

## **YMI Policies and Procedures**

**These procedures are designed to protect the students from harm and to prevent even the appearance of impropriety on the part of Youth Mentoring Initiative, Hamilton Southeastern Schools and its participating mentors, volunteers and students. One accusation could, at the very least, seriously damage the reputation of all those participating and endanger YMI.**

**Please know that we appreciate your participation in the Youth Mentoring Initiative and that we appreciate your adherence to these procedures. If you have any questions, please email Todd Melloh, Executive Director for YMI, at [todd@ymionline.org](mailto:todd@ymionline.org) or Jennifer Kimble, Director of Mentoring for YMI, at [jennifer@ymionline.org](mailto:jennifer@ymionline.org).**

**Please read each section carefully. Then, initial each section of this policy as an indication the you have read and agree to the conduct and policy outlined for YMI mentors. The last page must be completed and signed and returned to YMI before mentoring can occur. Keep this YMI Mentor Conduct and Policy sheet in your records for referral.**

### **YMI Mentor Code of Conduct with Mentee:**

We desire to communicate appropriate care and concern while being responsible and sensitive in all we do.

- Appropriate touch – side hugs; a gentle, conscious touch of our hands on their shoulders, arm, or back; high fives; handshakes, etc.
- Inappropriate touch/behavior – touching buttocks, genital area, chest, or upper legs; any kissing, sitting on laps, or having students sit on your lap; back rubs; full frontal hugs; piggyback rides; sexual innuendo or humor; etc.
- The mentor relationship must be kept to a face-to-face interaction, occasional texts or email ONLY.
- Any personal (1-on-1) interactions between mentors and students must take place in the presence of school staff. It is expected that, under no circumstance, should a member of the mentor team be alone, in a private location, with a student. This includes riding in vehicles. If a student needs to talk it needs to happen in a public place or room with an open door and other adults in the area.
- It is forbidden for a mentor to date a student, as is joking about it, flirting with students or any inappropriate physical contact - regardless of gender.

TRANSFERENCE: As we spend time with students, it is wise to be alert to the ways in which “transference” can impact our relationships with them. It is how people “transfer” their need for approval, encouragement and love on to others.

- How can you tell when that is happening to you? When you find yourself following their lead instead of guiding and leading them. You can also tell when you find yourself trying to be cool, accepted, flirting or responding to flirting, instead of being wise and intentional.
- How can you tell when that is happening in a student, towards you? When they flirt with you, manipulate

you with mood swings, come to you with constant crises, demand time, hang onto you, etc. Many of these behaviors are common and unconscious aspects of being a teenager. Others are a significant sign of deeper needs. Either way, we need to use wisdom and discretion as we develop a mentoring relationship with a teenager. Our own personal conduct (language, actions, and demeanor) needs to be above reproach, as well as not accepting inappropriate behavior from students.

### **YMI Mentor Confidentiality & Reporting Policy:**

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This section of policy lay out the mentor's responsibility about keeping student confidentiality and reporting situations of danger or harm to the student or others.

- When speaking of your mentee outside of the school or YMI communications, always refer to them as your "mentee" or the student you mentor and never by name.
- Do not take photos of / with your mentee or share a photo of your mentee.
- All information you are told about your student is confidential and sharing that information with others is prohibited.
- Report any uncomfortable or concerning actions, words, or feelings in your meeting notes and email scenario to Campus Coach and Director of Mentoring immediately after the meeting. If necessary, excuse yourself from mentoring session to seek out Campus Coach to immediately step in to situation.
- Do promise a student that you will keep confidential information secret. Tell the student that he/she is free to share confidential information with you but that you are required to report certain things. It is critical, not only for the welfare of the student, but also to protect yourself that you adhere to these exceptions:

***IMMEDIATELY following your session and BEFORE you leave the building, you must notify the designated school personnel, usually a counselor or principal, in the following situations:***

- If a student confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional or physical abuse, you *must* notify immediately.
- If a student confides that he or she is intending to harm themselves or others.
- If a student tells you of his/her involvement in any illegal activity.

*\*\*Note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given. Also, inform YMI Director of Mentoring via email. Remember this information is extremely personal and capable of damaging lives so do not share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities.*

### **YMI Mentor Social Media Policy:**

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While social media plays a significant role in our culture today, we need to be diligent to protect our student's confidentiality and create a model for mentor/mentee relationships that maintain healthy boundaries for both parties.

- When speaking of your mentee outside of the school or YMI communications, always refer to them as your "mentee" or the student you mentor and never by name.
- YMI mentors are not permitted to connect with their mentees through social media such as Facebook or Twitter, etc. The use of social media potentially creates unhealthy interactions that can go outside the boundaries of the YMI model of mentoring and

damage the relationship.

### **YMI Mentor Conduct and Communication with Mentee's Household:**

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Another encouraging aspect of mentoring is the contact we can have with parents. They are entrusting us with their most valued relationship. We must show responsibility, a teachable spirit, and do our job to communicate.

