

North Dakota Center for 4-H Youth Development



Youth Protection Policy

Together, Protecting NDSU Extension Youth Program Participants

Introduction

The NDSU Extension Service Youth Protection Policy was approved as organizational policy by the NDSU Extension Service Administrative Team on June 25, 1992, to be implemented as of April 15, 1993. Review and adaptations were made in February 2000, November 2002, and October 2010.

As an adopted policy for the NDSU Extension Service, all staff members in all NDSU Extension offices are required to participate in the process, function within the guidelines of the Youth Protection Policy, and ensure that it is implemented in all youth programs.

The policy has been developed and updated in cooperation with NDSU Extension administrators, field staff, specialists, support staff, ND Department of Human Services, NDSU Legal Counsel, and volunteers who work with youth development programs.

Acknowledgements

Review Committee, November 2002

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Pilot Counties:

Ramsey and Williams counties provided feedback at various stages of the initial policy development.

The NDSU Extension Service Youth Protection Policy was developed as a result of a recommendation approved by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP). It was recommended (September 6, 1990) that state policy and guidelines include:

- A. Selection procedures for salaried and volunteer staff which includes background checks.
- B. Training on child abuse identification and reporting.
- C. Written guidelines for all salaried and volunteer staff who work directly with youth.

Myron D. Johnsrud
Administrator, ES-USDA
December 2001

Policy

Purpose

The mission of 4-H is to create supportive learning environments for youth and adults to reach their fullest potential as capable, competent and caring citizens. The Youth Protection Policy represents a code of ethics which all volunteers and staff are expected to observe. Its purpose is to protect the safety and well-being of all youth participants, their families, volunteers and paid staff.

Whether we are staff members or volunteers, teens or adults, all of us who work closely with young people have the potential to profoundly affect the well-being of children. In addition to providing safe and appropriate environments, we must also be positive role models focusing on how we communicate with children, our methods of discipline and problem-solving, and how sensitive we are to the individual needs of all children.

The responsibility for the well-being of children lies with each and every one of us. The NDSU Extension Service Youth Protection process is designed to help us carefully select people who work with our youth development programs. This policy provides an opportunity for all adults working in NDSU Extension youth programs to:

- A. Be screened and carefully selected for work with youth.
- B. Learn how to:
 - 1) protect youth and all program participants.
 - 2) detect and change situations that may be harmful.
- C. Reaffirm their dedication to youth and their well-being.
- D. Establish and follow policies that create safe environments for all youth program participants.

Policy Applies To Volunteers, Teens and Paid Staff

Paid Staff

This policy applies to all Extension paid staff regardless of work assignment.

Volunteers

In North Dakota, volunteers with the NDSU Extension Service are considered 'unpaid staff' when they are functioning in an official capacity on behalf of the NDSU Extension Service. Volunteers (age 18 and over) who want to work directly with youth on a regular basis (more than a one-time interaction), or chaperone an overnight activity must be screened and approved to serve. Potential volunteers cannot assume volunteer responsibilities and be enrolled as a volunteer until the screening and approval process is complete.

Teens & Teen Employees

Teens: All 4-H Youth members who turn 18 years old during the year are required to complete the adult volunteer selection process because they will be interacting with youth on a regular basis.

Teen Employees: Youth seeking employment in programs that include overnight camping/chaperoning or ongoing child care services will follow prospective employee hiring procedures.

Confidentiality

- A. All staff who have responsibilities related to the screening and/or selection of paid staff and volunteers will be informed of the importance of confidentiality and sign a Confidentiality Statement (*Form H*) agreeing to protect the privacy of individuals.
- B. Any person who permits or encourages unauthorized disclosure of confidential information obtained from the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index can be charged with a class B misdemeanor (up to \$500 fine and 30 days imprisonment.)
- C. All information about applicants and why they are accepted or rejected as a youth program volunteer must be treated in a confidential manner. Only authorized persons should be involved in discussing questionable applicants. Discretion and privacy must be used when screening and discussing applicants.
- D. According to North Dakota open records law, anyone requesting information on an applicant may have access to all information in that person's file **EXCEPT** information from the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index.

