

## **Statement of Understanding Child and Youth Services Personnel**

### Standards of Conduct and Accountability in Child and Youth Services (CYS) Programs

#### **I understand that:**

1. I am responsible for providing guidance in accordance with (IAW) CYS Policy by using knowledge, skills and abilities to identify appropriate and inappropriate behavior of children/youth based on their age and social/emotional development. I will role-model and explicitly teach problem-solving strategies, impulse control, empathy and acceptance of self and others as well as pro-social behavior.
  
2. I will never use corporal/physical punishment, psychological abuse or coercion as an acceptable form of guidance. Guidance will never be punitive in nature. Children will not be punished physically or verbally for lapses in toilet training or refusing food. I will never punish children/youth by any of the following: spanking, pinching, dragging or grabbing, shaking, or other corporal punishment; isolation; confinement in closets, boxes, or similar places; time away/timeout; binding to restrict the movement of mouth or limbs; humiliation, verbal abuse, taunting or teasing; deprivation of meals, snacks, outdoor play opportunities, or other program components. Restricting the use of specific play materials and equipment, or participation in a specific activity will be based on the developmental age and social/emotional development of the child and if it poses a safety concern for the child or others.
  
3. I am responsible for knowing the boundaries for appropriate and inappropriate touching that are established to ensure that CYS personnel have a clear understanding of what is acceptable and what is not. These boundaries are specified in the Standards of Conduct and Accountability SOP.
  
4. If an allegation of abuse/neglect is made against me, it will be grounds for immediate closure of my Family Child Care (FCC) home or reassignment outside of CYS until the investigation is completed.
  
5. I am responsible for supervising Infants, Pre-toddlers and Toddlers by sight and sound at all times, including when sleeping. Mirrors and video monitoring do not replace direct sight and sound supervision. Preschool and kindergarten children are supervised by sight most of the time, with the exception of brief periods when children cannot be seen but still heard, as long as I check frequently on children who are out of sight (i.e. child using the toilet independently, child in a library area). Kindergarteners and School-age children may leave my supervision for brief periods, so long as they are in a safe environment (such as going to a hall bathroom) but must be within sight and/or hearing most of the time. Middle School and Teen youth are supervised by monitoring areas where youth are engaged in activities and requires that I move throughout the facility.

6. I am responsible for maintaining specific accountability for each Child Development Center (CDC)/Family Child Care (FCC) child in my group or each School Age Center (SAC)/Middle School Teen (MST) youth in my facility. I will follow the systems in place to account for children and youth at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition in CDC/SAC and during off-site activities based on risk assessment analysis. If I observe a child slipping away from or leaving his/her primary care group or discover a youth in an off-limits area within the facility, I will notify the primary caregiver. These instances are not considered abuse/neglect. I am part of a team and am responsible for assisting my teammates as needed.
7. I will conduct or participate in a face-to-name count of children conducted once per hour in CDCs and during transitions in and out of the classroom. I will monitor all School Age children and Middle School/Teen youth while they independently move throughout the facility.
8. I must ensure the physical count of children/youth and/or the system that is used to monitor the whereabouts of children matches the number signed in (applies to direct care and management staff). I must ensure that the physical count of children/youth matches the number swiped into Child and Youth Management System (CYMS) (applies to management staff only).
9. I will focus my full attention on the children/youth in my care and will refrain from using personal electronic devices (to include cell phones, tablets, laptops and smart watches) while counted in ratio.
10. I am responsible for ensuring that all children/youth safely evacuate the building in the event of an emergency.
11. I understand that CYS facilities are under continuous video and audio surveillance through Closed Circuit Television (CCTV). I also understand that recordings may be used to substantiate or refute allegations of child abuse/neglect or recognize positive performance.
12. I may be observed by a manager or Training Specialist as part of a documented training or performance observation any time during my duty hours, either in person or through the use of the CCTV System.
13. As a mandated reporter I will immediately and directly report to the Reporting Point of Contact (RPOC) and local Child Protective Services (CPS) (if located in the U.S.) any incident I witness which a reasonable person would consider child abuse or neglect.
14. If I witness an incident that a reasonable person would not consider child abuse or neglect, but is still a violation of this guidance, I will immediately verbally report it to my supervisor or other management staff, and follow up in writing.

15. I am responsible for completing reports on accidents, injuries to children/youth, or other unusual incidents that occur while I am on duty.

16. I will wear my appropriate color coded apparel (ensuring apparel can be seen at all times and from all angles) when caring for children/youth.

17. I will refrain from commenting, passing judgment, or providing guidance or input on sensitive topics with children/youth. I will encourage children/youth to reach out to a trusted family member or counselor for discussion.

18. The following Social Media and Electronic Communications are prohibited:

- Displaying in the workplace or any other place likely to embarrass or undermine the professional credibility of the CYS program or otherwise interfere with CYS operations, any material that is sexually explicit, provocative, inappropriate, inflammatory, or unprofessional. Such materials shall not be present on CYS premises.
- Communication to staff or children/youth that is unprofessional or inappropriate.
- Communication with children/youth through social media platforms except via the program's official social media pages (e.g. facebook, twitter).
- Communication with children/youth by email and messaging except via staff's .mil email address – all electronic communications with children/youth will have a parent and at least one other staff member on the cc line.
- Communication with children/youth by text message via a personal device.
- Sharing home or personal email, messaging, phone numbers or social media addresses with children/youth.
- Posting media to a personal social media site which includes non-familial children/youth enrolled in CYS programs.
- Use of Personal Electronic Devices while on duty.

19. I am required to immediately inform my supervisor/program director if I am charged with a crime referenced on the DD Form 2981 Basic Criminal History and Statement of Admission.

## **CAREGIVER'S CREED**

**“I am an Army Caregiver, a professional trained in my duties. I serve Department of Defense Families who protect the nation, by protecting their children/youth. I will always provide a safe, nurturing, enriching environment and ensure accountability for children/youth in my care. Never will I put children/youth in harm's way or allow others to do so. I will build trust with parents/guardians so they can concentrate on their mission. I will always treat Families with the dignity and respect they deserve. Army Caregivers are key members of the Army Team. I am an Army Caregiver.”**

My signature acknowledges that I have read, understand, and will comply with the Caregiver's Creed and the Standard of Conduct and Accountability SOP on appropriate

guidance, touching, interactions, social media, and accountability of children/youth, and my role in preventing and reporting child abuse or neglect in CYS programs.

In addition, my signature acknowledges I have read and understand:

- a. AR 608-10, sections pertaining to the Touch Policy and supervision of children, and other sections as directed by management;
- b. AR 608-18 Chapter 8, Out of Home Cases in DoD Sanctioned Activities;
- c. Latest CYS Multi-Disciplinary Team Inspection tool sections on Risk Management and Supervision; and
- d. My Position Description, which states my designation as a mandated reporter of child abuse or neglect.

I understand that failure to comply with these policies may result in adverse disciplinary action taken against me.

**Year 1:**

_____	_____	_____
CYS Personnel Signature	Print Name	Date

**Year 2:**

_____	_____	_____
CYS Personnel Signature	Print Name	Date

**Year 3:**

_____	_____	_____
CYS Personnel Signature	Print Name	Date