- Reach out to the parents by phone or email shortly after meeting your mentee. Simply share your name, contact info, and an encouraging word about their child. Do not offer to relay messages or information.
- On-going communication with parent/guardian can be facilitated by YMI Parent Liaison.
- IF you are meeting outside of the school building you and your mentee are no longer under the YMI “umbrella”, so it is important to establish that dialog with the parent directly.
- It is your responsibility to see that the parents are informed if there is to be any interaction with their child outside of school.
- Unfortunately, students can “forget” to ask parents for permission or simply leave out significant details. We are to take the lead in seeing that the parents know and approve of any plans.
- *These interactions are to be 100% arranged between you and the parent/guardian.*

### **YMI Mentor/Mentee On-Campus Meeting Policy:**

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YMI (Youth Mentoring Initiative) and its partnering schools provide a meeting location, a meeting schedule, and on-going support to YMI mentors and mentees for their on-campus meetings.

For purposes of this policy, a mentor/mentee on-campus meeting shall be defined as any weekly mentoring meeting scheduled and arranged by YMI staff or staff of its partnering school.

- Mentors must report to school office with YMI issued badge to be scanned in as a visitor.
- Mentee will be brought/ meet mentee in the school office for their scheduled meeting.
- Mentor and Mentee will be directed to the assigned location for their meeting.
- Any personal (1-on-1) interactions between mentors and students must take place in the presence of school staff. It is expected that, under no circumstance, should a member of the mentor team be alone, in a private location, with a student. If a student needs to talk, it needs to happen in a public place or room with an open door and other adults in the area.
- Mentor must check out at school office before leaving campus after mentoring session.

### **YMI Mentor/Mentee Off-Campus Outing Policy:**

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YMI (Youth Mentoring Initiative) and its partnering schools support and encourage off campus outings for our YMI mentors and mentees for the advancement of their relationship and a

deepening their connection by engaging in less structured times together.

For purposes of this policy, a mentor/mentee off campus outing shall be defined as any planned activity participated in by the mentor and mentee outside of their YMI scheduled weekly meeting on school property during the school day.

- All off campus outings are the sole liability of the mentor and do not fall within the official mentoring of YMI (which is a mentoring session on school property during the school day and calendar year).
- Any meetings or outings between the mentor and mentee that occur outside of the school calendar year are between the mentor, mentee, and mentee's legal guardian and are outside of the official YMI mentoring program which occurs only during the school calendar year.
- All off campus outings during the school year must be documented in the Mentor Portal for documentation of match activity even though it is activity that falls outside of official YMI mentoring.
- Mentees must have permission of a parent or other person having legal custody with permission documented in the Mentor Portal.
- Mentor must document the off campus outing (that includes the date and time) in the Mentor Portal.
- Any costs associated with the off campus outing are the sole responsibility of the mentor. Mentee can be asked to incur costs but this must be communicated at the time of permission obtained by mentee.
- Mentor may not change planned off campus outing while in progress, except where health, safety, or welfare of mentee in his/her charge is imperiled or were changes or substitutions beyond his/her control have frustrated the purpose of the off campus outing. If plans have to be altered in any manner, mentee's parent or other person having legal custody will be contacted by mentor and documentation will be made in the Mentor Portal.
- Mentor and mentee off campus outings may not include other persons associated with the mentor or mentee. (For example, mentee's friends, siblings, etc. or mentor's spouse, children, etc.)
- All YMI policies, and additional associated administrative procedures, apply to off campus outings.

## Child Abuse Laws in Indiana

**Juvenile Code:** Encourages effective reporting of suspected or known incidents of child abuse or neglect Provides each county with an effective child protection services  
Provides children and families with rehabilitative services  
Establishes a centralized statewide child abuse registry and an automated child protection system

### Definitions:

Child abuse or neglect refers to a child who is alleged to be in need of services (CHINS). The complete text of the [CHINS law](#).

### IC 31-34-1 A child is in need of services if before the child's 18th birthday:

- The child's physical or mental health condition is seriously impaired or seriously endangered as a

the inability, refusal, or neglect of the child's parent/guardian/ custodian to supply the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, or supervision

- The child's physical or mental health is seriously endangered due to injury by the act or omission of the child's parent/guardian/custodian. An omission is an occurrence in which the parent/guardian/custodian allowed that person's child to receive an injury the parent/guardian/custodian had a reasonable opportunity to prevent or mitigate
- The child is the victim of a sex offense under the criminal citations incorporated into the CHINS The child's parent/guardian/custodian allows the child to participate in an obscene performance The child's parent/guardian/custodian allows the child to commit a sex offense

And needs care, treatment, or rehabilitation that the child is not currently receiving and that is unlikely to be provided or accepted without the coercive intervention of the court.

