

# CODE OF CONDUCT

Georgia College is committed to the safety and protection of children. This Code of Conduct applies to those bringing minors to campus, in addition to all faculty, staff, employees, volunteers and students who represent the school and who interact with children or young people in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

The public and private conduct of faculty, staff, employees, students, and volunteers acting on behalf of Georgia College can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact, or can cause great harm if inappropriate. We must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany our work.

We should be aware of our own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with children and youth, and be particularly aware that we are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional, and sexual boundaries in such interactions. We must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviors with those for whom we have responsibility. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits, abuses, or harasses. We are to provide safe environments for children and youth at all campus locations.

We must show prudent discretion before touching another person, especially children and youth, and be aware of how physical touch will be perceived or received, and whether it would be an appropriate expression of greeting, care, concern, instruction, or celebration.

While on campus, you are prohibited at all times from physically disciplining a child.

Physical contact with children can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it, and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a child or young person are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open or a window providing clear visibility, and another staff member or supervisor is notified about the meeting.

**We must realize our duties as a Mandatory Reporter.** We must immediately report any reasonable suspicion or knowledge of abuse of a minor to the Georgia College Department of Public Safety and the appropriate supervisor or program manager who can take immediate action.

While on campus, you should refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol at all times, and from the use of tobacco products, alcohol and/or drugs when working with children. Adults should never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to young people. Staff members and volunteers should not accept gifts from, or give gifts to children without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.

Communication with children is governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers, and minors:

- Communication between you and minors that is outside the role of the professional or volunteer relationship (teacher, coach, host, etc.) is prohibited.
- Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the school are to be made using a school email address.
- Electronic communication that takes place over a school network or platform may be subject to periodic monitoring.
- Faculty, staff, and volunteers who use any form of online communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with minors may only do so for activities involving school business.

## Statement of Acknowledgement of Code of Conduct

I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my team's participation on the Georgia College campus.

I will:

- Maintain custody and supervision of my team at all times. I understand that at no point will Georgia College accept custody of my players or attendees. It is my responsibility to provide appropriate supervision at all times.
- Ensure bed checks and other safety protocols and procedures are implemented to ensure the safety and protection of those in my custody.
- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Never be alone with children and/or youth at activities without another adult being notified.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children – when necessary – only in ways that are appropriate, public, and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations as detailed this document.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening, or degrading children and/or youth.
- Smoke or use tobacco products, or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children and/or youth.
- Give a child who is not my own a ride home alone.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to children or youth without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
- Engage in private communications with children via text messaging, email, Facebook, Twitter or similar forms of electronic or social media except for activities strictly involving university business.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth at any time.

I understand that as a person working with and/or providing services to children and youth at Georgia, I am subject to a criminal history background check. My signature confirms that I have successfully passed a background check provided by my employer. My signature also confirms that I have read this Code of Conduct and that as a person working with children and youth I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in immediate removal from this program.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_