

International Order of the Rainbow for Girls

Youth Protection

IORG Policy and Program – Revised 2022



IORG YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY AND PROGRAM – 2022

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YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY AND PROGRAM

ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls (IORG) is a non-profit character building, service-oriented organization, with a goal of helping its members become more than they dreamed possible. We strive to give girls the tools, training, and encouragement to let their individual spirits shine by providing members with a safe, enjoyable, and caring environment. Rainbow is dedicated to helping young ladies to lift their standards, to know God, to better understand themselves, and to serve their communities.

In order to maintain this high standard, the IORG takes complaints of any type of maltreatment or harassment – including but not limited to sexual harassment – very seriously. This includes any harmful behavior between girls, between girls and leaders, between girls and volunteers, or between girls and any other individuals. Because our mission depends upon a close and nurturing relationship between girls and leaders, we are especially obligated to ensure the safety of our activities.

To achieve an organizational environment free of harm, it is imperative that all adults and girls associated with the organization be aware of Rainbow's zero tolerance policy. Harmful behaviors are prohibited within this organization and all of its activities. This includes harassment based on someone's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual preference, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected classification, as well as abuse in all its forms. Each girl and adult must ensure that his or her conduct complies with this policy and avoid any acts or statements that may constitute sexual or other types of harassment. Such conduct is unacceptable in the organization's environment, at all Rainbow-sponsored events and activities including regular and special open or closed meetings, out-of-town trips and activities, service and fund-raising projects, social events, or in any function held in the context of the Rainbow organization.

Youth Protection Policy Objectives

- Protect participants from harm to ensure that involvement with Rainbow is never detrimental to any girl
- Establish safe working conditions for volunteer leaders and advisors
- Enable the organization to accomplish its aims, eliminating maltreatment as a threat to our mission
- Create protective factors to ensure participant well-being
- Establish policies and practices that prohibit inappropriate, harassing, coercive, and abusive behaviors, and also promote respect and healthy boundaries, thereby discouraging predators from involvement

Failure to comply with IORG policy regarding youth protection will result in action being taken, which may include: (1) loss of privilege up to and including permanent expulsion from the organization, (2) loss of awards or distinctions achieved during involvement, and/or (3) reports to law enforcement authorities as appropriate, which may lead to formal criminal or civil charges being filed. Rainbow leaders will vigorously enforce this policy and are responsible for acting diligently to prevent, detect, and address violations of this policy. It is the Rainbow leader's responsibility to do everything possible to protect its members.

While all forms of child maltreatment are significant concerns, child sexual abuse is a particular concern. Due to the predatory nature of many child molesters, they often seek access to children where screening practices are weak or nonexistent. Implementing aggressive risk management strategies can help prevent child molesters from gaining access to children. Appropriate policies and procedures have been found to significantly lower the probability of abuse within youth-serving organizations.

Our Guiding Principles

Our commitment to the basic principles and teachings of Rainbow demands that we create a safe environment in which young people can mature into responsible adults.

- Strong policies create a safe environment to protect members and participants from harm, and to enable them the freedom to thrive
- Strong policies protect volunteers and leaders from unfounded accusation
- Strong policies create an environment in which participants and leaders may safely focus on the organization's objectives and fulfill its mission
- Protective factors are essential elements in ensuring safe space. Guidelines must offer helpful protective factors as well as prohibit harmful behavior to ensure members' wellbeing
- Strong policies discourage perpetrators from attempting to become involved with the organization

International Order of the Rainbow for Girls Position on Child Maltreatment

Child maltreatment in all its forms is unacceptable and will not be condoned under any circumstances within the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls.

The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls (IORG) is proud of our long history of helping girls develop skills and confidence in leadership and citizenship within an environment of encouragement, safety, and enjoyment. Focusing on getting girls ready for life, IORG was at the forefront in implementing protective policies to prevent maltreatment.

The Supreme Executive Board of IORG maintains our commitment to safeguarding the wellbeing of Rainbow Girls around the world. To that end, IORG prohibits child maltreatment in our programs and activities, and will take decisive action against offenders:

- Offenders will be removed from leadership positions and prohibited from future participation in IORG activities.
- Any behavior or activity which threatens the safety and wellbeing of Rainbow Girls or their adult advisors (whether carried out by an individual, group, or by electronic medium), will not be tolerated, including but not limited to physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, harassment, or bullying.
- Violations will be cause for immediate disciplinary action and removal, and reports will be made to appropriate child welfare agencies in keeping with applicable state laws.
- Attempts to hide incidents of maltreatment, interfere or discourage appropriate and timely reporting of an incident, or delay reporting any occurrences of abuse disclosed by a Rainbow Girl or other knowledgeable person will not be tolerated.

Realizing the necessity of vigilance to safeguard the wellbeing of Rainbow Girls and their adult advisors, the Supreme Executive Board of IORG hereby reaffirms our pledge:

- To maintain and enforce a no-tolerance policy against all forms of maltreatment
- To promote positive interactions throughout all levels of the organization
- To develop and maintain a comprehensive program to teach Rainbow Girls, their parents, and adult advisors about youth protection issues and resources for prevention and protection
- To implement stringent screening for leaders at all levels
- To maintain vigorous disciplinary procedures for anyone who violates this policy
- To establish and require strong reporting protocols consistent with applicable local laws
- To continue to develop policy and practice which assures an environment of safety and wellbeing

Approved by the Supreme Executive Board of The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls May 30, 2021

MALTREATMENT

DEFINITIONS

Defining categories of harmful behaviors helps us to better understand and communicate expectations, increase awareness, and prevent harm. Legal definitions, however, vary by state so it is advisable for leaders in each jurisdiction to research their local laws. The Child Welfare Information Gateway (www.childwelfare.gov) has such information by individual states. Cultivating relationships with law enforcement or child welfare professionals may likewise be beneficial to understanding applicable laws and procedures.

- * **Harassment** – persistent, unwelcome conduct that is insulting, degrading, or offensive to the recipient; repeated attacks; creating unpleasant or hostile situations; uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical contact. (Definitions of bullying and harassment sometimes overlap, but not all bullying is harassment and not all harassment is bullying. Under federal civil rights laws, harassment is unwelcome conduct based on a protected class such as race, national origin, color, sex, age, disability, or religion that is severe, pervasive, or persistent and creates a hostile environment.)
- * **Hazing** – the practice of abusive or humiliating rituals used as a means of initiation into a group.
- * **Bullying** – a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort in the form of physical contact, words or more subtle actions like social exclusion or spreading rumors. Typically, the person being bullied has difficulty defending herself and has done nothing to “cause” the bullying. It may also be said that the unwanted and aggressive behavior of bullies involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
- * **Cyberbullying** - sending hurtful or threatening emails or instant messages; spreading rumors or posting embarrassing photos of others through social media outlets. (The term “cyberbullying” is reserved for minors hurting other minors.) If it involves adults it is called “cyber-stalking” or “cyber-harassment”.

