

Helena Family YMCA

Child Abuse Prevention

Volunteer Coach Code of Conduct

As a volunteer coach with the Helena Family YMCA, I understand that I am a role model for youth and am responsible for helping provide a safe, positive, and nurturing environment for all participants.

Code of Conduct

1. At no time may a volunteer coach be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. Whenever possible, interactions with participants should occur in open, observable environments.
2. Volunteer coaches shall never leave children unsupervised during practices, games, or YMCA-sponsored activities.
3. Restroom supervision should follow YMCA guidelines. Coaches should never enter a restroom alone with a child. If assistance is needed, another adult should be present whenever possible.
4. Volunteer coaches should avoid one-on-one situations with participants. Conversations and activities should be conducted in view of others whenever feasible.
5. Volunteer coaches shall not engage in any form of abuse, including:
 - Physical abuse (hitting, striking, shaking, or inappropriate physical discipline)
 - Verbal abuse (humiliating, degrading, threatening, or insulting)
 - Sexual abuse (inappropriate touching, communication, or conduct)
 - Emotional or mental abuse (shaming, intimidation, or cruelty)
 - Neglect (failing to provide reasonable supervision or care)

Any form of abuse will not be tolerated and may result in immediate removal from volunteer service.

6. Coaches must use positive coaching techniques, emphasizing encouragement, skill development, teamwork, sportsmanship, and respect. Criticism, ridicule, and punitive discipline are not acceptable.

7. Coaches should be aware of and report any observable injuries, concerning behavior, or suspected abuse according to YMCA reporting procedures.
8. Coaches will treat all participants with dignity and respect regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, sexual orientation, or background.
9. Coaches will respect participants' personal boundaries and right to refuse physical contact. Appropriate physical contact should be limited to instruction, safety, or congratulations and must always be age-appropriate and non-invasive.
10. Coaches will maintain appropriate relationships with participants at all times and avoid favoritism or special treatment.
11. Coaches shall serve as positive role models by demonstrating respect, patience, good sportsmanship, honesty, and integrity.
12. The use, possession, or influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other impairing substances during YMCA activities is prohibited.
13. The use of tobacco products, vaping devices, or nicotine products during YMCA youth activities is prohibited.
14. Coaches will avoid the use of profanity, inappropriate jokes, offensive language, harassment, or discussions that are unsuitable for youth participants.
15. Coaches should be physically and emotionally capable of providing safe supervision and leadership to participants.
16. Coaches may not babysit, host sleepovers, transport participants in personal vehicles, or invite participants to their homes without prior YMCA authorization and parental consent.
17. Coaches should communicate with participants through approved YMCA channels and include parents/guardians whenever possible. Private electronic communication with minors should be avoided.
18. Coaches may not engage in romantic or inappropriate relationships with any participant.
19. Participants may only be released to their parent, guardian, or an individual authorized by the parent or guardian.
20. Volunteer coaches are required to read, understand, and follow all YMCA child protection policies and complete any required child abuse prevention training.

Acknowledgement

I understand that my role as a Volunteer Coach with the Helena Family YMCA carries significant responsibility. I agree to follow this Code of Conduct and understand that any violation may result in suspension or termination of my volunteer privileges.

Volunteer Coach Name: _____

Volunteer Coach Signature: _____

Date: _____