



NATIONAL
FFA ORGANIZATION

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National FFA Youth Protection Guidelines

Youth Protection Begins with You!

- Youth are defined as individuals under the age of 18.
- Educate yourself on the current National FFA Youth Protection Guidelines.
- Engage in appropriate behaviors and actions at all times.
- Be vigilant and recognize situations that could put you and our members at risk.
- Take action and respond appropriately.
- Report inappropriate behavior or potential harm to the proper authorities.

NATIONAL FFA YOUTH PROTECTION GUIDELINES:

1. Model Proper Expectations

- a. FFA youth are watching you and following your lead.
- b. Communications: no profanity, refrain from gossip, remain respectful.
- c. Leadership behavior: Set the example.
- d. Professional attire: Dress appropriately for all occasions.

2. Physical Contact and Personal Space

- a. No intimate physical touching/hugging/kissing. Handshakes, pats on the back or high-fives are the best.
- b. Avoid one-on-one alone situations with youth members. Use the rule of three (a minimum of two adults with one youth at all times).
- c. Respect the youth member's personal space.

3. Transporting Youth

- a. Have at least three people (minimum of two adults and one youth) in the vehicle at all times with documented approval from parents or advisors for the transportation arrangements.
- b. Ensure all passengers use seat belts at all times.
- c. No texting while driving.
- d. If you must be on a phone call while driving, hands-free technology should be used.

4. Use of Alcoholic Beverage or Unlawful Drugs

- a. FFA staff are strictly prohibited from consuming alcoholic beverages while attending any FFA-related function where members are present.
- b. FFA staff are strictly prohibited from using illegal drugs.

5. Curb Your Personal Biases

- a. Remain neutral and objective regarding:
 - i. Politics.
 - ii. Religion.
 - iii. Sexual preference/lifestyle.
 - iv. Gender.
- b. FFA staff are not physicians, therapists, clergy, or counselors.

6. Social and Digital Media

- a. Do not initiate personal texting conversations with youth.
- b. Do not initiate social networking connections with youth.
- c. Use best judgment when responding to social media connection requests from youth.
- d. If you wouldn't say it in a public setting, don't post it on social media.
- e. When posting student photos to our online social media sites, ensure all photos are taken in safe and appropriate public areas and depict normal rules of decency, respect and decorum.

7. Recognize, Respect and Report

- a. Signs of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or verbal).
- b. Signs of neglect.
- c. Signs of suicidal behavior.
- d. Signs of assault.
- e. Signs of bullying.
- f. Signs of exclusion.
- g. Know your limits of action and accountability.
- h. Know the law.

8. Recognize, Respect and Report

- a. Keep all hard-copy documents containing youth information secure. Any items with individual student information should not be left in public view or unattended, whether in the office or at an off-site event.
- b. Electronic documents that contain student information should not be stored long-term on computer desktops or on portable data storage devices (for example, USB drives) unless the information has been encrypted.
- c. Involve the fewest number of individuals necessary when dealing with sensitive issues, especially when the topic involves health history or disciplinary actions.
- d. Be aware of who may be within hearing distance when having conversations about sensitive issues.

9. Medical Management

- a. Under no circumstances are FFA staff to provide prescription or nonprescription (over-the-counter) medication to youth without proper documented parental consent via a signed medical release/consent form. This includes Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, Aleve, cold/cough medication.

10. Overnight Stays

- a. Separate accommodations for National FFA staff and youth are required at all times.

11. Know Your Role in National FFA Emergency Management.

- a. Emergency management structure roles and responsibilities.
- b. Evacuations.
- c. Incidents.
- d. Active shooter situations.

****Implementation of the above guidelines is intended for the National FFA Organization staff only but is available for use as a resource for state and local organizations if deemed appropriate.***