CHILD MALTREATMENT

Child maltreatment is considered to be any act or series of acts of commission or omission by someone responsible for a child's welfare that result in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. Abusive behaviors are deliberate and intentional, although harm to a child may or may not be the intended consequence. Acts of omission involve failure to provide for a child's basic physical, emotional, education or medical needs or to protect a child from harm or potential harm. In either case, harm may or may not be the intended consequence.

- * Physical abuse – intentional use of physical force that results in, or has the potential to result in, physical injury, including but not limited to hitting, kicking, beating, biting, pushing or shoving, pulling or dragging, burning or scalding, and poisoning.
- * Sexual abuse – Child sexual abuse involves any sexual contact between an adult and a child, whether accomplished by force or threat or deception, and regardless of whether the child understands the sexual nature of the activity. Sexual activity between an older and younger child can also be considered abusive if there is a significant difference in age, development, or size which would render the younger child incapable of giving informed consent. Sexual abuse includes any attempted or completed sexual act, sexual contact with, or exploitation of a child, and also noncontact sexual acts which expose a child to sexual activity (e.g. exhibitionism, pornography, etc.)
- * Emotional (psychological) abuse – intentional efforts (continual or episodic) to belittle, intimidate, terrorize, isolate, or demean a child by conveying that s/he is worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered, or otherwise unworthy.
- * Neglect – failure to provide adequate nutrition, hygiene, shelter, clothing, medical/dental care, access to adequate education, or other necessities for a youth's well-being. Emotional neglect is when a child is denied emotional responsiveness or adequate access to mental health care.

Consequences of Maltreatment


The consequences of maltreatment are contrary to the missions and teachings of Rainbow. Increasingly, research has shown that individuals who experience maltreatment as youth are at risk for a broad range of challenges including negative physical, academic and mental health issues, as well as physical health complaints, depression, and anxiety which may persist into adulthood. A recent study has confirmed that children who are bullied remain at risk for a variety of poor health, social and economic outcomes decades after exposure, extending previous findings to midlife. It has also been found that those who bully and harass others may also experience continued difficulties into adulthood including substance abuse, fighting, vandalizing property, academic difficulties, and abuse toward their romantic partners or spouses and their children. Even bystanders who observe harassment or bullying have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety. Therefore, for the good of members as well as their leaders, it is imperative that all forms of maltreatment be forbidden within the circle of Rainbow activity.

ENSURING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

REMINDER: The IORG Code of Conduct – Everyone who volunteers in any capacity with Rainbow is required to sign the Acknowledgement and Agreement to Abide by the Code of Conduct (pages 25-27), which outlines safety precautions and requirements for Rainbow activities.

(These documents are also available from the Supreme Inspector or Supreme Deputy in each jurisdiction.)

Protective Factors: Appropriate, positive interactions among youth - or between adult leaders and youth - are essential in supporting positive youth development, making youth feel valued, and providing caring connections. Conversely, inappropriate or harmful interactions put youth at risk for negative physical and emotional outcomes, which may last throughout their lives. These protective factors have been shown to significantly increase the resiliency of youth when they later encounter adverse situations:

- 
- ~ **Freedom from Fear:** Youth need to feel not only physically secure, but know that they are also safe from harassment or excessive criticism that can damage the imagination, interfere with creativity, and lead to distrust. Criticism should always be constructive and instructive, focused on behaviors rather than the person. Youth should never be put in a position to fear someone's wrath at any function.
 - ~ **Supportive Community:** In keeping with the lessons of Rainbow, youth benefit from the sense of connectedness at activities, and appreciate being accepted for who they are.
 - ~ **Praise:** Positive reinforcement of desirable conduct is proven to be more effective than negative reinforcement of undesirable actions. Excessive reward is not necessary; simple affirmations are quite powerful.
 - ~ **Hope:** Youth benefit from learning to make things right, to apologize and seek forgiveness as warranted, to make restitution when needed, to start making things better rather than sit with guilt or shame.
 - ~ **Tolerance:** Children are naturally open to accepting differences in individuals, but they can quickly absorb bias and prejudice when exposed to it. Learning to accept differences between people – be it age, gender, beliefs, socio-economic status, culture, custom or lifestyle – helps them mature and prepares them for the rich diversity they may face as they enter new phases of life experience.
 - ~ **Empowerment:** People are strengthened by the ability to handle situations. Giving youth opportunities to safely try new things or take on new responsibilities, to handle both success and failure graciously, and to learn from mistakes gives them tangible tools with which to face their future.
 - ~ **Advocacy:** Youth need to know that adult leaders are on their side and will stand up for their best interests.

Physical Safety: Ensuring the well-being of our girls requires that we be vigilant in maintaining physical safety as well as emotional health. Planning for any event should address both issues. Thoughtful consideration should be given to how youth will be transported to an event, what security might be warranted by the environment, and any other safety measures that might be necessitated by the location and type of activity. The following section on *Risk Assessment and Management* will provide a framework for planning.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Harm to members constitutes a serious threat to any youth-serving organization's ability to fulfill its mission. Legal, financial, and public relations consequences of a serious incident may actually lead to the collapse of an organization. However, avoiding risks altogether is impractical and may defeat the goals of an organization. Therefore, it is necessary for such an organization to accept a certain level of risk, depending upon its mission, the nature of its programs, and the characteristics of its participants.

Given that "risk" is any possible deviation from what is expected, "risk management" is a systematic approach for making thoughtful, informed decisions which identify possible and probable outcomes, and create a framework for responding to the unexpected in order to minimize harm. When developing risk management plans, leaders need to balance the achievement of the organization's mission with potential risk. If overly cautious, the organization may not be able to fulfill its goals; yet insufficient caution may place the organization and its participants at risk of harm.

Legal liability is a secondary concern. The primary objective of risk management in youth-serving organizations is the safety of the young people participating in its programs. This is a moral as well as legal obligation. Almost everyone behaves unwisely at times, usually to no harm. However, relying on such luck is not adequate for risk management, especially when the wellbeing of our youth is at stake.

Leaders, especially at the Advisory Board level, should consider the following process in making decisions about the activities of their assemblies:

- Establish the context – Assess overall strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the environment. What factors enhance or impair ability to manage risks?
- Identify risk – Determine what could happen, how and why.
- Evaluate and prioritize risk – How likely are the risks? How severe are their consequences?

By being mindful of situations, making informed and thoughtful decisions, and carefully planning our activities and contingencies, we can be prepared to manage reasonable risk and provide a safe environment in which our youth may continue to grow.

