

International Order of the Rainbow for Girls

Youth Protection

IORG Policy and Program – Revised 2014



IORG YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY AND PROGRAM - 2014

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**Code of Conduct and Agreement
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YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY AND PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

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 or 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.

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.

General 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

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 not only prohibit inappropriate, harassing, coercive, and abusive behaviors, but that also promote respect and healthy boundaries, thereby discouraging predators from involvement

DEFINITIONS and CONSEQUENCES of ABUSE

Defining categories of harmful behaviors helps us to better understand and communicate expectations, increase awareness, and prevent harmful behaviors. However, legal definitions 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 for individual states. Cultivating relationships with local law enforcement or child welfare professionals may likewise be beneficial to understanding applicable laws and procedures.

General Definitions

Child maltreatment is considered to be any acts 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, emotion, 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.

- Harassment – persistent, unwelcome conduct that is insulting, degrading, exploitative or offensive to the recipient; repeated attacks against someone; creating unpleasant or hostile situations with 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 is called “cyber-stalking” or “cyber-harassment”.
- 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 Abuse

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

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. These protective factors have been shown to significantly increase the resiliency of youth when they later encounter adverse situations. Conversely, inappropriate or harmful interactions put youth at risk for negative physical and emotional outcomes, which may last throughout their lives.

- 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 anger and 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 has proven to be much stronger in modifying behavior than negative reinforcement of undesirable actions. Excessive reward is not necessary; simple compliments can be quite powerful.
- Hope: Youth benefit from learning to make things right, to make restitution when needed, to apologize and seek forgiveness as warranted, 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 if they are exposed to it. Learning to accept differences between people – in age, gender, beliefs, socio-economic status, culture, custom or lifestyle, for instance – helps them grow in maturity and prepares them for the rich diversity they may face as they enter new areas of life experience.

- Empowerment: People are strengthened by the ability to handle situations. Giving youth opportunities to 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.

Balance Caution with Caring

It is important to realize that the same dynamics that create a nurturing environment, and may ultimately protect against child sexual abuse, can also open the doors to sexually abusive behaviors. Youth who are emotionally insecure, needy, and unsupported 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 and thus reduce their risk for child sexual abuse. But that same closeness between a youth and an adult can also provide the opportunity for abuse to occur. We must be ever mindful to balance the need to keep youth safe with the need to nurture and care for them.

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.

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 reporting agency. Further, the person whose behaviors are a matter of concern may be banned from attendance at future Rainbow functions and events.
- Rainbow Girls At Events Where Alcohol Is Being 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 the close proximity of the alcohol.
 - Girls are not allowed to touch the 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 alcohol is being sold and/or served on the premises of the girls' activity; that adequate adult supervision will be provided at all times; that girls cannot and will not touch the alcohol or containers of alcohol, nor be unsupervised in close proximity of the alcohol; 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.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Harm to young members constitutes a serious threat to any youth-serving organization's ability to fulfill its mission. In fact, legal, financial, and public relations consequences of a serious incident may 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 to occur, "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 any 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 undue harm.

Legal liability is a secondary concern. The primary objective of risk management in youth-serving organizations is the protection 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 inadequate strategy 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?
- Decide how to manage risks:
 - 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.

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.

MONITORING, ASSESSING AND RESPONDING TO BEHAVIOR

Monitoring

The goal of monitoring is to encourage appropriate behavior and prevent or minimize inappropriate behavior. Monitoring behavior involves observing interactions during activities and reacting in an appropriate and timely manner. Adult and youth leaders are expected to be fully familiar with the Youth Protection Policy, including the Code of Conduct (behavioral guidelines), which defines categories of behaviors, and to identify when someone has crossed the line of acceptability. Potential inappropriate behaviors could include showing favoritism or seeking time alone with a youth. Some situations pose more risk for inappropriate or harmful behaviors, such as overnight trips.