Learning to Establish Safe Environments and Barriers to Abuse

The following guidelines for volunteer and paid staff help establish safe environments and barriers to potential abuse.

- A. To protect individuals, paid and volunteer staff needs to work with young people in reasonably open places where others are welcome to enter (NOT behind closed/locked doors). Be aware that while spending time alone with a single child can be positive and helpful, it may also create reasons for concern.

- B. There will be a minimum of one responsible adult (at least 18 yrs. old) for every 8 to 10 youth, for any NDSU Extension Service youth-related activities involving an overnight stay, as consistent with national 4-H guidelines (12/1/93).
- C. Respect privacy. Adults need to respect the privacy of youth, and protect their own privacy. The privacy issue is especially relevant in situations where changing clothes or taking showers may be in facilities lacking privacy. In these situations staff (volunteer and paid) will intrude only to the extent that health and safety requires.
- D. Paid and volunteer staff needs to be alert to the physical and emotional well-being of youth under their supervision. Signs of injury, suspected child abuse or neglect should be reported.
- E. Tell parents and guardians that they are always welcome and encouraged to attend Extension youth program meetings and events.
- F. Extension paid staff and volunteers are reminded that their behavior can have an impact on youth in many situations and environments, during Extension programs and outside those responsibilities.
- G. An adult will not share a room with one minor child who is not his or her child. Youth need to room with other youth at Extension events. If the situation dictates that an adult and a youth share a room, there should be several youth with a single adult. Preferably, unrelated adults and youth will not share lodging.
- H. Extension paid and volunteer staff will not, under any circumstances, discipline children by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care, such as food and shelter.

Management of Policy

Note: All forms and letters referred to in this document are available in PDF format on the North Dakota 4-H website: www.ndsu.edu/4h/staff_resources/youth_protection_policy

Prospective Volunteer Screening

All volunteers age 18 and over who want to work directly with youth on a regular basis (i.e. more than a one-time interaction), or when chaperoning an overnight activity are required to apply, be screened and approved to serve as a volunteer.

- A. Potential volunteer(s) completes Adult Behavior Expectations (*Form A*) and the Application to Volunteer in Youth Programs (*Form B*). (See Volunteer Applicant Letter) (*Sample Letter 3*).
- B. A staff member (or designated volunteer/ committee) submits the name for clearance through the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index (see Appendix B) (*Sample Letter 1*).
- C. A staff member (or designated volunteer/ committee) submits the name in writing to the Center for 4-H Youth Development to check against the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website. (see Appendix B) (*Sample Letter 2*).

- D. Two references are checked for each volunteer applicant.
 - 1. Reference Check by Telephone or Face-to-Face Interview (*Form E*)
 - 2. Reference Check by Mail (*Form F*)

Reference Checks

Reference checks will be conducted on paid staff and volunteers who want to work in NDSU Extension youth programs. The Extension staff, personnel committee, or search committee will contact at least two references, requesting information on the qualifications of the applicant to work with youth.

References may be contacted by mail, telephone or face-to-face. Sample questions and forms are provided in the *Forms* section on the website. Two positive references must be received before a new volunteer or paid staff member is accepted for placement working with youth.

- A. Applicant(s) are interviewed by an Extension staff member (or designated volunteer/committee). An interview is recommended but optional. See Guide to Interviewing Prospective Volunteer Applicants (Appendix A) and Volunteer Interview Report (*Form I*).
- B. On the basis of information obtained (in steps 2, 3, 4 and 5) the Extension staff member (or designated volunteer/ committee) determines whether or not to accept the applicant. Potential volunteer is notified by letter regarding status (*Sample Letter 4 & Sample Letter 5*).

Review of Applicants

Reasonable effort needs to be made to review each applicant and provide a response to the individual in a timely manner. All information compiled from the application, Child Abuse Information Index check, Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website, references and interview will be reviewed. When there is questionable or inconclusive data, additional references may be considered or information from law enforcement authorities requested before deciding whether to recommend placement of the applicant to work with youth.

Acceptance

Volunteer may be enrolled in the Extension youth program. A letter of acceptance should be issued at this time (*Letter 4*).