DECIDE HOW TO MANAGE RISK

- ~ Avoidance – Eliminate risk altogether by deciding against a particular activity if the perceived risks are too great.
- ~ Modification – Change the nature of risks by altering conditions. What makes the activity risky and what can be done to make it safer?
- ~ Sharing – Can risk be shared by contractual means, e.g. insurance policy, mutual aide with another group, or contracted services (such as a bus or limousine service)?
- ~ Retention – Retaining risk necessitates that the organization prepare for consequences if the risk becomes a reality. Even if the organization has sufficient financial resources, its survival may be threatened by negative publicity and a crisis communication plan should be in place.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Emergency preparedness is another way Rainbow gets girls ready for life. It is an important part of planning for everything we do – from assembly room meetings to campouts, and from charitable work to formal events. We are regularly made aware of natural and manmade disasters. Being prepared ahead of time can help save lives in the event such emergencies occur during Rainbow activities. Learning to be prepared will also help Rainbow Girls learn how to handle other life emergencies they may face.

Jurisdictional leaders would be wise to supplement this *IORG Youth Protection Policy* with additional safety protocols and practices specific to their areas. Supplemental policies may address safety concerns for a variety of circumstances:

- Natural disasters
- Manmade disasters
- Acts of terrorism or violence
- Health or illness emergencies

Talk with your Advisory Board and the trustees or owners of the lodge or building in which you meet to develop procedures based on your location. Does the building where you meet already have procedures in place for natural or manmade disaster? Does the building meet fire and safety codes? You may also want to consider:

- Are emergency contacts posted in your meeting place?
- Are first-aid supplies available?
- Does each person in charge of an event or responsible for transporting girls have immediate access to emergency numbers and first-aid supplies?
- Are there agreed-upon plans regarding accidents, emergencies, and disasters?

Different parts of the country may deal with natural disasters unique to their area. Some areas may need to prepare for hurricanes or tornadoes; for others, the focus may be on earthquakes or wildfires. Those living in urban settings will have different resources and procedures than those in small towns or rural communities. State and local practices vary considerably.

Many communities now have Emergency Management Offices that coordinate community-wide safety efforts. They typically include law enforcement, fire, medical and other professionals who focus on safety concerns, and may be available for consultation or training. Periodic training for leaders and girls could also prove helpful and might include:

- Safety drills in the event of fire or structural damage
- Active shooter training from local law enforcement
- Instructions about how to exit the building or premises
- Plans concerning where and when to meet after safely evacuating

MONITOR, ASSESS AND RESPOND TO BEHAVIOR

MONITOR

Monitoring activity, that is, simply observing interactions and reacting in an appropriate and timely manner, encourages appropriate behavior and can prevent or at least minimize inappropriate behavior. Adult and youth leaders are expected to be fully familiar with *IORG's Youth Protection Policy* and *Code of Conduct* (which define behavioral guidelines) and be able to identify when someone has crossed the line of acceptability. Possible inappropriate behaviors could range from showing favoritism or making insensitive comments to excessive physical contact or seeking time alone with a youth. Some situations, such as overnight trips, pose more risk for inappropriate or harmful behaviors.

Adult leaders have the primary responsibility for monitoring behavior and interactions within the organization, and should be clear about their roles and lines of authority. Leaders must be prepared to respond immediately to inappropriate or harmful behavior, potential risk situations, and potential boundary violations and understand the reporting procedures. Such observances and any corrective action should be routinely documented.

At the same time, positive behaviors and interactions should be noticed and reinforced. Acknowledging and praising appropriate behaviors helps to reinforce and encourage them to continue.



BALANCING CARE WITH CAUTION:

DYNAMICS THAT CREATE A NURTURING ENVIRONMENT, AND ULTIMATELY PROTECT AGAINST CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, MAY ALSO OPEN THE DOORS TO SEXUALLY ABUSIVE BEHAVIORS. EMOTIONALLY INSECURE, NEEDY, AND UNSUPPORTED YOUTH MAY BE MORE VULNERABLE TO THE ATTENTIONS OF OFFENDERS. BY PROMOTING CLOSE AND CARING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN YOUTH AND ADULTS, WE CAN HELP YOUTH FEEL SUPPORTED AND LOVED, REDUCING THEIR RISK FOR SEXUAL ABUSE. BUT THAT SAME CLOSENESS CAN PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ABUSE TO OCCUR.

WE MUST REMAIN WATCHFUL AND MINDFUL TO BALANCE THE NEED TO NURTURE
WITH THE NEED TO PROTECT

ASSESS

Whether a behavior is appropriate, inappropriate, or harmful may be based on the circumstances. For example, kissing may be developmentally appropriate for older youth, but is not proper during assembly events. Kissing could even be considered harmful if force is involved. Hugging may be positive in some situations, yet can also be inappropriate if it occurs too often or for too long, or if the contact is romanticized or sexualized. The following table provides a general framework for differentiating interactions:

Appropriate Behaviors	Inappropriate Behaviors	Harmful Behaviors
Those interactions which are desirable and in keeping with the circumstances of an activity and the goals of the organization are most desirable. In interactions between individuals (youths or youths and adults), conversations and behaviors that support positive youth development should be encouraged. We want to make youth feel valued, and are provided caring connections that foster well-being.	Conduct which is not harmful, but falls short of being appropriate may be offensive, e.g. insensitive or thoughtless comments or actions or those made in jest. There can be a fine line between inappropriate and harmful behaviors. If something is not obviously harmful, it may be best to give the offending person the benefit of the doubt, and suggest being more mindful of remarks or actions in the future.	Any actions or comments that put youth at risk for adverse physical or emotional outcomes are damaging. This includes overtly hurtful, degrading, coercive or sexually suggestive language. Invasive of someone's space or privacy are also harmful. Action should be taken any time harmful behaviors are observed. (Please refer to the IORG Code of Conduct for specific situations and prohibited activities.)

RESPOND OR REPORT?

While the aim of youth protection efforts is the safety of our youth, it is still necessary for leaders and participants to clearly understand what to do if policies are violated or if a child comes to harm. In order to prevent or minimize harm, leaders must be able to respond quickly and appropriately.

Finding the balance between protecting youth and being so hyper-vigilant as to cloud the positive aspects of the organization can be challenging. Recognizing a continuum of appropriate, inappropriate and harmful behaviors, coupled with consideration for the amount of potential harm to the youth and others will guide leaders to suitable action. For instance, if someone tells a risqué joke, it is usually appropriate to handle it internally with guidance and instruction. But if anyone (youth or adult) forces sexual contact upon a youth, this must be reported to the legal authorities.

When inappropriate behavior that is not thought to be harmful is observed, it may be preferable for a Rainbow leader to explain to the person why their behavior is unacceptable, e.g. "we don't speak like that in front of our youth" or "that action could be misunderstood". This is especially helpful for those who are not mindful of changing cultural norms relative to physical boundaries. A climate should be created that encourages people to converse about what is considered appropriate, question confusing or uncertain behaviors and practices, as well as to promote appropriate interactions.

