



YOUTH INTERACTIONS POLICY

Memphis Athletic Ministries (MAM) is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all youth, staff, volunteers, and others who participate in activities sponsored by MAM. MAM is committed to protecting all youth associated with MAM activities from child abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse or molestation. This policy reflects MAM's commitment to making MAM neighborhood centers places of safety and protection for all who enter, especially youth, and places where all people can experience the love of God through healthy relationships with others. Implementing this policy will help to protect participating youth from potential misconduct incidents, help protect MAM staff and volunteers from potential false accusations of misconduct, and help to promote MAM's goal of providing safe, educational and enjoyable experiences for the youth it serves.

General Policies

1. All persons desiring to work directly with youth as part of any activity of MAM shall first submit in writing an application for employment or volunteer status on a form prescribed by MAM. Such persons shall make correct, full, and complete disclosures of all information requested on such application. The applications shall be evaluated and a decision concerning acceptance shall be made in accordance with the policies set forth herein.
2. No person shall have any right or entitlement to work with youth in MAM activities. The decision to allow a person to be associated with youth in MAM activities shall be guided first and foremost by the concern for the well-being of the youth. It is a privilege afforded by MAM for any individual to participate directly in those activities or programs.
3. MAM will require all persons seeking involvement with youth to consent to and permit MAM to obtain a criminal history, driving history, and State & National Sex Offender Registry, when appropriate, from the law enforcement agency.
4. MAM recognizes that all persons have inherent worth as children of God and that all persons can seek forgiveness and can receive salvation, regardless of prior crimes. Moreover, MAM supports the rehabilitation of persons who have previously been convicted of crimes. Nevertheless, because of the reported incidents of recidivism involving persons previously convicted of child abuse and because of the paramount importance MAM places upon the protection of youth, no person who has ever been convicted of child abuse will be permitted to serve as an employee or volunteer in any activity associated with MAM in which youth participate. For the purpose of this policy, child abuse shall include but not

be limited to any act of abuse, neglect, molestation, or exploitation of children, whether emotional, physical, sexual, or economic, and shall include conviction of any such act in any state or jurisdiction. MAM must be made aware of such information.

5. The policies and procedures set forth herein shall apply to all activities sponsored by MAM, regardless of time or place, and shall also apply to any activity permitted on the property or premises of MAM.
6. All adult volunteers, employees, or participants working directly with youth in any activity associated with MAM shall be required to attend orientation, training and/or education programs designated by MAM to keep those persons informed of MAM policies and for such other purposes as MAM shall designate.
7. All persons associated with MAM activities involving youth shall covenant and agree that they will take all necessary and proper action to ensure the protection of the youth involved in those activities.
8. Whenever in this policy a reference is made to adult volunteers, the rules and policies set forth shall be equally applicable to all persons working directly with youth in a program or activity of MAM, regardless of age and regardless of status as volunteer or employee.
9. MAM recognizes that volunteers make a valuable and necessary contribution to the activities of MAM. MAM also recognizes that these persons must be given some discretion and flexibility in dealing with situations as they arise. Therefore, MAM will not adopt rigid guidelines for interaction with youth, but MAM, through this Policy, will specify and define from time to time with or without notice certain basic rules that should govern all such interaction.

Interaction Guidelines

1. All persons working with youth shall seek to maintain an environment where an adult and youth are not alone but positioned in view of at least one other adult. The preference is that two adults be physically present in the same location as the youth at all times; however, for the purposes of this policy, a second adult could be made available at a moment's notice upon the outcry from the youth. The exception to this rule is when one adult is transporting one or more youth. However, if only one youth is being transported, he/she should be the same sex as the adult.
2. Except in an emergency, no person working with youth shall discipline youth with any physical touch or excessive physical demand, but shall report any discipline problems that may arise to the activity supervisor. No person working with youth shall at any time be verbally abusive toward or in the presence of youth, and no such person shall use profane or vulgar language in the presence of any youth.
3. No adult shall expose any youth to any activity, material, conversation, or other matter of a sexual nature, concerning sex or sexuality, regardless of the context or circumstances. The only exception to this rule is if the exposure is part of a program approved by MAM concerning sex or sexuality presented from a Christian perspective sponsored or endorsed by MAM.

4. No adult shall allow himself or herself to appear to any youth in a state of inappropriate nakedness, and no adult or youth shall be in the presence of any naked youth, except in an emergency situation and then only if in the presence of at least two adults.
5. No adult shall endanger the mental health of a child through chronic or persistent acts including verbal abuse, rejection, ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting or constant criticism. Neither shall an adult use religious reference to shame or motivate a child by guilt into a particular action or behavior.
6. All physical contact should be appropriate (i.e. high fives). Adults should not engage in, initiate or encourage inappropriate contact (see Code of Conduct).
7. Adults are prohibited from engaging in inappropriate communication with youth. Communication is inappropriate when it is for reasons not directly related to coaching, mentoring, tutoring, or supporting MAM youth and would otherwise be deemed unethical, illegal or immoral. Inappropriate communication can be found to occur via letter, telephone, email, social networking websites, etc.

Procedure Upon Report of Child Abuse

1. All persons involved in any activity of MAM involving youth have the duty and responsibility of reporting any incident or allegation of child abuse or violation of these policies involving any youth involved in the activity or any person present at any MAM-sponsored activity or program. The report should be made immediately upon discovery of the incident or allegation and then to their direct supervisor. Reporting guidelines and contact information for Community Resources related to Child Abuse issues are available at each site.
2. MAM specifically requires that all allegations of child abuse or violation of these policies be reported, regardless of the basis of the allegation or supporting evidence. All persons participating in activities of MAM agree that all incident reports shall be regarded as privileged and shall not be regarded as actionable for any purpose.
3. The person making any report or allegation of child abuse or violation of these policies shall document the incident in writing and provide a copy of the writing to the staff member in charge. The person receiving the report or allegation shall also document in writing the date and time of the report, the substance of the allegations, and the action taken.
4. If an allegation is to be made against the staff member in charge of an activity, the report should be made directly to a Senior Leadership Team Member. If an allegation is to be made against a Senior Leadership Team Member, the report should be made directly to a MAM Board Staff Committee Member.
5. Upon suspicion and or receipt of an allegation concerning an incident of child abuse, the individual involved shall immediately report abuse to the state of Tennessee. After a report has been made, he or she must notify the direct supervisor who will then notify all necessary parties. Investigation shall include communication with all persons involved, with all such communications being documented in writing, and collection and reservation of any relevant evidence.
6. If any member of the Senior Leadership Team has reasonable cause to believe that an act of child abuse occurred during any activity or program of MAM or on

any premises of MAM or during any event sponsored by MAM, he/she shall immediately notify the Department of Children's Services and MAM's insurance carrier. If the allegations constitute a potential criminal offense, he/she may also notify MAM's attorney and the appropriate law enforcement agency. He/she may also arrange for a counselor to provide services to any person involved in the incident.

7. If reasonable cause is found to report the incident of abuse, the person(s) accused of the abuse shall immediately be suspended from any MAM activity or program involving youth regardless of the validity of the allegations or report. This suspension will be in place until the final disposition of the report by the appropriate government or law enforcement agency is submitted.
8. In all matters related to an allegation or incident of child abuse, a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team shall be the only person authorized to speak on behalf of MAM to the media or other persons outside MAM. Any such public communication shall be first reviewed with legal counsel for MAM.