Adult leaders are primarily responsible for monitoring behavior and interactions within the organization, and should be clear about their roles and responsibilities. Leaders must be prepared to respond immediately to inappropriate or harmful behavior, potential risk situations, and potential boundary violations and understand the reporting systems within the organization. Such monitoring and reinforcement 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 them and encourage their continuance.

Assessing Behaviors

While specific circumstances are addressed in the IORG Code of Conduct, the following will provide a general framework for differentiating interactions between individuals:

- Appropriate behaviors are those which are desirable and in keeping with the circumstances of an activity and the overall goals of the organization. In interactions between individuals (youths or youths and adults), conversations and behaviors that support positive youth development, make youth feel valued, provide caring connections, and foster well-being should be encouraged.
- Inappropriate behaviors are not perceived to be harmful, but fall short of being appropriate. This might include comments or actions made in jest, or may be the result of thoughtlessness or insensitivity. There is sometimes 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 his or her remarks or actions in the future.
- Harmful behaviors include any interactions that put youth at risk for adverse physical or emotional outcomes. That includes anything that is overtly hurtful, degrading, coercive, sexually suggestive, or invasive of someone's space or privacy. Action should be taken any time harmful behaviors are observed. Please refer to the IORG Code of Conduct for specific situations and prohibited activities.

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 may not be appropriate within the confines of the organization. Kissing could even be considered harmful if coercion is involved. Hugging may be appropriate and positive in some circumstances, but can also be inappropriate if a youth is not receptive, or it occurs too often or for too long, or if the contact is romanticized or sexualized.

Responding

While the ultimate aim of youth protection efforts is the safety of the youth involved, it is 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 to (1) inappropriate or harmful behaviors, (2) infractions of policies, and (3) evidence or allegations of abuse, especially child sexual abuse.

When to Respond Within the Organization and When to Report to Authorities

It can sometimes be challenging to find the balance between being protective of youth and being so hyper-vigilant that the positive aspects of the organization are lost. It is important to recognize that there is a continuum of appropriate, inappropriate and harmful behaviors. The guiding factors of reporting to authorities should consider the amount of risk for harm to the youth and others. For instance, if a youth tells a sexually risqué joke, it is usually appropriate to handle it internally with guidance and instruction. But if a youth or adult volunteer forces sexual contact upon a youth, this must be reported to the legal authorities.

When inappropriate behavior is observed that is not thought to be harmful, it may be appropriate for the Mother Advisor, Advisory Board Chair, or other person in a position of leadership to approach the person demonstrating the behavior and explain that their behavior may be considered questionable. It may especially be helpful to those who may have been unaware of changing cultural norms relative to physical boundaries and increasing awareness of youth mistreatment to have an edifying conversation about what is not considered appropriate. A climate should be created that encourages people to question confusing or uncertain behaviors and practices, as well as to promote appropriate interactions.

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.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

Each state, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and international countries and provinces have different legal reporting requirements. The Child Welfare Information Gateway (www.childwelfare.gov) or other online or local resources can provide information about applicable laws. Each Rainbow jurisdiction is responsible for obtaining information about the requirements that pertain to their assemblies. Copies of appropriate ordinances should be attached to these policies for each assembly.

IMMEDIATE SAFETY – CALL 911: In cases of any immediate danger, call 911 or contact the police or sheriff. Any time there is a question of imminent safety for a youth or adult, leaders should not hesitate to contact the appropriate authorities.

Steps for Reporting

Anyone who observes, is informed Of, or has reason to suspect any action that could adversely affect the welfare Of a Rainbow Girl must immediately inform their Mother Advisor or Advisory Board Member.

