



**POLICIES & PROCEDURES  
(Child Safety)**

Space Foundation Team Members and Volunteers:

At the Space Foundation, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment.

The Safety Policies & Procedures outlined in these pages are intended to provide direction for Space Foundation team members and volunteers. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment, protecting children, you, and the mission of the Space Foundation. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

Thank you.

**Space Foundation  
Policies & Procedures  
Child Safety**

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## Overview of the Space Foundation Child Safety System

Because we care for children and desire to protect them, the Space Foundation requires all volunteers and team members to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS**.

### **STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment Prevention Training**

Space Foundation policies and procedures require that volunteers and team members (which includes full-time and part-time employees, as well as temporary and contract workers) avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Volunteers and team members are required to report any policy violations to a Space Foundation supervisor or Team Leader and/or to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead (the Chief Operating Officer).

Volunteers and team members should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip Space Foundation volunteers and team members with information necessary to protect a child from sexual abuse or maltreatment, the Space Foundation requires all volunteers and team members to complete the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training provided live or online through Abuse Prevention Systems ([www.AbusePreventionSystems.com](http://www.AbusePreventionSystems.com)).

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training is required for all volunteers and team members and must be renewed annually.

### **STEP TWO: Screening Process**

Volunteers and team members are required to complete the Space Foundation Screening Process, which requires volunteers and team members to:

- complete an Application
- complete a face-to-face interview
- provide references to be checked

### **STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures**

Volunteers and team members are required to review and sign an acknowledgement that they understand the policies and agree to comply with all requirements.

### **STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check**

The Space Foundation requires that all volunteers and team members undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

### **TRAINING FOR AUTHORIZED ADULTS**

In an effort to increase awareness of abuse and maltreatment of children, the Space Foundation will make available written materials to parents, grandparents, step-parents, legal guardians, caregivers, and other persons designated by parents and legal guardians as authorized to care for their child(ren) (hereinafter referred to as "Authorized Adults") concerning sexual abuse and maltreatment prevention.

## Child Safety Policy

### **ABUSE INTOLERANCE**

The Space Foundation has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in its programs and activities. It is the responsibility of every volunteer and team member at the Space Foundation to act in the best interests of each child in every program.

In the event that volunteers or team members observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is his/her responsibility to immediately report the observations to a Space Foundation supervisor or Team Leader and/or to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead.

It is important to keep in mind as you read through this Child Safety Policy that a potential abuser could be an adult, or could be another child of the same or different age, gender, size, or education level. It is critical for the safety of the children in our care, and for mitigation of the Space Foundation's risk, for our awareness to be heightened at all times.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS**

The Space Foundation is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible a team member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Team members and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a Space Foundation supervisor or Team Leader and/or to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead.

### **ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

Space Foundation team members and volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all Space Foundation child safety policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from positions for both volunteers and team members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead, together with Human Resources.

### **Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

#### **REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY**

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children, Space Foundation team members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to abuse of a child should be directed to a Space Foundation supervisor or Team Leader and/or to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED OR HARMFUL ACT**

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from all child interaction and Space Foundation activities. This suspension will continue during any investigation (internal or external).

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act will be prohibited from future participation as a team member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children or vulnerable populations at the Space Foundation. If the person is a team member, such conduct may also result in further disciplinary action, up to and including termination of Space Foundation employment.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination.

## **REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

Team members and volunteers at the Space Foundation are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague, to a Space Foundation supervisor or Team Leader and/or to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead.

Colorado requires that any person having cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect must make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

If a team member or volunteer observes an incident, or learns of an incident from a child, the team member or volunteer is required to verbally report the incident to supervisory staff as soon as possible. After receiving a report, the supervisory staff will speak with the parties involved, including the child, to gather detailed information about the entire incident. The Space Foundation Child Safety Lead will be notified as soon as reasonably possible.

## **RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE**

The Space Foundation Child Safety Lead will take appropriate action on behalf of the Space Foundation when a report of abuse occurs. Any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously, and will be reported in accordance with this policy to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead. If appropriate, the Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Department, El Paso County, (719) 444-5700 (Option #1) will be notified.

