation of the child/youth from the situation by redirection, praise of appropriate behaviors, and gentle physical restraint (such as holding) when the safety of a child or another person is a concern.

(7) Corporal/physical punishment is not acceptable form of discipline; discipline will never be punitive in nature. No CYSS staff or volunteer has the right or authority to punish a child/youth at any time for any reason.

(8) Appropriate discipline techniques with children focus on guiding, teaching, and supporting children with their problem solving techniques. Appropriate discipline will only be administered by CYPCs and not by volunteers.

(10) A child/youth may not be punished by spanking, pinching, shaking, or other corporal punishment; isolation for long periods, confinement in closets, boxes, or other similar places; binding to restrain movement of mouth or limb; humiliation or verbal

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abuse; deprivation of meals, snacks, outdoor play opportunities, or other program components, i.e., short-term restrictions of the use of specific play materials and equipment, or participation in a specific activity.

b. **Touch:** The CYSS Touch Policy is in accordance with AR 608-10. This policy has been developed to define the boundaries for appropriate and inappropriate touching of children and youth. Positive physical contact is an integral part of developmental/age-appropriate approach to children. Positive physical contact is essential to the emotional and social growth of children. It is important for paid and non-paid staff to clearly understand the difference between children's need for appropriate physical contact in nurturing guidance and touches that infringe on their safety and well-being. Adults involved with children/youth as caregivers, instructors, coaches, mentors, etc. must be mindful of the need to respect the personal space and privacy of children. Boundaries for appropriate and inappropriate touching are established to ensure that CYSS staff and volunteers have a clear understanding of what is acceptable and what is not.

(1) Appropriate touching is positive physical contact that nurtures children and youth and develops a sense of trust and emotional security in their interaction with adults.

(a) Appropriate touching involves recognizing the importance of physical contact to nurturing guidance; adult respect for personal privacy; personal space of children and youth; responses affecting the safety and well-being of the child; and CYSS staff and volunteers modeling appropriate touching.

(b) Appropriate touching includes hugs, reassuring touches on the shoulder, and touches expressively appropriate to instruction, such as those instance where hands-on guidance is needed (includes, but not limited to swimming instruction, where one might require a steadying hand on the back; voice instruction, where one might require a hand placed above the diaphragm; or gymnastics instruction, where one might require steadying hands on the trunk of the body).

(c) Touching may be necessary to ensure the safety of children/youth such as holding a hand while crossing the street (younger children ages 6-7).

(d) The type and degree of physical contact between the staff/adult and child may not violate legal or moral standards of society. They physical contact may not be

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against the desires of the child unless circumstances for the good of the child warrant the physical contact despite the child's wishes (e.g. the safety of the child).

(2) Inappropriate touching involves coercion or other forms of exploitation of children and youth; satisfaction of adult needs at the expense of the child, attempts to change child behavior with physical force when used in anger, or any physical contact that is in violation of the law and cultural norms.

(a) Inappropriate touching includes but is not limited to corporal punishment, slapping, striking, pinching, prolong tickling or fondling, and molestation.

(b) Any physical contact, within reason, that the child/youth describes as making them feel uncomfortable.

(c) Touching should never be punitive or corporal in nature. No squeezing of neck, arms, etc. No arm-twisting, pulling, or jerking of arm. No squeezing of face, as in "look at me."

(d) Physical restraint will not be used unless it is necessary to prevent injury to self or others. CYSS staff or volunteer will attempt to call for help before restraint is used on a child/youth. CYPCs will provide a written description on why physical restraint was necessary. Witnesses will sign written document. Parents will be informed of how and why physical restraint was used on their child/youth.

(e) Inappropriate touching will be grounds of immediate removal of a CYSS staff member of volunteer.

c. Accountability: The Army National Guard CYSS number one CYSS concern is the health and well-being of the children/youth within the CYSS program. CYPCs are responsible for the accountability of the children/youth at all times.

(1) A head count of children/youth will be conducted once event registration has concluded. If a child/youth is not listed on the sign-in sheet, add their name to the sheet. CYPCs will conduct a head count hourly for the duration of the event as well as after all scheduled breaks.

(2) A head count will also be taken before, during, and after transitions to/from field trips, while getting on and off buses, and during any transition between rooms.

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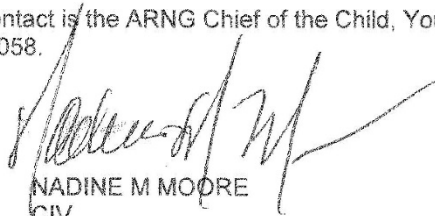
(3) If a child/youth is missing, the CYPCs should be immediately informed. The CYPC should notify the facility's management and/or security to assist with searching for the missing child/youth. Once the facility has been searched and the child/youth has not been found, the CYPC should immediately contact the local authorities, SFPD, and the child's/youth's parents.

(4) When the accountability of a child is in question (a child is missing), this is a direct violation of AR 608-10, 5-17c: "Visual supervision of all children must be maintained at all time. No child will be left unattended at any time indoors or outdoors, asleep or awake." Appropriate, progressive disciplinary action will be taken against all responsible CYSS staff and volunteers.

(5) No one will cover up a lack of supervision incident. CYSS staff and volunteers should bring all incidents in question to the SFPD immediately.

6. CONCLUSION: Both understanding and adherence to the established procedures are vital to the operations of the NG CYSS programs. All CYSS staff, to include CYPCs, other paid staff members, and volunteers will sign the National Guard CYSS Statement of Understanding and Acknowledgement of Discipline/Touch/Child Accountability, Appendix A, annually.

7. POINT OF CONTACT: Point of contact is the ARNG Chief of the Child, Youth and School Services Branch at 703-601-7058.



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