1. Report any incident of abuse, harassment, or any other conduct in violation of this policy by anyone, whether or not connected with Rainbow. (This could involve family, friends, acquaintances, girls or adults.)
2. Complete a Confidential Report of Concern with detailed information about the incident and submit to your Mother Advisor or Advisory Board Member as soon as possible. Report only the facts, including exact words or actions. Do not include personal opinions. **This report must be kept in strict confidence.**
3. The Mother Advisor or Advisory Board Member receiving the report shall determine whether to contact the appropriate legal authority to report. (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 about this determination, 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.)
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 Grand Deputy, at which point a thorough investigation shall be conducted.

6. Document details of any contact with an individual or organization in the Action Logs.
7. The Grand Deputy shall complete the Action Log and Subsequent Actions and Resolution Log, and submit to the Supreme Inspector/Deputy after each action taken in relation to the incident.
8. The completed report and all other future pertinent information, along with any supporting information, should be sent to the Supreme Inspector/Deputy for secured filing. No copies are to be kept in the hall or with individuals. Originals of the logs should be kept by the individual making the report, with copies sent, in a timely fashion, to the Supreme Inspector/Deputy after each contact is made.
9. The Supreme Inspector/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.
10. 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.
11. The Supreme Inspector/Deputy may also notify the Sponsoring Bodies that a report has been filed.

The privacy of all persons involved will be respected at all levels. All reports shall be kept in strict confidence.

Guide to Reporting Incidents and Concerns

Any adult or youth who has reason to suspect, or observe mistreatment of a youth or an unsafe situation, should immediately inform the Mother Advisor or Advisory Board Chair, followed by submitting a completed Confidential Incident Report as soon as practicable. (Incident Reports 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. For confidentiality purposes, the matter should not be discussed with anyone else.

Reports should be made:

- Any time the safety and wellbeing of a child is in danger
- Any time abuse is suspected or reported
- Any time sexual abuse of youth by anyone (including an adult leader, another youth within the organization, or someone outside of the organization such as a caregiver) is suspected.
- 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.)

Other Considerations

- If there is an incident or suspicion of child sexual abuse or physical abuse having occurred, child protective services or law enforcement authorities must investigate. DO NOT INTERFERE with the legal investigation process. In this instance, it is not the role of the volunteer leader to evaluate or investigate an allegation or suspicion.
- Any media or public inquiries must be referred to the Supreme Inspector/Deputy of the jurisdiction.
- Partnering with child protective services, law enforcement, or child advocacy groups can help ensure that organizational practices are in line with local applicable law, and can provide supportive training opportunities for leaders and participants that can reduce the likelihood of an incident occurring.

- . 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 requiring certain people to report concerns of child abuse and neglect. Some states require all people to report their concerns, while many states identify specific professionals or 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 laws on immunity from liability for individuals who report suspected instances of abuse in good faith. Immunity statutes, sometimes called Good Samaritan Laws, protect both mandatory and voluntary reporters from civil or criminal liability.

It is the Rainbow leader's responsibility to do everything possible to protect its members. Those in leadership positions with assemblies are expected to report any behaviors and practices that may be harmful to our youth or in violation of these practices. In most states, Child Protective Services is responsible for 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 requiring immediate action. This provides continuity, prevents confusion from multiple reports, and encourages clear communications through appropriate channels of authority.

Administrative Procedures

Safety shall be the first matter of concern and action when reports are made concerning any form of mistreatment or violation of policy. Thereafter, consideration may be given to administrative actions. As noted previously, failure to comply with the 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 being filed. Rainbow leadership will vigorously enforce this policy and are responsible for acting diligently to prevent, detect, and address violations of this policy.

When breaches of policy by anyone connected with Rainbow are observed or reported, 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. For the purpose of objectivity, it would be appropriate for the Mother Advisor and Advisory Board Members to confer with each other about this determination, excluding anyone who might have been involved in the incident. 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 Grand Deputy, and an investigation shall be conducted. The Grand Deputy shall prepare an Action Log and Subsequent Action and Resolution Log, which will be submitted to the Supreme Inspector/Deputy. The Supreme Inspector/Deputy shall report the incident to the Supreme Office for notification of the Supreme Executive Board.

