



Liability Considerations

When engaging with youth and young adults, there are a variety of safety considerations that should be addressed. Depending on the age range of your group, the considerations will need to be flexible. The following are some basic guideline considerations for you and your organization to keep in mind.

These guidelines are meant to provide a general framework for reducing liability and ensuring the safety of youth. Specific requirements may vary based on the nature of the organization, the activities involved, and state or local laws. Always consult with legal counsel to tailor these guidelines to your specific circumstances.

Ages 18 and older

When working with young adults over 18 years of age in the United States, the approach to liability guidelines slightly differs from those for minors, given that individuals in this age group are legal adults. However, they still may need certain protections, especially in educational, recreational, or supportive environments. Here is a list of general liability guidelines to consider.

1. Training and Certification

- Provide training on adult mandatory reporting laws, and appropriate behavior.
- Consider obtaining certifications in first aid and CPR.

2. Policies and Procedures

- Develop and implement clear policies and procedures regarding the engagement and mentoring of youth including use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs.
- Include guidelines for one-on-one interactions, emphasizing transparency and appropriate boundaries.

- Create procedures for reporting and responding to allegations of abuse or misconduct.

3. Consent and Autonomy

- Respect the legal autonomy of individuals in this age group, ensuring they provide informed consent for participation in activities.
- Ensure that you are aware of any individuals over 18 years of age that have legal guardianship.
- Clearly communicate the risks and benefits of activities and obtain written consent when necessary.

4. Transportation Guidelines

- Develop clear guidelines and expectations for group and individual travel
- Consider liability when using personal vehicles

5. Emergency Procedures

- Establish and communicate emergency procedures for accidents, medical emergencies, and other crises.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are familiar with and trained in these procedures.

6. Confidentiality and Privacy

- Maintain the confidentiality of young adult's private information.
- Implement policies to protect their privacy, including social media and photo-sharing guidelines.

7. Insurance

- Ensure that your organization has appropriate liability insurance coverage that

includes protection for activities involving young adults and their support people or personal aids.

8. Behavioral Expectations

- Clearly communicate behavioral expectations for both young adults and staff.
- Enforce a code of conduct and implement disciplinary procedures for violations.

9. Incident Documentation

- Document all incidents involving young adults, including injuries, behavioral issues, and allegations of misconduct.
- Maintain accurate and secure records.

10. Health and Safety

- Adhere to health and safety regulations, including those specific to facilities and activities.
- Conduct regular safety inspections and risk assessments.