PRECAUTIONS FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Aggressive Behaviors of Relatives and other Non-affiliated Guests

In keeping with Rainbow's no-tolerance policy for compromising the wellbeing of our members, any person who engages in behaviors that endanger or give cause for concern for the safety of a member or guest, or otherwise displays violent or aggressive behaviors at any Rainbow-sponsored activity or sanctioned event, will be asked to leave the premises. Failure to do so will result in protective action being taken to ensure the safety of our members. Depending on the severity of the event, those in leadership may contact security or law enforcement and reports may be made to child protective services or other appropriate agencies. Further, the person whose behaviors are a matter of concern may be banned from attendance at future Rainbow functions and events.

Rainbow Girls Attending Events Where Alcohol Is Served

Rainbow Girls may sometimes be asked to participate in an event that is located nearby where adults are selling or consuming alcoholic beverages, e.g. if girls from an assembly are invited to serve the meal at an adult function. In order to protect the well-being, as well as the reputation, of our girls, the following procedures should be followed in such circumstances:

- ~ Assembly leaders must be adequately familiar with the event and its sponsors to make a reasonable and informed decision about the appropriateness and safety of involvement for Rainbow Girls.
- ~ Adequate supervision must be provided by adults who are not involved in the sale, serving, or consumption of alcoholic beverages. Girls must never be unsupervised in proximity to alcohol.
- ~ Girls are not allowed to touch alcohol or containers of alcohol.
- ~ Girls will immediately depart and not return if anyone handling or consuming alcohol behaves in inappropriate or offensive ways toward or around them.
- ~ In order for a girl to participate, parents or guardians must sign a special release in advance, which clearly explains that (a) alcohol is being sold and/or served on the premises of the girls' activity; (b) that adequate adult supervision will be provided at all times; (c) that girls cannot and will not touch the alcohol or containers of alcohol, nor be unsupervised in proximity to alcohol; and (d) that Rainbow leaders will ensure that girls withdraw from the event and not return if anyone associated with the event behaves inappropriately or offensively toward or around them.
- ~ If the event is sponsored or coordinated by a Masonic group, Rainbow advisors should speak in advance with those in charge to make them aware that Rainbow Girls cannot and will not touch alcohol or containers of alcohol; and that the girls will immediately leave and not return if there is any inappropriate behavior towards or around them.

Cyber Safety

Social media includes some of the most dangerous territory for youth to travel. It is commonly used for sexting, cyber-bullying, child grooming, sexual extortion, pornography, trafficking, and other solicitation. Youth left unprepared and unsupervised may be easily lured into feeling “safe” in personal conversations that originated in online games or chatrooms, only to find themselves in compromising positions with adult perpetrators.

Reminder: Make certain that all Rainbow Leaders are familiar and compliant with the IORG Social Media Policy and any supplemental social media communication protocols your jurisdiction may have.

Epidemic and Catastrophe Guidelines

In the event of an epidemic or other catastrophe affecting the health and wellbeing of people in the community, decisions to continue or resume in-person events lie with the Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy of a jurisdiction, in compliance with:

- ~ All applicable national, state, or local governmental and health regulations
- ~ All applicable edicts issued by the Grand Master of the jurisdiction
- ~ Applicable regulations and requirements of building owners
- ~ IORG’s Youth Protection Policy

Prior to beginning in-person meetings or events, properly signed forms must be on file, including:

- ~ Permission forms for girls, signed by parents or guardians, agreeing to their daughters’ participation and releasing IORG, the grand jurisdiction, and the local assembly from liability associated with the circumstances
- ~ Waivers for adult attendees, hold harmless and release IORG, the grand jurisdiction, and the local assembly from any liability associated with the catastrophe
- ~ Any waivers required by Masonic Lodges
- ~ Any waivers required by building owners, if different from above

In continuing or resuming in-person meetings, precautions for the safety of everyone involved should be addressed by implementing CDC or other appropriate guidelines. Considerations may involve modifications for assembly activities, social distancing, sanitation, protective gear, additional security, or other factors in order to provide the safest environment possible for everyone concerned.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

If Anyone is in Imminent Danger, CALL 911 or contact the police or sheriff!

NOTICE: Legal reporting requirements vary by individual states, territories, and international countries and provinces.

Information about applicable laws may be obtained by The Child Welfare Information Gateway (www.childwelfare.gov) and other online or local resources. The leadership in each Rainbow jurisdiction is responsible for obtaining and distributing this important information to their assemblies. Copies of appropriate ordinances should be attached to IORG policies before distribution to assemblies.

Anyone who observes, is informed of or suspects any conduct that could adversely affect the welfare of a Rainbow Girl is to immediately inform the Mother Advisor or Advisory Board Member.

1. Report any incident of conduct in violation of this policy by anyone, whether or not connected with Rainbow. (This may be family, friends, or strangers, girls or adults.)
2. Complete a *Confidential Report of Concern* detailing the incident and submit to your Mother Advisor or Advisory Board Member as soon as possible. Report only facts, including exact words or actions. Do not include personal opinions.
3. The Mother Advisor or Advisory Board Member receiving the report will determine whether to contact the appropriate legal authority to report.
4. If the accused is connected with Rainbow, she or he must be removed from their position until resolution of the matter is concluded.
5. The Mother Advisor and/or Advisory Board Member shall complete their portion of the *Confidential Report of Concern* and submit to the Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy or their designee for action.

WHEN TO MAKE A REPORT:

- Whenever the safety and wellbeing of a child is in danger
- Any time abuse is suspected or reported
- Any time sexual abuse of a youth by anyone is suspected (including an adult leader, another youth, or someone outside of the organization).
- When abusive or harmful behaviors are observed at any Rainbow activities.
- When inappropriate or harmful behaviors are reported or observed.
- When any unsafe situation exists. (If it is thought that a youth is in danger in her living situation or private life and she is under 18 years of age, leaders should contact the mandated agency handling child abuse reports within that jurisdiction.)

6. As the Chief Executive Officer of a jurisdiction, the Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy shall determine whether Youth Protection issues are to be handled by a standing or special committee, or identify individuals who will coordinate such efforts.
7. A thorough investigation shall be conducted by the identified designees, to include interviewing of anyone directly involved or having knowledge of the incident.
8. Details of all contacts with individuals or groups are to be documented in the *Action Logs*.
9. Completed *Action Logs* and *Subsequent Actions and Resolution Logs* are to be submitted to the Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy after each action taken in relation to the incident.
10. The completed report and all other future pertinent information, along with any supporting documentation are to be sent to the Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy for secured filing. Originals of the logs should be kept by the individual making the report, with copies sent to the Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy after each contact is made. No copies are to be kept in the hall or shared with other individuals.
11. The Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy is responsible for the final resolution of the report. Regardless of the outcome of the report, Mandatory Reporters must report all incidents of suspected abuse to the proper law enforcement agency.
12. Any reports to legal authorities and any criminal or civil actions shall be reported to the Supreme Office for notification of the Supreme Executive Committee.
13. The Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy may also notify the Sponsoring Bodies that a report has been filed.
14. The privacy of all persons involved will be respected at all levels. All reports shall be kept in strictest confidence.