SCREENING AND SELECTION OF ADULT LEADERS

All adults who work with Rainbow youth must be appropriately and adequately screened. This includes advisors, volunteers and persons in leadership positions at any level, as well as those who only occasionally work with youth by assisting with activities or providing a service. Those who regularly work with youth are expected to complete training

requirements for becoming a Certified Chaperone within two years. Utilizing the same process for all workers provides transparency and consistency in applying the policy standards, and is also a deterrent to predators.

Process Overview for Regular Workers

- LI Must be at least 21 years of age
- LI Must be known to Mother Advisor or other Rainbow leader for at least six months
- LI Must submit completed standard application form with release of information for background checks and references (See Appendixes)
- LI Must not have been convicted of child abuse or molestation
- LI Must sign Acknowledgement and Agreement of Code of Conduct (See Appendixes)
- LI Must have successful background checks of sex offender, criminal, and other records
- LI Must have positive response from at least three personal references, at least two of whom must be from outside of Rainbow. (Use the standardized form in the Appendixes. Efforts should be made to contact the reference by phone so that answers can be further clarified as needed.)
- LI Must complete face to face interview with Mother Advisor or designee (See Appendixes)
- LI Must submit proof of driver's license and vehicle insurance
- LI Must complete YP Training Curriculum within two years

Youth Helpers

Youth Leaders under 21 years of age must always be under the supervision and in the physical presence of an adult leader designated to supervise youth activities. A person convicted of child abuse or molestation is not permitted to be a helper. All helpers must have been active members for at least six months, and demonstrated specific gifts, talents, and maturity that qualify them as helpers. The Mother Advisor and Advisory Board Chair must provide written approval of an individual's eligibility to be a Helper.

Certified Chaperone Criteria and Process

A Regular Worker may become a Certified Chaperone by having successfully served as a Regular Worker for at least a year, and meeting these additional criteria:

- Must complete Chaperone application
- Must have documented demonstration of appropriate behaviors and skills when working with Rainbow youth
- Must have recommendation from at least two (2) in Rainbow Leadership
- Must complete face to face interview with Advisory Board or selection committee
- Must have completed all regular YP training components
- Must complete additional training for Chaperone Certification within one year of application

Certifications are good for four (4) years, after which time recertification may be accomplished by repeating training and undergoing a subsequent background check.

Applications and Profiles

The Adult Worker Profile is an application to work with Rainbow youth as a volunteer in any capacity. Any adult working with our youth - whether as an Advisory Board Member, Mother Advisor, Chaperone, or volunteer worker - should be screened for suitability. Answers to these questions should give sufficient information that the approving body (Supreme Inspector/Deputy or Advisory Board) can 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. Secondarily, it has been found that those who prey upon young people are discouraged by such processes and may seek easier targets. Other youth organizations – including Masonic youth organizations,

churches, and schools – now require similar application processes and background checks. Adults should be accustomed to this process and will recognize it as necessary for the protection of our youth.

References and Background Checks

The Adult Worker Profile contains a release of information to contact references and check background information. It is advisable to verify as much information as possible regarding the background of the individual applying to work with our girls. Personal references should be contacted and notes kept on file. Verification of driver's license and automobile insurance should also be kept on file. Information about Masonic affiliation, previous youth group involvement, driving record, and criminal background checks should also remain in the individual's confidential file. Much information is available online or through locally available public records. The needs and resources of each Jurisdiction, along with applicable laws, will dictate this process. Each state and country will have its own laws pertaining to background checks. Each Jurisdiction should become familiar with laws pertaining to this information. Because laws are constantly changing, this information can become outdated quickly. Someone in each Jurisdiction should be responsible for checking and updating this information.