- A. Extension staff member (or a volunteer designee/committee) provides appropriate orientation and educational support for a volunteer role.
 - 1. Teaching Guide for Volunteer Training (see Appendix A)
 - 2. Power Point Presentation - Volunteer Youth Protection (available for download on website)
 - 3. Volunteer Youth Protection Policy Overview (available on website)
- B. Information compiled during the screening process is documented and filed prior to assigning the volunteer to work with children. See File Management.
- C. Enter certification in 4hOnline Enrollment program.

Conditional Acceptance

An applicant may be invited to volunteer with an Extension program without working directly with youth. This is conditional acceptance and provides an opportunity to support 4-H in another way. Some possibilities include: newsletter preparation, event planning, organizing programs, fundraising, recordkeeping, award selection. Send a letter of Conditional Acceptance (*Letter 5, Option 1*).

Rejection

Applicants must be notified in writing if not accepted (*Letter 5, Option 2*). (See Grievance Procedures for Volunteers – Appendix A)

Re-affirmation and Re-screening of Current Volunteers & Reactivating a Volunteer

Every six (6) years all current volunteers will repeat the screening process to reaffirm their dedication to keeping youth safe.

- A. Secure leader's certification report from 4hOnline Enrollment database

To get a report of volunteers screened in the 4hOnline Enrollment volunteer youth program, take the following steps:

1. Click **Report**
 2. Click **o**
 3. Click **†** **o** **k**
 4. Click **Run Report**
- B. Using Sample Letter 6, current program volunteer(s) are asked to read and sign the Adult Behavior Expectation Form (*Form A*), and completes the Volunteer Information Form (*Form C*) authorizing release of information to the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index.
 - C. Using Sample Letter 1, staff (or volunteer designee/committee) submits the volunteer name(s) for clearance through the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index using local office stationary. The original of form C accompanies this request.
 - D. Using Sample Letter 2, staff Member submits the name(s) in writing to the Center for 4-H Youth Development to check against the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website (*Sample Letter 2*).
 - E. If name(s) does not clear the Index or the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website, volunteer is removed from any direct contact with youth until the situation is reviewed.

Review of Applicants (Appendix A)

1. Grievance Procedures for Volunteers (Appendix A)
2. Dismissal of a Volunteer (Appendix A)

- F. If name(s) clears the Index and Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website, volunteer receives a letter for continuation (*Sample Letter 7*).
- G. Enter certification in 4hOnline Enrollment Program.

Applicant Previously Selected by Another Organization

Applicants who are serving with another youth program should sign a release for information to be obtained from that program (*Form G*). If screening for that program is at least as thorough as NDSU Extension Service youth program screening, the volunteer will not need to be re-screened.

Information obtained from another youth organization should be filed in the volunteer's personnel file. If information is more than six years old, applicant needs to complete an Application to Volunteer in Youth Programs (*Form B*) and Adult Behavior Expectations (*Form A*) following the steps in the new applicant procedure.

Teens & Teen Employees

Teens: All 4-H Youth members who turn 18 years old during the year are required to complete the adult volunteer selection process because they will be interacting with youth on a regular basis.

Teen Employees: Youth seeking employment in programs that include overnight camping/chaperoning or ongoing child care services will follow prospective employee hiring procedures.

Prospective Paid Staff (County-paid and State-paid)

- A. During the screening and selection process the search committee chair (or designee):
 - identifies interview questions relating to work with children, and
 - contacts at least two references and includes inquiry about suitability of candidate to work with children (consult *Form E* and *Form I* for examples of suitable questions).
- B. A finalist for an Extension staff position completes *Form M* (if county-paid) or *Form N* (if state-paid).
- C. The name(s) are checked against the Child Abuse Information Index (*Sample Letter 1*).
- D. The names are submitted for clearance against the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website (*Sample Letter 2*).
- E. The applications are reviewed to include information obtained in Steps 1, 3 and 4 above.
- F. This information, in conjunction with other applicant information, is used to determine if an offer of employment will be made.
- G. Document and file information learned prior to assigning the candidate a position to work with children. See File Management for Staff

