



KYAG Staff Code of Conduct

Introduction

KYAG prioritises the health, safety and wellbeing of its members above everything else, and so it is essential that all staff recognise and ensure that their behaviour reflects this, as well as the values and ethics of the group. Although staff are volunteers it is important that they embody and uphold professional standards of working in order to reflect the reputation of the group, as well as to maintain the safety of all staff and members. Behaviour and conduct must always reflect the values and reputation of the group both when taking part in group sessions and outside of group activities.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy the term 'staff' is used to encompass any trustees, paid staff, volunteers, occasional session helpers, parent helpers or any other adult undertaking activities on behalf of the group.

Primary Role

The primary role of a staff should always be the needs, rights and responsibilities of members. When working with members, we expect staff to be accepting of the individual, non-judgemental, inclusive and challenging of negative or inappropriate behaviour.

Members's participation

Staff should always help and encourage members to participate in the planning, organization and implementation of all work and activities.

Professionalism

Our professionalism is not defined by payment for doing youth work, but by the quality of service delivery, the personal qualities of our staff and the organisational culture of KYAG.

We expect staff to have an understanding of the following;

- Boundaries, values and ethics
- Commitment to the needs of members
- The need to present a public persona that is respectful and respected
- The issues (local, national and international) faced by members
- Issue-based and service-based delivery skills
- Practical and organisational skills
- How the actions of individual workers affect the public's views of youth work more generally; being an ambassador for KYAG and youth work in general.

Working with partner agencies

We welcome and value partnership and co-ordinated work with other agencies. We will only form such working partnerships when it is clear that the aims and objectives of a partner are sympathetic and supportive of KYAG's own mission and aims.

Our staff will never be disrespectful of other agencies or of colleagues that work for other organisations, (either in front of members or in any group-related environment). We will, however, always seek to give feedback and constructive criticism in a professional manner, directly to the agency/colleague concerned, especially when their performance affects members.

Working in communities and neighbourhoods

Members are an integral and important part of the life of any community or neighbourhood and staff should always be prepared to help others to understand the needs of others.

Working boundaries

Maintaining professional boundaries with members is vitally important.

Whilst it's recognised that many staff may have members attending the group, who are likely to have friendships/connections with other members, as well as be in contact with members and their families as part of involvement in the local community, it is important to maintain professional boundaries at all times.

Staff may have contact with group members outside of organised activities due to their personal connections, however no staff member should be contacting, associating or seeking to associate with any member outside of their typical social networks and behaviours.

Staff must be aware that breaching professional boundaries may raise concerns and initiate actions in relation to the Allegations Management Policy.

Confidentiality

Staff will abide by KYAG's confidentiality policy at all times and should always be very clear when explaining limitations and boundaries to members, that we cannot guarantee confidentiality on all issues at all times.

Gaining consent

Staff will seek parental consent for any project activity away from the usual meeting place of a group, or any activity involving the transportation of members, or any planned activity involving any element of risk. The authorised consent of parents and guardians is required for all members under the age of 18.

Participants over the age of 18 can provide their own written consent.

Alcohol and drugs

It is considered as an act of gross misconduct subject to instant dismissal for staff of KYAG to use or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs during group sessions, or to smoke tobacco/vape in the presence of members.

Insurance

All project activity will be covered by appropriate insurance. It is the Group Leader's responsibility to ensure that relevant insurance is in place in advance of any planned activity.

Legal issues

At all times staff must operate within the law. This may mean on occasion being obliged to contact the police if they have knowledge of a serious crime whereas at other times they may be required to answer truthfully if questioned by the police about a less serious offence. In either instance staff will not lie on behalf of members and members must be made aware of this.

Staff must not condone risky or illegal behaviour by members, even if they are unable to prevent it. This may require workers explaining and negotiating with members about when they can and can't work with them. KYAG staff will work with and alongside the Police and other authorities when it is in the interests of members that they should do so. Staff are expected to work with the Police, but not to compromise their commitment to the needs and rights of the members they serve. It is our responsibility to have an up-to-date working knowledge of the law as it applies to our work and to help the Police to understand our role, how we work and the ethics and boundaries we employ.

Health & Safety

Staff are expected to comply with KYAG's health and safety policy at all times.

Grievance and Disciplinary

Failure to uphold the KYAG Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary proceedings.