



Code of Conduct for Those Working With or Around Minors and Young Adults

As employees who work with or around minors and young adults, you are required to abide by the following guidelines when interacting with above mentioned population. For statistical purposes, we will use the United Nations definition of “**young adults**” as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. A “**minor**” is a person under the age of 18.

You have a duty to the minors and young adults with whom you work, to CIEE, and to yourselves to prevent and report any abuse or improper behavior. We also require that you avoid situations where an allegation of improper conduct can arise. Accordingly, you must adhere to a code of conduct when working with minors and young adults.

- Never use any form of physical or emotional punishment to discipline minors or young adults participating in any program.
- Never yell at, belittle or demean a minor or a young adult. Speak to them in an appropriate and respectful manner.
- Never engage in rough or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Do not touch minors and young adults or allow any inappropriate touching between them.
- Do not swear or use or respond to sexual innuendo; never make a sexually suggestive comment, even if the intention is just to be funny.
- Do not allow minors or young adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Do not put yourself in a situation that can be misconstrued or manipulated by others; Avoid any appearance of impropriety and think of how situations may be viewed in hindsight; It is preferable that you conduct interactions with minors in public spaces.
- Do not drive a CIEE student anywhere at any time. If there is an emergency, call emergency services or use a professional service such as a taxi/uber. If driving a personal car is the only option or in the best interests of the student in the circumstances, there must be another adult with you, e.g., group leader, staff member.
- Do not favor one student over another; do not give gifts to any student in a program; do not accept expensive gifts (over \$25 or equivalent in local currency) from any student in a program.



- Do not drink alcohol or smoke when working with minors in your professional capacity. Be professional and maintain the highest standards of personal behavior at all times.
- Do not keep secrets with a minor. Do not tell minors: “This is just between the two of us” or use similar language that encourages them to keep secrets from others.
- Avoid spending time alone with a minor away from others; try to avoid being alone with a minor, particularly in a restroom, changing or shower areas (follow the “rule of three” and always make sure there is another person with you).
- Encourage minors to use a “buddy system” to stay together when going to the bathroom, on field trips, or when leaving the classroom area.

What is Child Abuse and Neglect?

Child or minor abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, often by adults they know and trust. Different forms of child abuse include physical abuse, neglect, sexual and emotional abuse. **Child or minor neglect** is a form of child abuse, and it refers to the deficit in meeting a child's basic needs. Child abuse includes all of the following¹:

- Physical abuse²
- Sexual abuse³
- Emotional and Psychological abuse⁴

What If a Minor Tells You They Are Being Abused?

Stay calm and ensure that the minor is safe and feels safe. Second, assure the minor that you are taking what they say seriously and that you are going to help them, and they did the right thing about deciding to tell you. Be honest, explain you will have to tell someone else to help stop the abuse. Avoid making promises you cannot keep. Third, make a note of what the minor

¹ Definitions of child abuse and neglect. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau

² Is generally defined as "any nonaccidental physical injury to the child" and can include striking, kicking, burning, or biting the child, or any action that results in a physical impairment of the child.

³ Engaging in sexually inappropriate conduct of any kind toward or in the presence of a child, including but not limited to sexual abuse of a child; touching a child in an inappropriate or illegal manner; making pornography or other sexually inappropriate materials in any form available to a child or assisting a child in gaining access to such materials.

⁴ Defined as “a pattern of intentional verbal or behavioral actions or lack of actions that convey to a child the message that he or she is worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered, or only of value to meet someone else's needs”.



has said as soon as possible – be as detailed as possible and write down everything that you remember.

Important: Do not investigate on your own! ALWAYS REPORT!

Your Duty to Report

In many jurisdictions, law requires professionals whose work brings them in contact with children or young adults to notify local child protection authorities if they suspect that a child is being abused and/or neglected.

- Whether you are legally required to report or not, you **MUST** always report.
- **If you witness a child in a life-threatening situation, you must call 911 (or local emergency operator) immediately.**
- All other concerns for a child's safety and well-being must be reported.

Where and How to Report:

- In addition to your Department's current reporting protocols, report to your immediate supervisor or the Center Director. They will assist you to report to the designated agencies, if required.
- You should notify the CIEE management (regional/headquarters) if the direct line manager or the Center Director is the subject of concern (the abuser). The Regional Director of Operations (RDO) (or possibly other staff member) is obligated to inform each reported suspicion to the HR, Legal and HSS divisions of the CIEE headquarters. If the subject of concern is a member of a partner organization, the reporter of the incident shall inform any CIEE staff member.
- All information will be handled with utmost confidentiality. The reporter of the incident may be asked to provide follow-up information during the investigation.
- Please keep in mind that:
 - **Suspicion of abuse or neglect is all that is necessary to report.**
 - Reports are highly confidential.
 - You will be asked to describe what happened and your concerns about the child, who was involved, who else might have been involved.
 - State the facts in as much detail as possible and all subsequent developments. Do not make assumptions or draw conclusions.
 - Handle information with utmost confidentiality and do not disclose to anyone who does not need to know. Protect the privacy of both the suspect(s) and the victim(s).



Investigation

- All reported cases will be investigated. CIEE staff who received the report will contact the HR, Legal and HSS Units of CIEE HQ in order to discuss the appropriate actions to take.
- HR, Legal and HSS Units will follow all local laws and procedures in reporting the incident.
- Reported data and evidence of reported incidents will be protected and only be available for those who need the information to carry out their duties (“need to know” basis only).



Acknowledgment of Responsibility

My signature below represents my acknowledgment that I have received a copy of *CIEE Code of Conduct for Those Working With or Around Minors and Young Adults* (herein "Policy") and understood the provided guideline.

I certify that I agree to comply and adhere to the Policy.

Employee name

Job title

Employee signature

Date