- H. If staff member has access to or works with Youth Protection Policy files, they complete the Confidentiality Statement (*Form H*). Appropriate orientation and educational support is provided to the staff member.
- Staff Teaching Guide
 - Power Point Presentation for staff training
 - Staff Youth Protection Policy page
 - Volunteer Youth Protection Policy page

Re-affirmation & Re-screening of Current County Paid Staff (*county serves as employer of record*)

- A. Every six (6) years staff completes Re-affirmation and Re-certification Form (*Form P*)
- B. Staff with responsibilities for processing youth protection records read and sign the Confidentiality Statement (*Form H*).
- C. Using sample letter 1, submit name(s) for clearance through the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index.
- D. Using sample letter 2, submit name(s) to be checked through the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website.
- E. If name does not clear the Index or Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website, the individual is removed from any direct contact with youth until the situation is reviewed.
- F. Retain a copy of form P, form H, and the clearance letter received back from Bismarck in the employees personnel file.

Re-affirmation & Re-screening of NDSU Paid Staff (*NDSU serves as employer of record*)

- A. Every six (6) years staff completes Re-affirmation and Re-certification Form (*Form O*)
- B. Staff with responsibilities for processing youth protection records read and sign the Confidentiality Statement (*Form H*).
- C. Submit completed forms O and H to the Extension Directors office for clearance through the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index and for permanent personnel file.
- D. Using sample letter 2, submit name(s) to be checked the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website.
- E. If name does not clear the Index or Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website, the individual is removed from any direct contact with youth until the situation is reviewed.

See Grievance Procedures for NDSU Paid Staff (Appendix A)

Supervision of Policy

Management Procedures

The supervisor or chairperson in each NDSU Extension county office, district, or campus department is

responsible to ensure that the NDSU Extension Service Youth Protection Policy is implemented.

The supervisor is an office chairperson, department chairperson, assistant director, or county 4-H contact. The supervisor may *designate* another Extension staff member or an Extension volunteer to be responsible for part(s) of the implementation of this policy. The supervisor (or designee) is responsible to ensure that:

- A. All appropriate forms are provided to all individuals affected by this policy.
- B. Appropriate processes are followed.
- C. Educational resources and training are provided to volunteers/staff.
- D. He/she is available to listen and take action as appropriate.
- E. Files and confidential information are secure and managed appropriately.
- F. Local councils and advisory groups are invited to establish "safe environments and barriers to child abuse" as they recommend policy that affects NDSU Extension youth programs.
- G. Parents/guardians are invited to be involved in planning and implementing youth development programs, establishing policy and educating others in keeping participants safe.

Personnel Committee

County staff may appoint a volunteer personnel committee to oversee the volunteer selection process. All volunteer applicants should be investigated through the same procedures. The personnel committee will implement procedures for reviewing all applicants' files. The committee should make recommendations on acceptance and/or placement.

Where there is reason to question an applicant's qualifications, committee members may seek additional information. Individuals with experience in child protection, law enforcement, counseling or personnel management are good candidates for a personnel committee.

Role Description

- Volunteer Personnel Committee Member (Appendix A)
- Youth Protection Training Leader (Appendix A)

File Management

Access to Files

All Youth Protection Policy information on volunteers/paid staff must be kept in a secure place, accessible only to the authorized NDSU Extension Service personnel and/or designated personnel committee working with this policy implementation.

However, according to North Dakota open records laws, information (**EXCEPT** information from the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index) about any youth program volunteer or paid staff, must be available, if requested.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Information from the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index CANNOT be made available to anyone except authorized NDSU Extension Service personnel or committee members upon penalty of being charged with a class B misdemeanor.

Supervision of Files

Signed Adult Behavior Expectations forms (*Form A*) and Volunteer Information Forms (*Form C*) will be filed:

- At the local county Extension offices where the volunteer is working in youth programs
- At a regional or state Extension office, if that volunteer only works with regional or state youth programs.

