

NDSU Extension Service Youth Development Programs



Adult Chaperone Expectations for 4-H and other Youth Events

The North Dakota State University Extension Service is dedicated to the positive development of North Dakota youth and families. Active and caring chaperones are an important part of the success of our youth work.

The NDSU Extension program strives to provide high-quality educational programs for youth.

The primary purpose of this set of responsibilities is to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants.

A minimum of one responsible adult (at least 18 years old) will be assigned for every eight to 10 youth for any NDSU Extension Service youth-related activities involving an overnight stay, as consistent with national 4-H guidelines.

Chaperones are required to abide by the following expectations:

- **Meet the established age for chaperones for the event and be screened and approved through the Youth Protection Policy.**
- **Follow all expectations outlined in the NDSU Extension Service Youth Development Programs Adult Behavioral Expectations (PB400).**
- **Act as a positive role model and lead by example.** North Dakota 4-H supports the CHARACTER COUNTS!* Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship. Chaperone behavior should demonstrate these pillars. We strive to help youth make good choices by modeling healthy behavior. No tobacco use, in any form (including e-cigarettes) will be allowed during 4-H chaperone duties.
- **Be willing to accept responsibility to represent, promote and support NDSU Extension to develop an effective county, state and national youth program.**
- **Provide the required documents to serve as an adult chaperone.** Examples may include: Adult Behavioral Expectations, Adult 4-H Health form, media release, Assumption of Risk and Release, Volunteer Request to Operate a State Vehicle, proof of insurance.
- **Be able and willing to communicate regularly with participants and Extension staff prior to, during and following the event.** Participate in any scheduled pre-event orientation or conference calls. Access to email and a cell phone is required.
- **Be familiar with and follow the workshop/event rules and expectations.** If you are chaperoning an event that does not have established rules, work with the event coordinator to create basic rules and that all youth understand them. Basic rules include: behavior expectations, meeting times, time for lights out, buddy system and other important parameters for youth.
- **Be willing to ensure the welfare, health and safety of participants.**
- **Assist in developing a positive community spirit among all participants.**
- **Attend all adult chaperone briefings for or during the event.** Share information from the meeting(s) with youth participants.
- **Assist with the event as requested by the event coordinator.**

Chaperones are expected to respect, adhere to and enforce the following rules, policies and expectations established by NDSU Extension youth programs:

- **Be responsible for having the required documents for all youth and adult participants for the specific event, such as a signed 4-H Participant Code of Conduct, media release and health form.**
- **Encourage, support and monitor full involvement of all participants in all activities.**
- **Help participants evaluate what they see, hear and do.**

- **Establish a code of conduct/vehicle etiquette/trip expectations during trips and review them with youth.**
(Examples: Youth may not lie down together in the back of the bus; participants must be in rooms by a set time and stay in their rooms).
- **Ensure all youth follow hours and room rules and respect the rules established for each event.**
- **Youth need to room with other youth.** An adult will not share a room with one minor child who is not his or her child. If the situation dictates that an adult and a youth share a room, several (three or more) youth should be with a single adult. Preferably, unrelated adults and youth will not share lodging.
- **Utilize best practices in room assignments based on gender and developmentally appropriate ages.**
- **Abstain from and do not tolerate physical, verbal, or emotional abuse.**
- **Respect the privacy of youth and others.** In situations in which changing clothes or taking showers may be in facilities lacking privacy, chaperones should intrude only to the extent that health and safety require.
- **Promptly alert the workshop or event coordinator(s) of problems that need to be addressed.** Work in conjunction with coordinators to fill out appropriate reports, if necessary.
Contact the appropriate NDSU Extension office immediately if a serious accident or infraction occurs.
- **Inspect luggage or rooms when a reasonable suspicion exists** that a violation of law or NDSU Extension Service event rules has occurred and notify the coordinator if the conduct by adult staff/volunteers or youth is unacceptable. Law enforcement may be notified by the event coordinator.

Complying with Adult Chaperone Expectations is important for all NDSU Extension staff and volunteers. Failure to comply with any component of the expectations or participation in other inappropriate behavior as determined by NDSU Extension representatives may lead to dismissal as a volunteer from the NDSU Extension youth program, as identified in the NDSU Extension Service Youth Development Programs Adult Behavioral Expectations (PB400).

Chaperone signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Extension staff signature _____ Date ____/____/____ *

CHARACTER COUNTS! is a service mark of the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition, a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics.

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