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## PREPARING CHAPERONES FOR NCYC

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Chaperones assist not only their dioceses, but also the NFCYM in providing an event that is both fun and safe for young people. Many dioceses have in place their own chaperone training programs that address their specific needs. Other dioceses have not yet developed such programs. Because chaperones serve both their dioceses and NCYC, all dioceses are asked to find a way to impart the following information to the adults traveling with them in advance of departure. NFCYM believes that informed chaperones make the best chaperones.

Advance training can take place in many ways, from face-to-face meetings conducted by diocesan or parish group leaders to a series of informational flyers mailed directly to each chaperone to web-based materials or regular email communication. Each diocese should design a process that works for its group's size and diocesan geography. Regardless of how chaperone training is conducted, dioceses are strongly encouraged to provide opportunities for chaperones to meet the young people who will be in their care before leaving for NCYC. This will help the chaperones and young people recognize each other, learn each other's names, and a little about one another, which should make chaperones' job a great deal easier on site.

NFCYM requires that chaperones be at least 21 years of age or older and appropriately screened and trained for service according to the diocese's policies for youth protection. NFCYM suggests that dioceses have both male and female chaperones in proportion to the gender make-up of the delegation. Further, NFCYM suggests that dioceses require chaperones to refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages for the duration of NCYC, including travel to and from the host city.

### NFCYM Adult Code of Conduct

Young people are the most important gifts God entrusts to us. As an adult participant in an NFCYM-sponsored youth event or program, I promise to strictly follow these policies and the following standards as a condition of my providing services to either to my diocese/organization and/or NFCYM.

#### I will:

Conduct myself in a manner that exhibits the highest Christian ethical standards and avoids even the appearance of impropriety, and therefore I will:

- 1) Report suspected abuse of any minor to the appropriate authorities.
- 2) Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of minors.
- 3) Develop and maintain the level of skill required to be competent.
- 4) Be knowledgeable of and adhere to all applicable aspects of *Safeguarding God's Children: NFCYM Policies for Protecting Young People*. (<http://www.nfcym.org/youthprotection>)
- 5) Complete training in youth protection in my diocese or, if not available in my diocese, through the Boy Scouts of America's on-line training/certification program.
- 6) Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- 7) Honor the equality of all people, avoiding all forms of discrimination and respecting the dignity of each person without regard to economic status, age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or physical or mental abilities.
- 8) Use positive reinforcement and communication rather than criticism, unhealthy competition, or comparison.
- 9) Become thoroughly familiar with the objectives and guidelines of the program in which I am participating and strive to achieve these objectives and communicate them appropriately.
- 10) Be aware of and adhere to emergency plans and evacuation routes appropriate to the program in which I am participating.
- 11) Be responsible and/or accountable for stewardship of all resources entrusted to my care.

- 12) Uphold the authority of those responsible for the program or activity in which I am participating and assist them in every way to encourage learning and to conduct fair and impartial events.
- 13) Avoid situations where I am alone with minors, always following the two adult rule.
- 14) Avoid any form of excessive familiarity, inappropriate language, or any situation and conduct that exploits or could give the appearance of exploiting another.
- 15) Follow practices that consistently exhibit no tolerance for any form of abusive behavior.
- 16) Follow practices that demonstrate appropriate relationships between all NFCYM personnel and minors that are important for a child's development and a positive part of ministry.

**I will not:**

- 1) Use physical affection to initiate inappropriate contact with minors.
- 2) Touch a minor in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- 3) Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of minors.
- 4) Purchase tobacco products for or distribute tobacco products to minors.
- 5) Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol while supervising minors or while participating in an NFCYM youth event.
- 6) Purchase alcohol for or distribute alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 years.
- 7) Use, purchase, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- 8) Purchase, download, possess, or distribute pornography.
- 9) Pose any known health risk to minors (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations).
- 10) Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, demean, nor degrade minors or others nor tolerate such behavior in the environment for which I am responsible.
- 11) Use physical discipline in any way for behavior management of minors. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This includes but is not limited to spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, hitting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior of a minor.
- 12) Use profanity in any form in the presence of minors.

I have read *Safeguarding God's Children: NFCYM Policies for Protecting Young People* ([www.nfcym.org/youthprotection](http://www.nfcym.org/youthprotection)), understand its meaning, and agree to conduct myself in accordance with its terms.

I hereby represent that I am not currently being investigated for, nor have I ever been convicted of a disqualifying offense as defined in *Safeguarding God's Children: NFCYM Policies for Protecting Young People*; I have never been terminated from employment or a volunteer position for reasons related to allegations of physical or sexual abuse by me; nor have I sought or received any medical, physical, or psychological treatment for reasons involving physical or sexual abuse by me.

I understand that should my response to any of the statements above change, I am obligated to inform my diocese/organization/NFCYM immediately. Moreover, I understand that should I admit to, plead no contest to, or be found guilty of an incident of sexual misconduct or other disqualifying offense, or if it appears that an alleged claim is substantiated; my services with NFCYM-sponsored youth events shall be immediately terminated. Further, I understand that my failure to agree to and abide by the Adult Code of Conduct will bar me from participation in any NFCYM-sponsored youth event.

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**\*Disqualifying offenses include but may not be limited to the following:**

1. A felony or misdemeanor classified as an offense against the person whether an adult or a minor.
  - a. Offenses against the person include, but are not limited to murder, assault, battery, sexual assault, injury to a child, and abandoning or endangering a child.
  - b. Offenses against the family include, but are not limited to, bigamy, incest, interference with child custody, enticing a child, and harboring a runaway child.