Girls and adults are protected under this policy from coercion, intimidation, interference, or retaliation for reporting, requesting an investigation, or filing a complaint.

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING

- Any adult or youth who observes an unsafe situation or has reason to suspect mistreatment of a youth should immediately inform the Mother Advisor or Advisory Board Chair, followed by submission of a completed *Confidential Report of Concern*.
- For confidentiality purposes, the matter should not be discussed with anyone else.
- The *Confidential Report of Concern* should be completed while memories of the events are still fresh, and should include only what was observed and not personal opinion
- The adult leader receiving the information is then responsible for notifying authorities as well as following administrative procedures.
- It is best to have two Advisors present when talking with members or their parents about the alleged incident. For the purpose of objectivity, it would be appropriate for the Mother Advisor and Advisory Board Members to confer with each other in determining who will be involved in these conversations, excluding anyone who might have been involved in the incident.
- If the course of action decided upon includes contacting legal authorities, the person filing the report should make the call, with an Advisor present as a witness.
- If there is an incident or suspicion of physical or sexual abuse having occurred, child protective services or law enforcement authorities must investigate. DO NOT INTERFERE with the legal investigation process.
- Any media or public inquiries must be referred to the Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy of the jurisdiction.
- Abuse hotlines and other emergency numbers are located in the front of telephone books. When in doubt, call 911. Any time abuse is suspected or reported, assembly leaders are expected to report to the authorities.

Who Makes Official Reports?

Each state has laws that identify persons required to report any observations of child maltreatment. Some states require all people to report their concerns, while others identify specific professionals and volunteers as “Mandated Reporters”. Whether mandated or not, we have an ethical responsibility to report matters concerning the safety of our youth. All states have “Good Samaritan Laws” providing immunity from liability for individuals who make reports in good faith.

It is the responsibility of those in Rainbow leadership positions at all levels to do everything possible to protect our members, and to report any behaviors and practices that may be harmful or in violation of these practices. In most states, Child Protective Services is responsible for investigating abuse perpetrated by a caretaker, and

law enforcement is responsible for abuse by all other individuals. This may vary from state to state, so it is important to consult experts in your jurisdiction.


While anyone can make reports to legal authorities, it may be best for someone in a position of leadership to make the official report when there is not a matter of imminent safety. This provides continuity, prevents confusion from multiple reports, and encourages clear communications through appropriate channels.

Administrative Procedures

Safety is the first matter of concern and action when reports are made concerning maltreatment or violation of policy. Thereafter, consideration may be given to administrative actions. Failure to comply with IORG policy regarding youth protection – including failure to report observed violations of policy – will result in action being taken, pursuant to the Statutes of Supreme Assembly. This may include: (1) loss of privilege up to and including permanent expulsion from the organization, (2) loss of awards or distinctions achieved during involvement, (3) reports to law enforcement authorities as appropriate, which may lead to formal criminal or civil charges. Rainbow leadership will vigorously enforce this policy and are responsible for acting diligently to prevent, detect, and address violations of this policy.

When policy is breached by anyone connected with Rainbow, or allegations of wrongdoing relative to this *Youth Protection Policy* are made, a *Confidential Report of Concern* should be completed and submitted to the chair of the Advisory Board and Mother Advisor as soon as practicable. Anyone connected with Rainbow who is accused of misconduct must be removed from his or her position until final resolution of the matter.

The Mother Advisor and/or Advisory Board member will complete their section of the reporting form and submit it to the designated individuals in the jurisdiction for investigation. The investigators shall prepare an Action Log and Subsequent Action and Resolution Log, which will be submitted to the Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy for action. The Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy shall report the incident to the Supreme Office for notification of the Supreme Executive Board.



The consequences of breaching policy are internal; and action will be taken administratively, utilizing progressive discipline as necessary. Such breaches should not be reported to legal authorities.

However, any time abuse is suspected, it must be reported to the authorities immediately.

SCREENING AND SELECTION OF ADULT VOLUNTEERS

All adults in Rainbow must be thoroughly screened

Utilizing the same process for all workers provides transparency and consistency in applying IORG policy standards. Therefore, any adult working with our youth – whether an Advisory Board Member, Mother Advisor, Chaperone, volunteer or person in a leadership position at any level – are to be screened for suitability prior to working with Rainbow Girls.

Secondarily, vigorous screening serves as a deterrent to predators. It has been well documented that those who prey upon young people are discouraged by such processes and tend to seek easier targets. Other youth organizations – including Masonic youth organizations, churches, and schools – now require similar application processes and background checks. Adults who are active in volunteer organizations are accustomed to this process and will recognize it as necessary for the protection of our youth.

Applications and Profiles

The *Adult Application and Profile* is a confidential questionnaire for anyone who is applying to work with Rainbow youth as a volunteer in any capacity. The requested information should be sufficient for the approving entity (Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy or Advisory Board) to make an informed decision about the individual's appropriateness to work with our members. The intention of collecting such information is the protection of our members as well as the adults who work with them. [A sample *Adult Application and Profile* can be found in the Downloadable Documents section of our website.]

References and Background Checks

It is advisable to verify as much information as possible regarding the background of the individual applying to work with our girls. A confidential personnel file should be maintained on each volunteer, to include: *Adult Application and Profile* and signed *Release of Information*; documentation from personal interview; notes from contacts with references; verification of driver's license and automobile insurance (if the volunteer will transport members); criminal background checks and driving record. Leaders should become familiar with local regulations pertaining to background checks. Because pertinent laws may vary by jurisdiction, leaders in each jurisdiction should become familiar with their local regulations and have a process for regularly checking and updating this information.

Volunteer Requirements

- ☐ At least 21 years of age
- ☐ Known to Rainbow leaders 6 or more months
- ☐ Completed application profile
- ☐ Signed release for background checks and references
- ☐ Background checks clear of criminal, sex offender registry, and court records
- ☐ No convictions of child abuse or other violent crimes
- ☐ Signed *Acknowledgement and Agreement for Code of Conduct*
- ☐ Three or more positive references, at least two from outside of Rainbow
- ☐ Face-to-face interview with Mother Advisor or her designee
- ☐ Proof of driver's license and vehicle insurance
- ☐ Complete IORG YP Training within two years

Criminal background record searches are required for all applicants, to include: multi-county criminal court history in all states of residency over the past seven years, multi-state criminal court history, and sex offender registry. Additionally, a motor vehicle record report must be obtained for any person who will be transporting youth, and a credit report for any person handling funds or finances. Conviction of a crime unrelated to the individual's responsibilities with Rainbow does not necessarily disqualify the applicant [the Supreme Executive Board has established guidelines for these decisions]. However, anyone convicted of any crime against a person, or misconduct of any kind with a child is automatically disqualified. Anyone convicted of a driving violation in the past five (5) years that could have endangered a child, or two violations in the past ten (10) years is also disqualified. Misrepresentation of any information relative to a person's background is grounds for elimination from consideration. A criminal record check and sexual offender registry check must be conducted every three (3) years in keeping with national child safety recommendations.

