

Abuse Prevention Policy
Presbyterian Youth Triennium
for Volunteers, Leadership and Staff

Believing that God calls youth and adults to experience Christian community together - the staff of the Presbyterian Youth Triennium, in cooperation with the sponsoring denominations require the following conduct and practice from youth and adult volunteers, leadership, and staff at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium:

ADULT ADVISORS, APPROPRIATE ADULT CHOICES AND CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

- 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.
- Background checks will only be run in the six months prior to the event and will be run through the PYT Abuse Prevention partner, Praesidium, Inc.

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 adults and 1 youth present. Youth and Adults should never be alone, 1 to 1, in any space that is private, closed off or out of view of others. 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).
- If emergency or medical transport is needed the “2&1” rule should be practiced. If a Conference Dean must transport a youth to the hospital or FIRST AID STATION for treatment there should be another adult or youth present. Ideally - an adult advisor or Conference Dean should accompany a youth who is receiving first aid treatment.
- Small Group Leaders, Conference Pastors, and any other PYT staff 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.
- PYT staff are not allowed to be in the sleeping room of a participant (youth or adult) unless there is another PYT staff person present. Ideally - conversations, consultations, prayers should be conducted in a more public or common space.
- 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 a PYT staff person (small group leader, support staff, etc.) is privy to information regarding a participant's life (youth or adult) that is related to a life threatening, health threatening, situation or experience - 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 or with the PYT Administrator.
- In an event as large and complex as the Triennium - with profound conversations, active spiritual growth and extreme physical demands emotions can, at times, run high. PYT staff should take care to facilitate hospitality, encouragement, low drama, and safe parameters so that youth and adults can feel safe. Feeling safe while living in Christian community is a right of all Triennium participants and PYT staff are the models and keepers of this expectation.
- PYT staff should remember that the Triennium welcomes all youth and the adults appointed to accompany them as participants. To this end - PYT should strive to lead and speak with the understanding that the Triennium community is a diverse community with participants and staff who represent different denominations, racial and ethnic communities, geographical areas, sexual identities, genders, and theological backgrounds and experiences of church. The Triennium community is first and foremost a gathering for young people - called together as disciples of Jesus Christ, as members of Christ's church and as agents of healing in the world. PYT staff are present to help youth discern their next steps of faith and to do this in a way that is faithful, healthy and courageous.
- PYT staff should be the primary models of appropriate communication. This includes verbal, physical, digital and non-verbal communication (gestures, body language, etc.).
- Physical contact between youth and adults, youth and youth, should be limited to appropriate contact. Appropriate contact includes side hugs, no lap sitting, no pinning down, tackling, wrestling.
- PYT staff will not share inappropriate or sexually suggestive materials, images, statements, jokes or body language with a youth or any other PYT participant.
- PYT staff should help youth and adult participants to remember that they should never share inappropriate materials, images, statements, jokes or body language with each other or with adults.
- If an inappropriate meeting or situation is observed by another PYT staff person – the observer should immediately contact the Community Life office and report the situation.
- PYT staff must 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. In the case of a text or email the PYT staff person should flag the email and preserve for documentation should the need arise for documentation.

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