

Abuse Prevention

Location: Indiana State Museum and
Historic Sites
Effective Date: March 3, 2021
Revision Number: 1

Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation

Purpose

This policy states the guidelines the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation has set forth to prevent the physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children and youth by its employees and volunteers. Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation seeks to create a welcoming and nurturing environment and has zero tolerance for those whose actions may jeopardize the safety, health or innocence of a minor.

DEFINITIONS

Abuse: Because it takes many forms, abuse can be broken down into the following subtypes, all of which are prohibited within the scope of this policy:

- Physical abuse: Injury inflicted on a *child or **youth
- Sexual abuse: Contact or activity of a sexual nature between an adult and a *child or **youth
- Emotional abuse: Mental or emotional injury inflicted on a *child or **youth by the actions of an adult
- Neglect: Failure to provide adequate care for a *child or **youth
- Economic abuse: Deliberate misuse of the money or belongings of a *child or **youth

*Child: A person younger than age 12.

**Youth: A person age 12-18.

POLICY GUIDELINES

Personnel Screenings

Safeguards in the hiring process will be used to eliminate from consideration any candidates who display characteristics that classify them at high-risk for violating this policy. The required personnel screenings and background checks will be determined based on the respective position and level of involvement with children and youth.

For those who regularly work with or around children or youth

Candidates for positions that involve regular interaction with children or youth will be screened and selected using the following:

- Standard Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation employment/volunteer application that includes signed authorization to perform necessary background checks
 - Criminal background checks in all states where the candidate has lived in the past seven years
 - Sexual offender registry checks in all states where the candidate has lived for the last seven years
 - Driving records and any applicable certification if the position requires the transportation of children
 - In-person interview of the candidate
 - If hired, criminal and sexual offender registry checks will be conducted every five years for those who regularly work with children or youth
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For those who occasionally work with children or youth:

Candidates for positions that involve occasional contact with children or youth will be screened and selected using the following:

- Standard Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation employment/volunteer application that includes signed authorization to perform necessary background checks
- In-person interview of the candidate
- Driving records and any applicable certification if the position requires the transportation of children

All information collected about a candidate will be reviewed and used to determine if they are appropriate for the respective position. If hired, all information collected during the hiring process will be included in the employee's/volunteer's permanent file, which will be maintained over the course of their employment/volunteer time with Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation.

Personnel screenings are required regardless of current employment/volunteer status with Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation. Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation employees/volunteers seeking to transfer into a position that involves working with children or youth must undergo the same review process as new hires.

Structural Guidelines for Programs

All Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation programs are designed to encourage safe interaction between employees/volunteers and children or youth. The following guidelines are meant to keep established safeguards effective:

- Programs for children and youth must have an established adult-to-child ratio.
- Employees/volunteers are restricted from being alone with a child or youth where they cannot be easily observed by others.
- Employees/volunteers are not allowed to implement new activities or programs for children without Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation consent. Request for new activities or programs should be submitted in writing to management.
- Written permission must be obtained from a parent or guardian before any employee/volunteer transports a child or youth in the name of Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation.
- Children under the age of 6, placed in the care of Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation will only be released to a parent, legal guardian or a person designated by a parent or legal guardian.

General Conduct

To provide a safe and healthy environment for both mind and body, the following guidelines are meant to guide Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation employees/volunteers during their interactions with children and youth. These guidelines do not and cannot outline every situation that may be encountered while on the job, requiring employees/volunteers to act with a certain degree of personal discretion. Because a certain action is not prohibited in this section does not mean it is acceptable behavior. Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation reserves the right to take disciplinary action against employees/volunteers whose actions are found to be inappropriate regardless of whether they appear in this section:

- Employees/volunteers will treat all children and youth with respect and consideration. Treatment must be fair and equal, and must not be based on sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, or economic or social status. All effort must be made to avoid favoritism, or the appearance of favoritism.
- While representing Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation, employees/volunteers must not possess, distribute, use or allow others to use any alcohol or drugs.
- Employees/volunteers must not use harsh or inappropriate language, degrading punishment or any type of restraining device in the name of behavior management.
- Employees/volunteers must not participate in or allow others to engage in any form of hazing.
- Employees/volunteers must not have sexual contact with children or youth.
- Employees/volunteers must not dress, undress, shower or bathe with or in the presence of children or youth.

- Employees/volunteers must not use physical punishment in any form. The only time physical force is allowed against a child or youth is when their actions are placing others at an immediate risk for serious harm.
- Employees/volunteers are prohibited from sharing sleeping locations with children or youth. This includes beds, tents, hotel rooms and other similar areas. Employees/volunteers can sleep in open areas with children or youth as long as the area is large enough for the employee/volunteer to have their own defined sleeping areas and other employees/volunteers are also present.
- Employees/volunteers must not discuss their own sexual history, preferences or fantasies nor their use of illicit or pornographic materials while in the company of children or youth.
- Employees/volunteers are not allowed to possess any sexually oriented materials (books, magazines, videos, clothing) when conducting business in the name of Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation.
- When one-on-one discussion or counseling is warranted, employee/volunteer interaction with a child or youth will take place in an area that allows for private conversation while remaining in the view of others.

If, for any reason, an employee/volunteer feels there is a need to make an exception to these guidelines, they must submit to their supervisor a written description of the incident and why their actions were necessary. Their report will be reviewed for wrongdoing. A copy of the original report along with any additional findings made by the reviewer will be included in the employee's/volunteer's permanent file.

Steps to Reporting Child Abuse

All Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation employees/volunteers are required to report to local authorities any good-faith suspicion or belief that any child is or has been physically or sexually abused, physically or emotionally neglected, exposed to any form of violence or threat, exposed to any form of sexual exploitation, including the possession, manufacture, or distribution of child pornography, online solicitation, enticement, or showing of obscene material.

Indiana law (IC31-33-5-1) requires anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect to report it to the authorities. Professionals who knowingly fail to make a report required by IC 31-33-5-2 commit a class B misdemeanor. You may not abdicate this reporting responsibility to any other person.

- Ensure the child is in a safe environment.
- DON'T panic or overreact to the information disclosed by the Child or youth.
- DON'T criticize the youth.
- DON'T promise not to tell anyone. You must report the allegation to the designated senior staff member.
- DO listen intently and obey the no one-on-one contact policy.
- DO respect the youth's privacy. Keep the information confidential and share it only with the designated senior staff member and official agencies.
- DO make sure the youth feels that he or she is not to blame.
- You must report the allegation to the designated senior staff member and complete an incident report with security.
- Report the suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Indiana Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-800-5556

Employee/Volunteer Agreement

If you are uncertain or question the content of this policy, you are required to consult your supervisor. This should be done prior to signing and agreeing to the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation Abuse Prevention Policy.

I have read and understand Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites Corporation's Abuse Prevention Policy and agree to abide by its terms and conditions throughout the course of my employment/volunteer time. I understand that my failure to follow the terms of this policy could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employee/Volunteer signature

Date

Supervisor signature

Date