A signed *Release of Information* statement is necessary to obtain permission before checking references or obtaining background reports on all applicants. The sample *Adult Application and Profile* found on our website contains such a release of information, although a separate release form is acceptable.

Interviews

It is recommended that each new applicant be interviewed by the appropriate selection authority (Mother Advisor, Advisory Board, or Supreme Inspector/Supreme Deputy) in order to clarify or verify information and explore motivation for involvement with the organization. It is important to make sure each adult worker is a well-rounded individual who has a variety of interests, adult interactions, and activities beyond working with youth in our organization. Interviews may also provide an opportunity to explore how individuals handle stress, conflict, and authority. A standardized set of questions will help make interviews more objective and consistent.

YOUTH LEADERS

Youth Leaders under 21 years of age must be under the supervision and in the physical presence of an Adult Leader authorized to supervise youth activities. A Youth Leader must have been active members for at least six months, and have demonstrated specific gifts, talents, and maturity that qualify them. The Mother Advisor and Advisory Board Chair must document their approval of an individual's eligibility to be a Youth Leader, and the youth must complete the first four YP Training Modules.

CHAPERONES

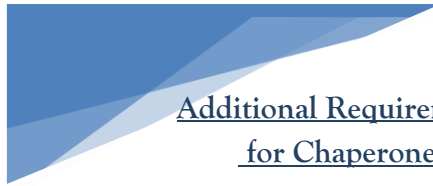
A chaperone is someone who has demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities to work well with Rainbow Youth, combined with the maturity to provide appropriate guidance, and the wisdom to demonstrate sound decision-making practices. This is someone who garners the respect of our members, while also being trusted to ensure their safety.

Because this position holds greater responsibility for the wellbeing of our members, it is important to complete the full application process even if the person has been a regular volunteer for some time. Getting an updated *Chaperone Application*, checking references, and conducting an interview will serve to confirm or update information from a regular volunteer application, and provide insight into the motivations for a regular volunteer wanting to take on additional duties and training. [A sample *Chaperone Application* is available in the Downloadable Documents section of our website.]

Those who regularly work with or supervise youth (at least five times per year) should consider becoming a Certified Chaperone. Others may be considered Occasional Volunteers, who will also need to be screened although the process is not as extensive as that for certification. All volunteers who work with or around youth must have been known by the Advisory Board and/or Mother Advisor for at least six months. Other criteria are addressed in the *Screening and Selection of Adult Leaders* section above.

CHAPERONE - YOUTH RATIOS

To ensure the safety of our members and the wellbeing of all concerned, **a minimum of two unrelated adults, at least one of whom is a female Certified Chaperone must accompany Rainbow Girls on all trips, outings and assembly activities. The size and particulars of an event may require additional adult leadership to be present. Any exceptions to this standard require a signed Parental Consent form as well as approval of the Advisory Board Chairperson and Mother Advisor.** Adult volunteers may include Certified Chaperones, Advisory Board Members, parents, and members of sponsoring fraternal organizations.



Additional Requirements for Chaperones

A volunteer may become a Certified Chaperone after successfully serving an assembly for at least a year, and meeting these additional criteria:

- Complete Chaperone application
- Documented demonstration of appropriate behaviors and skills when working with Rainbow youth
- Two (2) recommendations from Rainbow Leaders, i.e. Advisory Board Member or Mother Advisor.
- Face-to-face interview with Advisory Board or selection committee
- Completed all regular YP screening and training components
- Complete additional training modules within one year of application
- Be approved by the Advisory Board

Chaperone certifications are good for three (3) years. Recertification may be accomplished by repeating training and undergoing a subsequent background check.

Because there are many considerations for every situation, it is essential that assembly leaders anticipate the level of risk involved and exercise good judgment in making decisions about ratios of adults to youth. [Please review the *Risk Assessment and Management* section above.]

Among variables to be considered are:

- Age and developmental level of youth and adult volunteers - If youth or adults are younger, a lower ratio is needed, i.e. fewer youth per adult. Also consider the length of time the individuals have been known, and the extent to which they have demonstrated dependability and good judgment.
- Risk of the activity – How much isolation is involved? Are there physical safety considerations, such as in sports, hiking, or camping activities?
- Location of the activity - Is travel involved? Will everyone be able to stay together, or is it likely that small groups will form and drift apart from the others? It is more reasonable for a smaller number of adults to oversee 40 youth in an assembly room than it is at a park where individuals are dispersed in a broader area.
- Refer to the *IORG Code of Conduct* for specifics for special circumstances.

Volunteers who are overseeing an event should be actively engaged with youth in order to maintain an acceptable level of supervision and monitoring of activities. Even if adequate ratios of adults to youth are maintained, youth are not being monitored if adult volunteers are engaged in their own conversations or segregated in another part of the area.

SUMMARY OF SCREENING AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Volunteers who regularly work with Rainbow Girls, attend Rainbow meetings, or participate in the affairs of the Assembly must initially submit the required application forms, references and interviews, a comprehensive background check. Within two (2) years, the volunteer must complete Modules I through IV of the *IORG Youth Protection Training Modules*.
- To become a Certified Chaperone, a volunteer must submit a new application along with letters of recommendation from Rainbow Leaders, complete an interview with the Advisory Board or selection committee, and have completed all *IORG Youth Protection Modules*.
- Volunteers or parents who only occasionally work with Rainbow Girls must complete the required forms, a comprehensive background check, and Modules I through IV of the *IORG Youth Protection Training Modules*.
- Advisory Board members and all adults in leadership roles at any level are expected to submit the required forms, references and interviews, a comprehensive background check, and complete all of the *IORG Youth Protection Training Modules* in order to be fully informed regarding issues of youth wellbeing and safety, about which they are often required to make decisions.

YOUTH PROTECTION TRAINING MODULES

Each jurisdiction is responsible for ensuring that adequate training is provided to adults and youth. The following chart describes *IORG's Youth Protection Training Modules*. Jurisdictions may utilize their existing training materials as long as they adequately address each of these content areas. *IORG's Youth Protection Training Modules and Resources* are available in the Downloadable Documents section of our website.

Training is to be documented yearly on the Annual Youth Protection Reporting Form, which is to be submitted with the Annual Reports in January of each year to the Supreme Office.

Each module provides a stand-alone training session that includes a PowerPoint slide presentation, Talking Points for each slide, and a Training Guide.