2. A felony or misdemeanor classified as an offense against public order.
  - a. Offenses against public order include but are not limited to prostitution, obscenity, sexual performance by a child, possession or promotion of child pornography.
  - b. A felony or misdemeanor violation of any law intended to control the possession or distribution of any substance included as a controlled substance by a governing or law enforcement agency.
3. While a serious offense, driving while intoxicated may not be a disqualifying offense for volunteering but must disqualify someone from driving any NFCYM vehicle or any other vehicle at NFCYM sponsored activities or events and must disqualify someone from transporting young people to and from an NFCYM event.

Civil cases for damages for any of the foregoing types of acts or omissions may also be disqualifying offenses for purposes of these policies.

## General Responsibilities

While chaperones will likely already be aware of the following information, please provide a review.

- The possession or use of illegal drugs by any individual will not be tolerated.
- The possession of any weapon by any individual will not be tolerated.
- Chaperones must adhere to the NFCYM Adult Code of Conduct (see above).
- Chaperones should review the NFCYM Youth Code of Conduct with the youth assigned to their care and supervision ([www.nfcym.org/ncyc/youthconduct](http://www.nfcym.org/ncyc/youthconduct)).
- Chaperones are responsible for helping to enforce the NFCYM Adult and Youth Codes of Conduct. If a person is engaging in inappropriate and/or unsafe behavior, chaperones should not hesitate to take appropriate corrective action. *This should be done in as pastoral way as possible.*
- Chaperones, as well as youth, are expected to attend all conference activities.
- During all conference activities, especially the dance and other recreational/social activities, chaperones should be available to supervise *all* youth.
- Chaperones should not go anywhere during the conference where youth are not permitted (i.e. cocktail lounges, bars, etc.)
- Chaperones are responsible for enforcing the NCYC curfew (12 a.m.) and for keeping noise to a minimum in the hotels. Chaperones do not have the authority to extend the curfew.
- Be sure that all participants have filled in the following information on the back of their name badge:
 

Hotel Name	Chaperone's Mobile Number
Hotel Telephone Number	Bus Company Name
Diocesan Leader's Name	Bus Number and Location
Diocesan Leader's Mobile Number	Meeting Location in Case of Emergency
Chaperone's Name	
- After receiving conference program books and quick guides, chaperones should review key information with youth. This is especially necessary since young people only receive the quick guide and not the more detailed program book. Chaperones should help young people become familiar with the layout of the conference facility, as well as help plan concurrent session and workshop choices, and assure they understand important safety information.
- Chaperones should designate a place where young people can locate them at intervals throughout the day (morning, afternoon, evening). This meeting place should be in a public and identifiable part of the convention center and not obstruct traffic flow. THE FOLLOWING PLACES ARE OFF LIMITS AS MEETING POINTS: the interior of the arena and meeting rooms and high traffic areas such as hallways, stairs, and doorways.
- Chaperones are expected to maintain the separation of boys and girls in sleeping rooms at hotels.
- Chaperones should check sleeping rooms periodically after curfew to make sure the young people remain in their assigned rooms. Hotel security personnel may question youth's presence in the hotel

corridors, especially after curfew, as well as investigate when excessive noise is coming from sleeping rooms. NOTE: If a chaperone must enter young people's sleeping room, a second chaperone should be present.

- Keep the diocesan group leader's cell phone number available in case of emergency.
- Before leaving the hotel each day, chaperones should be sure their group members are dressed appropriately\* and have everything they need for the day including:
  - NCYC credential/name tag
  - Copy of medical release form
  - Quick Guide
  - Jacket/sweater

\*Appropriate Attire: Short shorts, tank tops, and anything that does not promote Christian values including references to tobacco or alcohol products are not appropriate.

## MEDICAL

All participants should keep a copy of their medical permission form with them at all times. If a young person becomes ill during the conference, consult diocesan guidelines for the appropriate action to be taken. First aid and emergency medical assistance are available during program hours at the dome and convention center. If a situation occurs outside of programming hours, hotel front desk staff should be able to assist with contacting appropriate medical assistance. Medication, even over-the-counter, should not be shared. It is important to track youth that are taking any type of medication. In an emergency situation doctors will need to know what the youth has taken.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR DIOCESAN GROUP LEADERS' CONSIDERATION

- Provide as part of the conference package, or encourage young people to bring, items to trade with other groups (ex. pins, hats, bandanas, etc.).
- Have participants wear comfortable shoes.
- Inform chaperones (and participants) that noise levels can exceed a comfortable level. They may wish to bring hearing protection.
- Large groups often provide as part of their package colored T-shirts, hats, sweatshirts, flags, banners or other identifiable objects to help keep groups together.
- Each chaperone should be encouraged to have a cell phone. The diocesan group leader's number should be available to chaperones at all times.
- Create and communicate a plan for evening room and curfew checks.
- Review the diocesan chain of command for the trip (i.e. chaperone → parish group leader → diocesan group leader).
- Review diocesan procedures for handling the illness of a youth participant.
- Consider making and distributing labels to be placed on the back of name badges with the following information

Hotel Name	Chaperone's Mobile Number
Hotel Telephone Number	Bus Company Name
Diocesan Leader's Name	Bus Number and Location
Diocesan Leader's Mobile/Pager Number	Meeting Location in Case of Emergency
Chaperone's Name	
- Remind chaperones that all problems/complaints/critiques do not need to be shared with young people. Youth will take their cues from the reactions and behaviors of their chaperones.
- Help chaperones remember that this is a blessed opportunity. God has chosen them as a vessel to give young people an opportunity to experience Christ. We lead by example. Young people's experiences of faith are a direct result of adults who walk with them in faith.