Signed Youth Protection Policy Forms, (*Forms M, N, O and P*) for *paid staff* will be filed:

- At the NDSU Agriculture Budget Office if they are NDSU (state paid) employees, or
- At the local Extension office if they are hired by a local entity (county paid)

Inactive files

All records must be kept on file for six (6) years after the volunteer is no longer involved in an Extension youth program or a paid staff member is no longer employed in compliance with the Statute of Limitations for filing civil and criminal actions.

When a volunteer becomes inactive or paid staff member resigns, all of their forms should be stapled together and placed in the INACTIVE file. Social Security numbers (SSN) must be blocked out with a permanent marker ensuring the imprint of the information can't be read or store the forms in a locked file cabinet in an area not accessible by the public.

Permanent files

Files need to be kept indefinitely for applicants who have been rejected or dismissed from working with Extension youth programs or those who have filed a grievance or complaint regarding procedures or actions taken. Abuse or neglect complaints/reports also need to be kept indefinitely.

Discard Files

Discard inactive files after six (6) years in compliance with the Statute of Limitations for filing civil and criminal action. Example: Inactive in 2001; discard 2007. Paper documents containing SSNs must be shredded, or disposed of by using a secure receptacle for confidential documents or through the use of a licensed and bonded vendor.

Suggested Filing System

All completed forms may be stapled together for each volunteer/paid staff member and filed alphabetically in the above categories or a file may be established for each volunteer and/or staff member. Include clearance through the Child Abuse Information Index and the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website.



4-H Anti-bullying Policy

The North Dakota Extension Service exists to help youth and adults enhance their lives and communities. To achieve this goal, a safe and positive environment needs to be maintained; thus, bullying behaviors by youth, volunteers and/or staff are prohibited.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying behavior is defined as unwanted deliberately negative action by another individual or group of individuals with intent to harm. Bullying may inflict harm or distress, including physical, social, sexual, psychological or educational harm, on the targeted individual or group. Bullying often includes an imbalance of power between individuals/groups.

Cyberbullying is bullying that happens through email, chat rooms, instant messaging, a website, text messages or social media. Bullying may include, but is not limited to, verbal aggression, emotional attacks, sexual harassment, racial discrimination, physical aggression, isolating others or electronic harassment.

Management

The following protocol will highlight the procedures for staff, volunteers and participants in regard to bullying behavior. Any action that meets the criteria for bullying behavior is strictly prohibited. Should an event that may be defined as bullying behavior be witnessed, the following procedure should be implemented:

1. If you notice a situation that may be characteristic of bullying, make sure the situation is safe before engaging.
2. If the situation is safe and/or appropriate reinforcement is present, proceed to see what is occurring in the situation.
3. If bullying obviously is occurring, immediately stop the bullying.
4. Whether the incident is observed or reported, talk with all individuals involved on a one-on-one basis. This may include the bully, victim, bystanders and the incident reporter.
5. Investigate other aspects of the incident as necessary.
6. Fill out a North Dakota 4-H Incident Report form for documentation of the incident as needed.
7. Attempt to determine the intent of the individual committing the bullying behavior and if further action other than a warning is required.
8. Communicate the incident to necessary individuals, such as co-workers, supervisor and/or parents. This may include sharing the bullying report and verbal communication of the incident with the next course of action.
9. Using a team approach involving necessary individuals, determine the appropriate consequence for the degree of bullying involved.
10. Implement disciplinary action.
11. Follow up with the victim(s) to ensure that the bullying does not continue.

Incident report forms for participants, volunteers, parents and staff will be in all Extension county offices and online. Using good judgment related to each situation, copies of the report may be sent to:

- Parent/guardian of the youth involved in the incident
- Local Extension office
- District Director
- State 4-H administrator
(Chair, Center for 4-H Youth Development)

Also, retain a copy for your use.

The incident report is designed to document who, what, when, why, where and how the situation was handled. It provides documentation to describe the situation.

Disciplinary Action

Any report of bullying will be taken seriously, with appropriate action taken. However, disciplinary action against a person exhibiting bullying behavior cannot be made based solely on an anonymous report. A named reporter and/or an investigation are required. The response of the NDSU Extension Service to the bullying will be based on the severity of the bullying.

