

Child Safety for University Youth Initiatives

1. Reporting Suspected or Reported Abuse

Members of the campus community should utilize reporting mechanisms that are in place to report any suspected instances of abuse, neglect or exploitation of children.

- a) For emergencies, call 911, the University Police Department or local law enforcement and follow up by informing your supervisor.
- b) If a child discloses that he or she has been abused by someone, DO NOT investigate to determine if the reported abuse is true, ask leading questions, make promises, or notify the parents or caretaker. Ask only the following questions: "What happened?", "Who did this to you?", "When and Where did this happen?".
- c) For any cases of suspected, ongoing abuse or neglect, the person receiving the report should contact local law enforcement.
- d) Once the incident is reported to law enforcement, notification must be given to the camp or program director. The program director must file an online report with the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services at the following link:
<http://www.txabusehotline.org/Login?Default.aspx>
- e) It is important to maintain the highest level of confidentiality and professionalism when reporting, and the report must be made as soon as possible.

2. Child Protection Training and Criminal Conviction and Sex Offender Background Checks

All individuals working with minors in summer camps and youth programs or providing individual tutoring and/or instruction on the campus of the University are required by law to have completed A&M System approved Child Protection Training, at least once every two years. These individuals are also required to have a criminal conviction and sex offender background check performed annually, prior to working with minors. These requirements exist whether the person is an employee of the University or not. The following procedure will be followed by camp directors to ensure compliance with these requirements.

1. As soon as possible, but not later than three weeks prior to the beginning of any summer camp or youth program, camp directors and/or faculty conducting tutoring and/or private instruction are responsible for developing a list of all persons who will be working with minors. The list must be sent utilizing the approved spreadsheet format, and must be e-mailed (not faxed, and not scanned) and should include the title and dates of the camp and/or tutoring/private lesson sessions, the camp directors name and contact

information, the full names and e-mail addresses of the persons who will work the camp, and whether or not the camp worker is:

- a) A current employee (this includes student workers and part-time employees).
 - b) A new employee
 - c) A contractor
 - d) A volunteer
2. If the person is a contractor, you must also include a Request for Criminal History Check form, faxed only to HR at extension 5871.
 3. If the person is a volunteer, you must include the Request for Criminal History Check form, as well as the Volunteer Waiver form, both should be faxed only to HR at extension 5871.
 4. If the person is a current employee, HR will verify that a criminal history check was conducted, and contact the camp director if a Request for Criminal History Check form is needed. New Hire Packets can be found at https://hr.tamucc.edu/Faculty_Staff_Resources/Forms/index.html
 5. The list, as described above must be submitted by the camp director as soon as possible, but not later than three weeks prior to the start of the camp. The list should be sent to: joseph.miller@tamucc.edu, rosie.ruiz@tamucc.edu and maria.pedigo@tamucc.edu.

Requests for Criminal History Check, New Hire Packets and Volunteer Waivers should be sent directly to HR. at <http://hrhirepack@tamucc.edu>

6. Upon receipt of the list, the Training & Development Office will assign the mandatory Child Protection Training for current employees through TrainTraq. (Camp workers who are not current employees will be given access to the online training through External Gateway, without the necessity of acquiring a UIN.) The names provided on the list should be the same name used in the online training. Different use of nicknames or misspelled names on the online training will delay verifying training credit. **It is the camp director's responsibility to ensure that all persons working with minors complete the training, prior to any contact with minors.**

Five days prior to the beginning of each camp, the Office of Research Engagement will provide the updated roster to the camp director, so that the camp director may follow up with any that are incomplete. On the last business day before 'day one' of the camp, the list will be generated again, and any workers that have not completed the training must not be allowed to have contact with minors until training completion is verified.

3. Distribution and Security of Medicine

It is the responsibility of each camp director to determine whether or not, based on the nature of that camp, they have the capability to assume the responsibility of dispensing medications to campers. If a camp director accepts that responsibility, the following elements must be in place:

- a) Medications, either prescribed or over the counter, if presented by participant parents/guardians should be housed in a specified, secure location where they can be dispensed by a designated staff member
- b) Utilize a *Dispensing Log* to document any medications dispensed and keep on file for review if necessary.
- c) Do not dispense medication without specific written instructions from parent/guardian.

4. Medical Emergencies

- a. It is required that at least one person certified in First Aid/CPR is on duty with campers at all times. Recreational Sports provides First Aid/CPR training periodically throughout the year.
- b. Maintain *Emergency Contact/Consent to Treat* info so that key personnel can access them easily.
- c. For serious emergencies, call 911. The University Police monitors all 911 calls.
- d. Camp personnel are expected to be prepared to respond appropriately in the case of medical emergencies, and this response should be included in your training.
- e. For any first aid given, be sure to document carefully what was provided.
- f. Notify parents as soon as possible.
- g. Notify the Director of Research Engagement as soon as feasible.
- h. Make sure to follow university incident reporting protocols.

5. Confidentiality of Personal Health Information

- a. It is the legal and ethical responsibility of all TAMUCC staff, students, volunteers and representatives to protect the privacy and confidentiality of patients' personal health information.
- b. Only the minimum necessary amount of health information should be collected from program participants, as offered by parent/guardian, and only insofar as is necessary to provide parent/guardian instructed care.
- c. Only those individuals with a need to access and use an individuals health information are permitted to do so.
- d. Personal health information must be kept in a secure location within camp files.
- e. Personal health information should be destroyed after two years of storage.

6. Staffing

- a. All camps should maintain a minimum of a 1:10 staff to camper ratio, whenever possible. However, it is understood that there may be some sedentary, low risk activities where more flexibility may be allowed (e.g. classroom style activities). Under no circumstances should there be a staff to camper ratio any higher than 1:25. At no time should a group of campers, of any size, be unsupervised by staff. Individual staff members must never be alone with individual campers.
- b. Each camp must have a designated camp director, with the overall responsibility for planning and executing the program, training and supervising the camp staff, and ensuring compliance with all University rules and procedures, including coordination of efforts and cooperation with Office of Research Engagement requirements. Camp directors are responsible for developing job duty descriptions for camp counselors for their individual programs.
- c. Camp counselors must be fully trained in both the plan of activities for the individual camp, as well as University rules and procedures.
- d. Communication including social media between minors and counselors outside of University programming is prohibited. If there is a legitimate reason for communication to occur with the minor after the camp is over, the employee/volunteer should seek approval to do so from the parent/guardian.

7. Special Needs Campers

A&M-CC camps do not discriminate against youth based on disabilities. Every effort must be made to accommodate campers with special needs, within the context of the individual camp activities.

8. General Safety and Emergency Response Awareness

- a. Review and understand all of the relevant material on the University's Safety homepage at <http://safety.tamucc.edu/index.html>
- b. Each camp director is individually responsible to have appropriate procedures in place and have adequately trained staff on hand to be prepared to deal with any possible emergency. Prior planning is the key to having a safe and successful camp.