

Policy Type: Institutional

Applies to: Faculty, staff, student employees, students, and volunteers

POLICY DATES

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Revised:

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The University of Mount Union ("University") recognizes that minors, defined as children under the age of eighteen (18), will be on campus during various times during its operations. The University also recognizes the need to provide a learning environment that safeguards their needs along with the needs of the institution. The purpose of this policy is designed to protect any child attending a University sponsored program. In addition, this policy outlines the expectations of third parties to adhere to the University's policy of protecting minors while on the campus. The University has a zero tolerance for any type of abuse or harm to children. As such, the University acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegation, report or suspicion of abuse.

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PROCEDURE

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Definitions:

- **Child:** any person seventeen (17) years or younger.
- **Authorized Adult:** An individual, age 18 and older, paid or unpaid, who supervises, chaperones, or otherwise works with minors in program activities, or recreational and/or residential facilities. This includes but is not limited to: faculty, employees, student employees, staff, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees provided by temporary agencies, and independent contractors/consultants. The role of authorized adult may include positions such as counselors, chaperones, coaches, instructors, and other similarly situated persons.
- **Mandatory Reporters:** A category of people identified by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) section 2151.421 which includes but are not limited to: attorneys, physicians, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, or other health

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care professionals, licensed psychologists, licensed school psychologists, administrators or employees of a child day care center, administrators or employees of a residential camp or child day camp, administrators or employees of a certified child care agency or other public or private children services agency, school teachers, school employees, school authority, and persons engaged in social work or the practice of professional counseling.

Abuse can be:

- **Physical:** Hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. This can be caused by an intentional act or the omission/failure to act in such a way to protect the child.
- **Emotional:** A persistent treatment of the child to create a severe adverse effect on the child's emotional well-being. For instance, making a child feel as if they are worthless or inadequate.
- **Sexual:** To entice a child to engage in sexual activity, regardless of consent, or awareness of what is happening. This involves any level of contact of a "sexual" nature, including but not limited to: fondling, rape or oral sex; or non-contact in the form of pornography, watching or partaking in the act of making pornography. Both male and female children can be the victim of sexual abuse. In addition, the act of sexual abuse can originate from men, women, adults or other children.

Preventing Abuse:

In order to ensure that abuse does not happen to a child while participating in a University sponsored program or a third-party program held at the University, the following policy is provided. All Authorized Adults on the campus must adhere to this policy.

- All Authorized Adults will be required to have a background check prior to their participation in any program involving children. The background check must be repeated every three (3) years. The Human Resource Office shall have the responsibility of retaining the background checks and ensuring that every Authorized Adult in fact has an updated background check on file.
- Each authorized adult, who is not the minor's parent, legal guardian or an entrusted adult of the parent or legal guardian, and will be participating with the minors in a campus program or activity, shall complete mandatory training prior to participating in any program held at the University.
- In the event a child will be alone with an Authorized Adult, the child must be in an area of campus that he or she can be visually observed by other Authorized Adults. There is never a time that a child is to be alone with an Authorized Adult behind closed doors. In addition, a child under the age of fourteen is not permitted to be unaccompanied on the campus.
- It is never appropriate, nor does the University permit corporal punishment of any type as a method of disciplining a child. If the behavior of the child is such that the Authorizing Adult cannot bring the child under control, the Authorizing Adult is to contact an appropriate university official or campus security for assistance.
- No Authorized Adult is to transport a child in their personal vehicle, with the exception of an emergency. Transportation of a child will only take place as a group, with multiple Authorized Adults present and only as appropriate to carry out the purpose of the program for which the student is on campus.
- All children participating in programs at the University must remain in the assigned area for which the program is taking place. No child shall remain unsupervised for any reason while on University property.
- No Authorized Adult is permitted to meet a child outside a sanctioned University program or a program permitted to take place on University property without the express written consent of the guardian or parent of the child.

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- No child is permitted to be released from a University program to a person other than the parent or guardian of the child, unless the parent/guardian has authorized the release to the University, or program director in writing and in advance.

Reporting Requirements:

A. Mandatory Reporters

- Mandatory Reporters must report to a municipal or county peace officer (police officer or county sheriff) or a public children services agency if they know or suspect that child abuse has occurred or that a threat of such abuse exists, as required by Ohio Law. If a Mandatory Reporter knows or suspects that child abuse has occurred, or the threat of child abuse exists, whether because of direct observation of an action or incident or because a child discloses to the individual, or based on some other observation or information, the Mandatory Reporter must report to Alliance Police Department at (330) 821-9140 or the Stark County Division of Children Services at (330) 455-5437.
- If a Mandatory Reporter makes a report to the Stark County Division of Children Services or the Alliance Police Department pursuant to this policy, that individual must also report the matter to University of Mount Union Director of Campus Security at (330) 428-1344.

B. Authorized Adults Not Mandatory Reports

- Authorized Adults who are not Mandatory Reporters participating in programs covered by this policy shall report an incident of known or suspected child abuse, or threat of child abuse, whether through direct observation, because of a report of said child abuse, or through other observation or information, in two ways:
 - i. Report the incident to the Director of Campus Security at (330) 428-1344.
 - ii. Notify the person in charge of the program. If the person in charge of the Program cannot be reached, then a designated University Official must be contacted.

How to handle allegations of abuse in addition to reporting requirements:

- Individuals who witness or suspect child abuse should not conduct an investigation or delay in notifying the appropriate authorities. Such actions could taint any appropriate criminal or administrative investigation and render evidence inadmissible.
- Authorized Adults should consider the safety of minors participating in programs above all other program requirements. It may be necessary to remove minors from abusive or potentially abusive situations. In such a case, Campus Security must be notified immediately.
- Do not alarm the child and make sure to remain calm. It is not your place to question the child, but to assist in alerting the designated officials. It is the role of the professionals to question the child.
- When an Authorized Adult or other person has been alleged to have engaged in inappropriate conduct with a child, that individual must discontinue any further participation in the program covered by the policy until such allegation has been satisfactorily resolved and he or she has been given written permission by the University to participate again in programs.
- Treat any allegations as confidential, only sharing the details with law enforcement officials or University officials that have a legitimate need to know.
- Should the allegations be against an Authorized Adult working in the program, as defined above, follow the steps outlined herein. It is not your responsibility to notify that Authorized Adult; rather, it is your responsibility to notify the officials identified in this policy and allow them to make any notifications necessary.
- It is not your responsibility to talk with the child's parents or guardians. That will be the responsibility of University officials or law enforcement officials.

Designated University officials:

- Director, Campus Security
- Director, University Counseling Services
- Title IX Co-coordinators

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Once a University Official is notified, it is then their responsibility to alert the appropriate child protection agency. Once you have completed this task, your responsibility ends. It is not your responsibility to talk with the child's parent or guardian.

Reporting possible abuse:

The University understands that it is not the primary role of a faculty, staff member, and coach or volunteer to assess whether abuse of a child is taking place. To that end, the University expects that any such person will report any possibility of potential abuse immediately. The University also expects every member of the University to cooperate in and not hinder any investigation whether by the University, Law Enforcement or a child protective agency as required. Any person concealing or impeding an investigation of child abuse will be subject to immediate termination of employment, as well as civil or criminal penalties.

Records of allegations:

All documentation will be deemed confidential and stored appropriately. A written record of the outcome will be filed in the employee's personnel file.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Human Resources	

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Director of Human Resources	Human Resources	(330) 829-6560	Humanresources@mountunion.edu

History

All changes must be listed sequentially, including edits and reviews. Note when the policy name or number changes.

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