

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR SMA, CO-WORKERS & VOLUNTEERS

This CODE OF BEHAVIOUR must be formally agreed to and signed by all members of the Society of African Missions (SMA), their employees, co-workers and volunteers on joining or participating in activities involving children and young people.

It is important for all those in contact with children to

- Treat all children in a way that fully respects their dignity and rights;
- Behave in a way that sets an example of the good conduct you wish others to follow;
- Operate within SMA principles, guidance and specific local procedures;
- Be visible to others when working with children;
- Respect each child or young person's boundaries;
- Help children to develop and awareness / understanding of their own rights and the rights of others;
- Provide children with information on how / from whom they can seek help if they have a problem;
- Challenge and report behaviour that is potentially abusive or in conflict with this Code;
- Develop a culture where children can talk openly about their contacts with staff and others.

In general, it is inappropriate to

- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others;
- Take children to your own home, especially where they will be alone with you;
- Use alcohol, tobacco or non-prescriptive drugs in the company of children or to attend a youth-event under the influence of any mood altering substance;
- Give personal contact information (e.g. mobile number or email address) to a young person;
- Befriend a child or young person on Facebook or other social networking site;

You must never

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse a child;
- Develop a sexual relationship with a child;
- Develop a relationship with a child which could be deemed exploitative or abusive;
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.
- You must avoid actions or behaviour that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive.
- For example, you must never use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.

You must never

- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative;
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom you are working;
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves;

- Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade anyone, adult or child;
- Discriminate against, show different treatment towards, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.

GENERAL CONDUCT

- Children and young adults should not be permitted to work or remain in an SMA church, residence, retreat house, parish property or school unless there are at least two adults present.
- The right to privacy of children and young adults must be respected at all times. Particular care regarding privacy must be taken when young people are in locations such as changing areas, swimming pools, showers and toilets.
- Photographs or videos of children and young adults can only be taken with their parents' permission and the consent of the young people themselves. Photos or videos must never be taken while the young people are in changing areas.
- In places such as changing areas, toilets and showers, separate provision should be made for boys and girls. There should be adequate and gender-appropriate supervision of males and females in such areas.
- The use of computers by children and young adults must be strictly controlled and supervised at all times.

PILGRIMAGES and OTHER TRIPS away from HOME

- All trips, including day trips, overnight stays and holidays, need careful advance planning, including adequate provision for safety in regard to adult supervision, transport, facilities, activities and emergencies. Adequate insurance should be in place to cover all contingencies.
- Written consent by a parent or guardian – specifically for each trip – must be obtained well in advance. A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers should be made available to parents and guardians.
- The provision of appropriate and adequate sleeping arrangements should be ensured in advance of the trip. Sleeping areas for boys and girls should be separate and supervised by two adults of the same sex as the group being supervised. The supervising adults should sleep in a separate room adjacent to the group being supervised
- In an emergency situation, when an adult considers it necessary to be in a children' dormitory or bedroom without the presence of another adult, they should immediately inform another adult as soon as possible, and make a diary note of the circumstances.

PEOPLE with SPECIAL NEEDS or DISABILITY

- Children and young adults with special needs or disabilities may depend on adults more than others for their care and safety, and so extreme sensitivity and clear communications are particularly important in such cases
- Where it is necessary to carry out tasks of a personal nature for such people this should be done with the full understanding and consent of parents or guardians.
- All SMA's and their co-workers should be aware that such vulnerable people may be more likely to be bullied or abused.

Signed _____

Print your name here:

Date: _____