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Setting Appropriate Boundaries

Creating a community of kindness and safety.

At Odyssey Youth Center, it is essential to establish clear and consistent boundaries between youth and adults. This creates an atmosphere of safety for the youth and protects you and the center from any false allegations. Due to safety and legal requirements these norms are non-negotiable. We will go over these norms as a staff/volunteer group to clarify any questions.

- Rule of three or more (never be alone with a youth out of sight of another person).
- Don't show favoritism, no special relationships.
- Never disclose your home address or phone number to any youth members.
- Do not contact or socialize with youth outside of the center or sanctioned Odyssey events. Do not greet a youth member in public unless they greet you first.
- Do not give youth rides in your car except in cases of organized and sanctioned Odyssey events, and even then, only rides from OYC and back are appropriate. Never give youth a ride home.
- Do not go in a youth's home or car.
- Do not promise to keep secrets with youth—as mandatory reporters, you may well need to report what they share with you to OYC staff or CPS for the safety and well-being of the youth, the center, or others.
- Do not trade massages with youth (if there is a massage workshop, youth massage youth, adults massage adults).
- Avoid swearing and telling off-color jokes to youth.
- Do not smoke in the presence of youth.
- Do not use alcohol or drugs when onsite (or just before a shift) or at any OYC youth event.
- Use and model appropriate limit setting for affection
 - Avoid physical contact that can be misinterpreted.
 - Ask permission of others.
 - Avoid affection that cannot be observed by others.
- Do not discuss your own sex life or activities with youth.
- Avoid staring or commenting on the youths' or others' bodies.
- Use informal monitoring. (We need feedback to one another around boundary issues. For the safety of the kids and the program, if you feel another staff/volunteer member is crossing boundaries, you need to let the director know right away.)

Odyssey Youth Center works with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth and their allies to provide a safe place, education and advocacy to promote positive growth and self empowerment.