

Abuse Prevention Policy

Presbyterian Youth Triennium

Believing that God calls youth and adults to learn, serve, worship and experience the community of faith together - the staff of the Presbyterian Youth Triennium, in cooperation with the sponsoring denominational abuse prevention requirements and guidelines expects the following conduct and practice from youth and adults at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium:

ADULT ADVISORS, APPROPRIATE ADULT CHOICES AND CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

- Church and presbytery delegations must have the appropriate ratio of adult advisors to youth participants. This ratio is: 10 youth (of the same gender) to 1 adult (of the same gender).
- Delegations must participate in AT LEAST one pre-event orientation to build community, review the Triennium Guidelines for Community Life and discuss how that delegation will travel, live and learn safely and faithfully during the event days.
- All Adult Advisors (volunteers chosen to chaperone church and presbytery delegations) **MUST** have a PYT Background Screening Check run that results in an approved criminal background screening report check in order to serve as an adult advisor. Delegation registrars will work with the National PYT Registrar to provide adult advisors with the instructions to complete Consent Release procedures in order for the background check to be run.
- Churches and Presbyteries are expected to cover the cost of the criminal background checks. Instructions will be provided to the registrars and adult advisors as well as the PYT volunteer staff. These guidelines and instructions will be communicated prior to the background screening process.
- Background checks will only be run in the year of the event and will be run through the PYT Abuse Prevention partner, Praesidium, Inc,.
- All PYT adult volunteers (small group leaders, office staff, EMTs, etc...) must have a current **AND** approved criminal background check in order to be confirmed as a volunteer. Triennium staff must keep a record of all signed release forms (denominational policy) and reports. Criminal background check instructions and forms will be provided to the volunteers by their assigned PYT staff person. PYT will cover the cost of the volunteer background checks.

YOUTH ABUSE PREVENTION AND CARE

- All PYT participants (youth and adult) are expected to follow the “2&1” rule. During **any** situation there should be at least 2 youth and 1 adult present or 2 adult and 1 youth present. Youth and Adults should not be alone, 1 to 1, in any room, classroom, or office. If a 1 to 1 situation is absolutely unavoidable – the adult should take care to keep the situation as public as possible (doors open, another adult notified and aware of the meeting, documentation in the Incident Report Log, etc...). The 2&1 rule is in effect for all situations (before or after small groups, in the residence halls, in the dining courts, at recreation events, if someone has to leave worship or go to the hospital).

- Youth and Adults will maintain different showering and grooming hours in the residence halls bathrooms and shower rooms. These hours are posted in the residence halls (denominational policy).
- If emergency or medical transport is necessary the “2&1” rule should be practiced. If a Conference Dean must transport a youth to the hospital or FIRST AID STATION for care there should be another adult or youth present.
- Small Group Leaders and Adult Advisors should sit, in a public place, such as a residence hall lobby, a common area, a mall, a place with other people in close proximity, if they would like to pray together, talk, or share ideas.
- If anyone, youth or adult, finds themselves in a situation where they feel alarm, distress, danger or coercion from another person (youth or adult) they should contact their Residence Hall Coordinator or Conference Dean immediately. Or, they can come to the PYT office and ask to speak to the PYT staff or a conference pastor. Care will be taken to talk with both parties and to seek for a way to provide appropriate follow up and support. These instructions must be shared with youth and adults in an official capacity (e.g. orientation meeting, pre-event meeting).
- Adults should not encourage or suggest situations where they are alone with young people in an isolated space. If a young person approaches an adult and asks to talk, pray, or walk with, adults are asked to suggest to the young person that they might meet in a few minutes “outside” or in a lobby ... some place that is public.
- If an adult (small group leader, support staff, etc.) is privy to information regarding a young person’s life, wellness, safety the adult should immediately alert the Conference Dean of the young person’s residence hall. It is the Dean’s responsibility to ensure that adult advisors, conference pastors and parents are made aware of critical information. If the situation is one of certain danger the adult should make sure to share the information with their assigned PYT staff person.
- Physical contact between youth and adults should be limited to appropriate youth/adult contact. Side hugs, no lap sitting, no pinning down, tackling, wrestling.
- An adult should never share inappropriate materials, images, statements, jokes or body language with a youth or any other PYT participant.
- Youth participants should never share inappropriate materials, images, statements, jokes or body language with each other or with adults.
- An adult should never invite a young person into his/her sleeping room, car, bus, van, or any other private location.
- If an inappropriate meeting is observed by another PYT participant – the observer should immediately contact their Conference Dean with this information.
- Adults should not text, email or call with private messages or invitations. Communication following the Triennium should remain public or semi-public (e.g. Small Group Facebook page) unless they are responding to a direct question.
- Adults and youth should not share residence hall sleeping rooms. The exception to this rule is for the occasional caregiver/youth situation or parent/youth situation. If a youth participant

requires a caregiver/para – the PYT National registrar will need written permission from the youth's parent/guardian.

- PYT participants are asked to conduct themselves with extraordinary decorum, patience, and modesty while attending the event and while traveling to and from the event.