Please direct questions to Karen Askew at Supreme Assembly – 918-423-1328 or saoffice@gorainbow.org

	Module I	Module II	Module III	Module IV	Module V	Module VI	Module VII
T I T L E	<i>Where We Stand: Rainbow's Emphasis on Youth Wellbeing</i>	<i>Maltreatment and Prevention</i>	<i>Relationship and Situational Safety</i>	<i>Action: Responding and Reporting</i>	<i>Assessing the Situation</i>	<i>Prevention and Risk Management</i>	<i>Leader Responsibility for Youth Protection</i>
O B J E C T I V E	Create understanding of IORG position on child wellbeing, the current policy and practice, and review of the <i>Code of Conduct</i>	Provide understanding of maltreatment to inform decisions; explore prevention; empowerment interactions	Heighten awareness of risk situations, and those in which one individual may exercise influence or control over another to their detriment	Empower participants to know when and how to respond when they observe or suspect abuse	Provide leaders with information to utilize in promoting positive development and minimizing risk behaviors	Explore options for a strength-based approach to working with youth while recognizing potential risks	Clarify roles and empower adult leaders to act when they observe or suspect abuse
C O N T E N T	SEB's Position Statement on Abuse, Philosophy and Rationale, <i>Code of Conduct</i> ; Policy Overview.	Definitions, Consequences & Indicators of Maltreatment: Behaviors, Myths & Prevention.	Relationship dynamics/safety, Bullying, Dating violence, Drugs and Alcohol, Safe Driving, CYBER Safety, Suicide Prevention.	Distinguishing Appropriate, Inappropriate and Harmful Behaviors; Disclosures, Reporting.	Youth Development -- Healthy vs Harmful Behavior, Relationship Dynamics, Grooming.	Prevalence of Maltreatment, Protective Factors, Assessing & Managing Risk, Personal Conduct.	Monitoring & Assessing Behaviors, Responding - Situations & Disclosures, Reporting or Handling.
	Youth or Adult	Youth or Adult	Youth or Adult	Youth or Adult	Leaders and Chaperones	Leaders and Chaperones	Leaders and Chaperones

REFERENCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention; Atlanta, GA; www.cdc.gov
- Child Welfare Information Gateway, a service of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; www.childwelfare.gov.
- Leeb, RT, Paulozzi, LJ, et al; *Child Maltreatment Surveillance: Uniform Definitions for Public Health and Recommended Data Elements*; Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control; January, 2008 www.cdc.gov .
- National Criminal Justice Training Center; <https://ncjtc.fvtc.edu/>; professionally facilitated training webinars on: *Cyber-safety; Online Protections for Children and Families When Social Distancing; Sex Offender Typologies; Myths of Sexual Assault; Child Pornography and Relationship to Contact Offending*.
- National Center for Victims of Crime; <http://www.victimsofcrime.org/help-for-crime-victims/get-help-bulletins-for-crime-victims/bulletins-for-teens/bullying-and-harassment>
- Nonprofit Risk Management Center; *Why Risk Management in Relation to Child and Youth Protection?*; online publication; <http://www.nonprofitrisk.org>
- Patterson, John C. and Oliver, Barbara B.; *The Season of Hope: A Risk Management Guide for Youth-Serving Nonprofits*; Nonprofit Risk Management Center; 2002. ISBN 1-893210-03-0
- Safeguarding God's Children: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse; multi-media training materials; Church Publishing; December 2008; ISBN13: 978-0-89869-626-4.*
- Saul, J. and Audage, N. C. *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures*; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention; Atlanta, GA; 2007 (scheduled to be updated in the fall of 2022).
- Stopbullying.gov; <http://www.Stopbullying.gov> , a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services; 2014.
- Takizawa, Maughan, and Arseneault; *Adult Health Outcomes of Childhood Bullying Victimization: Evidence From a Five-Decade Longitudinal British Birth Cohort*; www.psychiatryonline.org; 2014.
- Understanding and Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect*; American Psychological Association; online publication; <http://www.apa.org>; 2014.

RESOURCE LIST

- [American Psychological Association](#) has excellent articles on Bullying, Trauma, Teens, Children, Kids & Social Media, Suicide, Sex Abuse and numerous other topics.
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) has information on preventing injury, protecting youth, and addressing urgent threats (e.g. drug overdose, suicide prevention) in addition to other health issues.

The following direct links may be of particular interest:

- [Child Abuse Prevention](#)
 - [Dating Matters](#)
 - [Violence Prevention](#)
 - [Transportation Safety for Teen Drivers](#)
 - [Suicide Prevention](#)
 - [Adverse Childhood Experiences](#)
- [Darkness 2 Light](#) has a mission of empowering adults to prevent child sexual abuse.
 - [KidsHealth](#) has separate sections for parents, kids, and teens with age-appropriate information, advice and encouragement to help kids grow up healthy and happy. A separate section for educators provides free lesson plans and programs.
 - [Love is Respect](#) is a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, offering 24/7 free and confidential information, support and advocacy to young people between the ages of 13 and 26 who have questions or concerns about their romantic relationships. The site also provides support to concerned friends and family members or other caring adults via phone, text, and live chat. They provide a safe and inclusive space for young people to access help and information in a setting specifically for them. They also provide comprehensive education materials for youth, as well as training, toolkits, and curriculum for educators, peers, and parents to promote healthy relationships and prevent future abuse.
 - [Stop Bullying](#) This Federal Partners anti-bullying website has excellent videos, information, resources and tools to understand and become proactive against bullying behavior.
 - [Stop Bullying Now](#), is a website of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State University, which delivers research-based programs, training, downloads, and other resources developed by a team of long-term faculty, therapy and research professionals. Their programs focus on prevention of bullying, cyberbullying and childhood aggression.

Resources for cyber-safety, recommended by trainers from the National Criminal Justice Training Center:

- ~ www.ICACTaskforce.org (Click on “Internet Safety” tab to explore resources and training for parents, youth, etc.)
- ~ www.NetSmartz.org (Click on “Resources” tab to access resources for parents, educators and communities)
- ~ www.commonssensemedia.org (Click on “Parents Need to Know” tab for parents’ guides to current websites, movies, games, apps, books and more)

INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF RAINBOW FOR GIRLS
Acknowledgement and Agreement to Abide by the Code of Conduct

Abuse in any form is not condoned by The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls (IORG).
Appropriate administrative and legal action will be taken as warranted.

This form in its entirety, is required to be completed and signed by every adult working with Rainbow Girls.
In order to safeguard Rainbow Girls and their adult advisors, every adult working with Rainbow must
acknowledge and agree to abide by the IORG Youth Protection Policy, the Code of Conduct, and the
following:

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by the following:

- ☐ I agree to do my utmost to prevent maltreatment of the Rainbow Girls in my care.
- ☐ In activities where discretion is required, I agree to anticipate the level of risk for individual activities and to use my best judgment in making decisions which affect the well-being of all concerned.
- ☐ I agree not to physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect any Rainbow Girls.
- ☐ I agree to comply with the IORG Youth Protection Policy regarding conduct with Rainbow Girls.
- ☐ I agree to immediately report any observations of inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations.
- ☐ I acknowledge my obligation and responsibility to protect Rainbow Girls and agree to report known or suspected abuse to leaders and state authorities in accordance with these policies.
- ☐ I understand that IORG, its jurisdictions and assemblies will not tolerate abuse of its members, and I agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.
- ☐ I fully understand that I am subject to the *IORG Code of Conduct*, as well as all elements put forth in the full *IORG Youth Protection Policy*, and that any behavior or action in violation of those policies will be grounds for my removal from the organization and loss of any awards or designations I may have received during my involvement.