## **WHEN A CHILD HAS BEEN VICTIMIZED**

If a team member or volunteer has knowledge or a suspicion that a child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the information will be reported to supervisory staff and the appropriate authorities as outlined above.

In addition to notifying the appropriate authorities (if required), the Space Foundation will provide the child or the child's Authorized Adult(s) with information to allow the child (or the Authorized Adult(s), on the child's behalf) to obtain assistance and intervention, as well as available counseling options.

## **BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINE**

School age children may be accompanied to the restroom for supervision and assistance when needed. However, children should receive the minimum amount of assistance needed based upon their individual capabilities. Team members and volunteers should never take a lone child to the restroom.

If a team member or volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out another worker of the same gender as the child to accompany the child. The team member or volunteer should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing their activities.

Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another team member or volunteer.

### **GIFT GIVING**

Team members and volunteers are prohibited from providing special gifts to any individual child. Special occasions or special accomplishments should receive group acknowledgement and can easily be rewarded with group recognition (i.e., mention during announcements; have the entire group sing Happy Birthday, etc.) Any requests for variance from this policy must be addressed to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead.

### **INTOXICANTS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while working with children at the Space Foundation (also see the Team Member Handbook). Team members and volunteers are prohibited from providing alcohol or illegal drugs to children.

### **TOBACCO**

The Space Foundation is a tobacco-free facility. The Space Foundation requires team members and volunteers to refrain from the use or possession of tobacco products in the facility, and while in the presence of children or Authorized Adults. Space Foundation team members and volunteers are prohibited from providing tobacco products to children.

### **NUDITY**

Team members and volunteers at the Space Foundation should never be fully or partially nude in the presence of children in their care.

### **ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN**

The Space Foundation recognizes that meeting program objectives may occasionally require that team members and volunteers interact with children on an individual basis. Workers should observe the following guidelines when interacting with children:

Team members and volunteers should conduct any necessary one-to-one meetings with an individual child at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed. There will be no one-to-one meetings between a team member or a volunteer and a child behind closed doors.

### **CONTACT WITH AUTHORIZED ADULTS**

Authorized Adults who leave children in the care of the Space Foundation team members and volunteers for services and activities will be contacted if the child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Space Foundation activities.

## **INVOLVEMENT**

Authorized Adults are encouraged to be a part of any and all services and programs in which children are involved at the Space Foundation. Each Authorized Adults accompanying a child or children to any Space Foundation program or activity is responsible for the child(ren)'s safety.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

An Authorized Adult who desires to participate in such a way as to have ongoing contact with children in the Space Foundation program other than his/her own child(ren) will be considered a volunteer. All volunteers are required to submit to an interview process and successfully complete a background investigation prior to serving as a volunteer. The Space Foundation reserves the right to accept or deny any individual to its volunteer program.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

The Space Foundation is committed to protecting the children in our care. The Space Foundation has implemented a physical contact policy that will promote a positive, nurturing environment while protecting children. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of Space Foundation team members or volunteers must foster trust at all times – personal conduct must be above reproach. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Space Foundation programs:

1. Pats on the back, "high fives" and other forms of appropriate physical contact between team members or volunteers and children are generally suitable in the Space Foundation setting. Do not, however, force even these types of physical contact on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection should be immediately reported to a Space Foundation supervisor or Team Leader and/or to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead.

## **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

At the end of the program day or activity, Space Foundation team members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to an Authorized Adult.

In the event that a team member or volunteer is uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, he/she should immediately locate or contact a Space Foundation supervisor or Team Leader and/or to the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead, before releasing the child.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS**

Team members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children. Team members and volunteers are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any child in the program. This provision includes the use of mobile phones, text messages, e-mail, instant messaging and online chat rooms.

## **POSSESSION OF SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS**

Space Foundation team members and volunteers are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, etc.) on Space Foundation property or in the presence of children.

## **INTERNET/ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

No computer at or related to the Space Foundation is to be used by team members, volunteers, children or others to engage in computer chat room discussions or visit pornographic, sexually inappropriate websites, or other materially explicit or violent websites. Violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any questions about inappropriate use of computers or the suitability of a particular website should be discussed with the Space Foundation Child Safety Lead.

## **VERBAL INTERACTIONS**

Verbal interactions between team members or volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. Space Foundation team members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission to provide nurturing care to children. Team members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.