**This definition includes a child with a disability that is deprived of:**

- nutrition necessary to sustain life
- medical or surgical intervention necessary to remedy or ameliorate a life threatening medical condition if the nutrition or medical or surgical intervention is generally provided to similarly situated children with or without disabilities

**Religious Beliefs/Provision of Medical Treatment:**

When a parent/guardian/custodian fails to provide specific medical treatment for a child because of the legitimate and genuine practice of the parent/guardian/custodian's religious beliefs, a refutable presumption arises that the child is not a child in need of services because of such failure. However, this presumption does not prevent a juvenile court from ordering, when the health of the child requires, medical services from a physician licensed to practice medicine in Indiana. The presumption does not apply to situations in which the life or health of a child is in serious danger.

**Use of Corporal Punishment:** Nothing in the Juvenile Code limits the right of a person to use reasonable corporal punishment when disciplining a child if the person is the parent/guardian/custodian of the child. In addition, nothing in this chapter limits the lawful practice or teaching of religious beliefs.

## **Child Abuse Laws in Indiana - continued**

**Reporting:**

Any individual who has reason to believe that a child is a victim of child abuse or neglect must make a report. In agencies in which there are established reporting protocols, the report may be made to the individual in charge or another designated agent, who also becomes responsible to report or cause a report to be made. This does not relieve individuals who make a report to another staff person of their own obligation to report directly to child protection services or law enforcement unless a report has already been made by the agency liaison. Anonymous reports are accepted. Failure to make a report can be a Class B misdemeanor.

The complete text of the mandatory reporting law. (IC31-33-5-1) The complete text of the failing to report law. (IC31-33-22-1)

The complete text of the false reporting law. (IC31-33-22-3)

**Immunity from liability:**

Any person, other than the accused, who reports child abuse or neglect or is involved in the investigation or disposition of child abuse or neglect report is immune from criminal or civil liability, unless the person acted maliciously or in bad faith.

The complete text of the immunity from liability law. (IC31-33-6-1)

**Confidentiality:**

All reports made to CPS are confidential and will only be released to CPS workers, police, prosecutors, doctors, or other authorized personnel.

The complete text of the confidentiality law. (IC31-33-18-4)

**Child Protection Services:**

Each County Office of Family and Children must establish a CPS, which will be the primary agency responsible to receive, investigate or arrange for investigation, and coordinate the investigation of all reports of known or suspected child abuse or neglect. CPS must:

Provide protective services to prevent a child's exposure to further incidents of child abuse or neglect. CPS must provide or arrange for, coordinate, and monitor the provision of services to ensure the safety of children. Reasonable efforts must be made to prevent a child's removal from the home. Cooperate with and seek and receive cooperation of appropriate public and private agencies and programs providing services related to prevention, identification or treatment of child abuse or neglect.

## **Youth Mentoring Initiative (YMI) Commitment**

While being a YMI Mentor is a volunteer opportunity, our organization and more importantly our students depend on a certain level of consistency and commitment from our YMI Mentors. Please read the following statements that layout the YMI Mentor Commitment. By continuing with your involvement and mentoring with YMI, you agree to uphold these commitment statements to YMI as an organization and the YMI Mentees.

- I have agree to strictly abide by the YMI Mentor Protocols & Policies & Procedures and Child Abuse Laws in Indiana that have been made available to me in the YMI Mentor Handbook made available to me on the YMI website. This document outlines the conduct and responsibilities required of me as a mentor.
- I agree to meet weekly in the academic year calendar year during the school hours with my mentee during our scheduled 30-60 mentoring session at their school and to make this scheduled session a priority appointment in my calendar.
- I agree that if I am unable to make our regularly scheduled session due to unavoidable scheduling conflicts that I will do my best to reschedule for that particular week but at a minimum I will let the Campus Coach for the school know about any change and connect with my mentee via text or email as well.
- I agree to continue with my mentee for a minimum of 1 (one) academic year and, if at any time I need to withdraw from volunteering with YMI, I will give as much advance notice to the Director of Mentoring via email of my inability to serve as a mentor in a continuity of mentoring for the mentee.
- I agree to attend training sessions provided by YMI as these training sessions equip me for my mentoring role and communicate vital information regarding YMI.

- I understand that failure to adhere to these standards may result in my removal or suspension from participation in the YMI program. My removal or suspension from participation is the sole discretion of the YMI Board of Directors, Executive Director, and/or the Director of Mentoring.
- I understand that failure to adhere to these standards could result in personal legal liability as I have acted outside the Youth Mentoring Initiative (YMI) code of conduct, policy and procedure that I agreed to uphold in my role as a volunteer YMI Mentor.
- I agree to be a YMI Ambassador within my community and sphere of influence.
- I agree to be responsible for keeping my background check with the HSE school system up to date, as I understand this is an HSE School Policy. I will also be responsible for the cost of the background check.

By becoming a YMI Mentor, I agree to all of these commitment statements for my volunteer services with Youth Mentoring Initiative (YMI).

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Print Name

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Signature

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Date