Signature

Print Name

Date

Witness and Title

Print Name

Date

Approved by the Supreme Executive Board of The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls May 30, 2021

INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF THE RAINBOW FOR GIRLS

CODE OF CONDUCT

Abuse in any form is not condoned by The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls (IORG).

Appropriate administrative and legal action will be taken as warranted by any violations.

Please refer to the full IORG Youth Protection Policy for additional information.

In order to safeguard Rainbow Girls and their adult advisors, every adult working with Rainbow must acknowledge and agree to abide by this IORG Code of Conduct

OVERALL SAFETY

1. Appropriate Conduct – Rainbow Girls and adult advisors will conduct themselves in keeping with the values set forth through the lessons of Rainbow, always treating each other with courtesy and respect.
2. Authorized Activities – All Rainbow events must be authorized by the local assembly Advisory Board, the Grand Jurisdiction or IORG. No unofficial organizations, “secret” activities or ceremonies are permitted.
3. Parental Notifications – Parents are to be notified in advance of the times, location, and purpose for each event. Their formal permission is needed for a Rainbow Girl to participate in field trips, overnight trips, and other special activities. Parents are encouraged to participate in all Rainbow activities.
4. Rainbow Girl and Parental Information – Each assembly will maintain a confidential record of contact information for Rainbow Girls and their parents, identifying those authorized to pick up the girl from an event. Any restrictions should be noted in writing and signed by parents as soon as a girl becomes a member. This information should be updated annually or as custody issues change.
5. Transportation – Anyone transporting a Rainbow Girl is required to have a current driver’s license, insurance, and a safe driving record. Drivers are expected to follow legal driving practices relative to speed, use of seat belts, texting and other distractions. Parents must sign an informed consent form before any girl is transported by adult advisors to an event.
6. Responsibility for Youth – Adult advisors are responsible for Rainbow Girls and their guests between the times of arrival to and departure from the location of a meeting or event. Girls are never to be left alone to wait for transportation, or allowed to leave with an unauthorized person.
7. Safety Rules – To ensure the safety of our Rainbow Girls, a minimum of two unrelated adults, at least one of whom is a certified female chaperone, must accompany Rainbow Girls on all trips and outings. The size and particulars of an event may require additional adult leadership.
8. Overall Safety – Dangerous behavior will not be tolerated at Rainbow events. Weapons are prohibited at all Rainbow activities. Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the safety of Rainbow Girls, their advisors, and guests.

BEHAVIORAL SAFETY

9. Co-ed Activities – Proper standards of conduct are to be established prior to the event. Certified male and female chaperones must be present for any co-ed activities, and parental approval is needed in advance.
10. Positive Role Models – Inappropriate topics, e.g. suggestive jokes or stories, discussion of private activities and relationships, adult language, etc. are never to be discussed around Rainbow Girls.
11. Drugs and Alcohol – Use or distribution of alcohol or illicit drugs, or misuse of legal drugs by Rainbow Girls or adult advisors is prohibited while participating in or assisting in any Rainbow activity. Conversations related to alcohol or drug use is not acceptable except in an educational context.
12. Inappropriate Relationships – Adult advisors or other volunteers are expressly prohibited from dating or becoming romantically involved with any youth and from having sexual contact with any youth.
13. Illicit Media - All sexually oriented images, and use of electronic devices to view or download sexually oriented images are prohibited at Rainbow events or in the presence of Rainbow Girls.

14. Photographs, Videography, and other Media – Media images of Rainbow Girls should reflect the values of our organization. A media release, signed by the parents, is required before any pictures are taken, shared, published, or displayed.
15. Proper Attire – Members are to be properly attired at all times in keeping with the IORG dress code. Activities should be monitored to ensure appropriate and modest attire at all times.
16. Discipline – Only constructive, respectful, and non-physical discipline intended to instruct and demonstrate appropriate correction is permitted. All forms of restraint, degrading punishment, or physical discipline for behavior management are prohibited. Belittling or disparaging remarks and verbal abuse are not sanctioned in any form by the IORG or any Grand Jurisdiction.
17. Unacceptable Behavior – No form of harassment, hazing, or bullying is permitted by adults or youth. Advisors should also avoid unnecessary physical contact, including (but not limited to) back rubs, tickling, patting of buttocks, wrestling, or bear hugs.
18. Appropriate Physical Contact – Physical contact may include hand-shaking, high-fives, shoulder hugs (if acceptable to recipient), pat on the shoulder or other similar non-intrusive expressions of appreciation.
19. One-on-One Contacts – For the protection of both youth and adults, no one-on-one activities between adults and Rainbow Girls are allowed. Should privacy be required for a confidential conversation, the interaction should be observable and interruptible, i.e. out of hearing range of others yet still within their view.
20. Activities in Private Homes – Unless authorized by the Advisory Board, no activities involving Rainbow Girls and adult advisors or other volunteers are to be conducted in private homes. Appropriate chaperone/adult to youth ratios are to be observed at all times as addressed in the full IORG Youth Protection Policy.

PROCEDURAL SAFETY

21. Separate Accommodations – Adult advisors or other volunteers are prohibited from sharing a bed, sleeping bag, or room with a Rainbow Girl, and will maintain separate sleeping quarters except in severe emergencies, unless the adult is an immediate family member or an informed consent form is signed by a parent. Careful consideration should be given before housing older and younger girls together.
22. Respect of Privacy – Adult advisors and Rainbow Girls will respect each other's privacy. Except where health and safety require otherwise, adults will not intrude into changing rooms, showers or other private areas. Adults will protect their own privacy as well, and are not to bathe or undress in the presence of youth. If separate facilities are not available, a schedule for private activities must be maintained. No cameras or video equipment are permitted into private areas. Cellphones with cameras must be turned off and put away.
23. Recognizing and Responding – Any report or complaint from a Rainbow Girl concerning inappropriate or harmful behavior is to be taken seriously and addressed. Adult advisors should be aware of and responsive to signs that abuse may have occurred, e.g. sudden changes in attitude or behavior, avoidance of particular individuals, etc.
24. Intervention and Reporting – When inappropriate behavior is observed, an adult advisor should immediately intervene to explain the rules of behavior for Rainbow activities. Any observed maltreatment, harassment or other harmful behavior should immediately be reported in keeping with the reporting protocol outlined in the full IORG Youth Protection Policy.
25. Screening and Monitoring – Adults assisting a Rainbow Assembly in any capacity must be known to the assembly for at least six months, complete a thorough application and screening process, and participate in training as detailed in the IORG Youth Protection Policy before being allowed to serve.

Approved by the Supreme Executive Board of The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls May 30, 2021