Disciplinary action may include:

- A verbal warning
- An apology
- Dismissal from current and/or future activities
- Phone call/meeting with parents
- Restoration of property
- Expulsion
- Criminal charges

NDSU Extension staff are mandatory reporters regarding suspected child abuse. Any individual who is a staff member and witnesses bullying or knows that bullying is occurring but does not report the incident is subject to disciplinary action.

In addition, disciplinary action will be taken against an individual who reports bullying as a joke/prank. Bullying is a serious issue and, therefore, claims made as a joke will not be tolerated.

Any individual reporting an incident of bullying in good faith is protected from retaliation. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination, intimidation and/or demotion. Should an incident of retaliation occur, it should be reported immediately and appropriate remedies will be made.

Visit North Dakota 4-H on-line at www.ndsu.edu/4h

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County Commissions, NDSU and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating.

This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, (701) 231-7881.

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Appendix A

Guide to Interviewing Prospective Volunteer Applicants

Interviewing is a conversation between two people on a subject of mutual interest in which each person has a chance to give and gain information.

It is optimal to conduct the interview face-to-face whenever possible. Interviewing new volunteers helps to gain information about their interests and skills that will assist you in matching them with the work that needs to be accomplished. It should help place qualified applicants in specific jobs. It helps identify persons who may not be good role models for youth. The interview will also help determine areas where volunteer need additional training.

Before the Interview:

Decide:

- What information you need to get. See Sample Interview Report (*Form I*)
- What information you need to give
- Time needed to interview

Arrange:

- Time and place to meet where you can be free from interruptions

Prepare by:

- Organizing thoughts
- Selecting the questions you will ask
- Gathering needed materials

During the Interview

- Use the application to help determine interview questions to ask.
- Help the applicant feel comfortable/at ease. Begin informally and establish rapport.
- Listen and tell the applicant about the job(s) available: duties, skills, qualifications and experiences needed, working relationships with others, authority/accountability, benefits, training and resources available and time required. Be honest!
- Give the applicant time to answer your questions. Record responses.
- Encourage questions.
- Suggest other positions which may be more suitable or of interest.
- Leave the door open for either the applicant or the organization to decide later.
- Close the interview by telling the applicant what the next step will be.
- End on a positive note! Thank the applicant for his/her time and interest.

After the Interview:

- Record the information and your impressions as soon as possible.
- Proceed with the next steps as agreed upon with the applicant.

Qualities of an Effective Volunteer Interviewer:

1. Ability to converse easily with strangers.
2. Respectful of all people.
3. Skill in observing or sensing other peoples' reactions, attitudes, concerns and personality traits.
4. Ability to listen attentively and hear accurately.
5. Experience as a volunteer.
6. Knowledge of volunteer jobs available.
7. Ability to speak clearly and explain things well.
8. Capacity to recognize individual strengths and potential.
9. Experience working with persons of varied racial, religious, educational and economic backgrounds.
10. Familiarity with the programs and the organization.
11. Ability to efficiently guide the conversation without sacrificing sensitivity or purpose.

Adapted from: Marlene Wilson.
The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs (Boulder:
Volunteer Management Associates, 1976), p.123

Common Errors Interviewers Make:

1. Failing to describe the job and organization in sufficient detail.
2. Tending to be routine instead of adapting each interview to the individual.
3. Failing to direct the interview and thereby wasting time.
4. Doing more talking than listening.
5. Tending to be overly influenced by individual factors such as personality traits rather than considering the person as a whole.
6. Asking questions which have an obvious preferred answer.
7. Making decisions too early in the interview.
8. Not knowing what to look for.

Adapted from: Marlene Wilson.
The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs (Boulder:
Volunteer Management Associates, 1976), p.126-27

Dismissal of a Volunteer

Volunteers are appointed to program responsibility by NDSU Extension Service personnel. The ultimate authority for dismissal rests with the designated staff person (or personnel committee) in consultation with NDSU Extension administration and/or Center for 4-H Youth Development staff.

- A. The staff member will contact the volunteer (in writing or in person) specifying the allegations or behavior in question. Discuss intended or possible outcomes including removal from their role with NDSU Extension youth programs.