Criminal background record checks must be made for all applicants in any states where they have resided during the past seven years, and other states as determined by the advisory board, to include: a multi-county criminal history check, multi-state criminal history check, sexual offender registry check, a credit report, and a motor vehicle record must be obtained for any person who will be transporting youth. Conviction of a crime unrelated to the individual's responsibilities with Rainbow does not necessarily disqualify the application. The Advisory Board will make determinations on an individual basis. However, anyone convicted of any crime against a person, or misconduct of any kind with a child is automatically disqualified from consideration. 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 excluded from consideration. Misrepresentation of any information relative to a person's background is grounds for elimination from consideration. A criminal records check and sexual offender registry check must be conducted every four (4) years for regular workers.

Interviews

It is recommended that each new applicant be interviewed by the appropriate selection authority (Mother Advisor, Advisory Board, Grand Deputy, or Supreme Inspector/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 also provide the opportunity to explore how individuals handle stress, conflict, and authority. A set of standard questions and scenarios will help make interviews more objective.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Each jurisdiction is responsible for ensuring that adequate training is provided to adults and youth. The following lists are comprised of critical topics, which are therefore considered to be required training. Jurisdictions may utilize their existing training materials training resources materials as long as they adequately address each of these content areas. IORG's YP Training Curriculum Modules and Resources are available (anticipated date: January, 2015) to supplement existing training in order for each jurisdiction to comply with requirements. *Training is to be documented yearly on the Annual Youth Protection Reporting Form, which is submitted by [date] each year to the Supreme Office.*

TRAINING MODULES FOR REGULAR ADULT

- WORKERS** LI Child Abuse Overview
- LI IORG Policy and Code of Conduct
- LI Prevention of Abuse
- LI Handling Disclosures

- Dating and Relationships Safety
- Bullying
- CYBER Safety/Internet/Texting
- Situational Safety
 - o Drug and Alcohol Use and Abuse
 - o Safe Driving
- Reporting

ADDITIONAL TRAINING MODULES FOR CHAPERONES

- Protective Factors
- Healthy Youth Development
- Personal Conduct
- Behavioral Indicators
- Relationship Dynamics
- Monitoring and Assessing Behaviors
- Responding to Situations
- Disclosures and Reports

TRAINING MODULES FOR YOUTH

- Child Abuse Overview
- IORG Policy and Code of Conduct
- Prevention of Abuse (Awareness)
- Dating and Relationships Safety
- Bullying
- CYBER Safety/Internet/Texting
- Situational Safety
 - o Drug and Alcohol Use and Abuse
 - o Safe Driving
- Reporting

CHAPERONE - YOUTH RATIOS

The purpose of having ratios for the number of chaperones and adults to youth is to ensure the safety of the youth and the wellbeing of all concerned. Adult volunteers may include certified chaperones and advisory board members, parents, and members of sponsoring fraternal organizations. Those who regularly work with or supervise youth (at least five times per year) should complete the process for 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 process above.

A minimum of two unrelated adults, at least one of whom is a female chaperone certified by the Advisory Board 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.

There is no clear standard ratio for every situation because there are so many considerations, so it is essential that assembly leaders anticipate the level of risk involved and exercise good judgment in making decisions about the ratios of adults to youth. All variables should be taken into account, such as:

- Age and developmental level of youth and adult volunteers - If youth or adults are younger, you may need a lower ratio, 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 - Does it involve much isolation from others? 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 two adults to oversee 40 youth in an assembly room than at a park where it is easier to lose track of individuals.
- Refer to the IORG Code of Conduct for specifics for special circumstances.

Volunteers should be encouraged to actively interact with youth in order to maintain adequate supervision and monitoring of activities. Even if there are adequate ratios, youth are not being monitored if all adult volunteers are engaged in their own conversations or segregated in another part of the area. **References:**

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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>

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Understanding and Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect; American Psychological Association; online publication; <http://www.apa.org>; 2014.

- Wired Safety focuses on prevention of cyber stalking and harassment - <https://www.wiredsafety.org/>