- B. Review signed Behavioral Expectations with individual and information from the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website, if possible.
- C. The staff member may provide an opportunity for the volunteer to present additional or contradictory information pertinent to the situation.
- D. Documentation must be kept regarding all contacts and all information gathered during this process. Dates and contact names will be noted and held in a confidential file.
- E. Final decision will be made and communicated to the individual in writing. Consult with an NDSU Extension Service supervisor or member of the Center for 4-H Youth Development for support and confirmation of process.

Grievance Procedures for Volunteers

A prospective volunteer can dispute a decision made during the application process.

- 1. Volunteer submits concern in writing to NDSU Extension paid staff responsible for local Youth Protection Policy.
- 2. Within 30 days volunteer shall meet with Extension staff member(s) to discuss concern(s) and possible solution(s).
- 3. Satisfactory solution is identified . . . STOP HERE.
- 4. If concern has not been resolved satisfactorily, then:
 - a. Volunteer is given opportunity to contact Extension District Director (or next immediate supervisor) to submit written grievance within 30 days of last meeting with local Extension staff members.
 - b. Extension District Director and designated staff member of the Center for 4-H Youth Development review concerns and prior decision(s).
 - c. Volunteer contacted by Extension District Director or next immediate supervisor within 10 days of receipt of grievance to have opportunity to voice concern.
 - d. District Director or next immediate supervisor uphold, modify or repeal previous decision(s). Volunteer receives written statement regarding decision.

Role Title: Youth Protection Training Leader

Purpose: To organize and conduct training for youth program volunteers regarding the NDSU Extension Service Youth Protection Policy.

Success Criteria: Extension youth program volunteers will understand, use facts and implement procedures to promote safe environments and the well-being of all youth program participants.

Time Required: Peak period - fall. As needed throughout the year.

Responsibilities:

1. Become familiar with information, reporting requirements and procedures.
2. Conduct training as a part of youth leader training meetings.
3. Provide follow-up training for new volunteers throughout the year.

Target Dates:

September-November	Volunteer Training Meetings
November-June	Conduct Training for Individual New Volunteers

Resources Available:

NDSU Extension Youth Protection Policy Handbook

Report to:

Department or county youth program contact

For questions, contact:

Volunteer Signature

Staff Signature

Date

Role Title: Volunteer Personnel Committee Member

Purpose: To manage and process the applications of volunteers applying for NDSU Extension Service volunteer roles working with youth.

Success Criteria: All volunteers will have an approved application on file. New volunteers applications will have appropriate accompanying documentation assembled for timely decisions on acceptance prior to enrollment.

Time Required: Peak period - fall. As needed throughout the year.

Responsibilities:

1. Become familiar with information, reporting requirements and procedures.
2. Conduct training as a part of youth leader training meetings.
3. Provide follow-up training for new volunteers throughout the year.

Target Dates:

September-November	Volunteer Training Meetings
November-June	Conduct Training for Individual New Volunteers

Report to:

Department or county youth program contact

Resources Available:

NDSU Extension Youth Protection Policy Handbook

For questions, contact:

Volunteer Signature

Staff Signature

Date

Appendix B

Understanding the North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index

What Is It?

The North Dakota Child Abuse Information Index is a list – maintained by the North Dakota Department of Human Services - of all reports of suspected child abuse and neglect where a decision is made that services are required to provide for the protection and treatment of an abused or neglected child. A person who is the subject of a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is notified of the report and that an assessment is in process.

How Does It Work?

Child abuse and neglect reports are assessed by social workers employed by County Social Services, and a child protection team assists with the decision making to decide if services are required for a family. The subject has the right to appeal the decision. The names of the subjects are placed on the Child Abuse Information Index when there is a decision made that services are required for the protection and treatment of an abused or neglected child.

All information gathered during the assessment is confidential unless otherwise ordered by the court. If the outcome of the assessment is a decision that services are required, the records are maintained on the Child Abuse Information Index for ten (10) years and then expunged. If the decision is made that no services are required the name of the subject is not placed on the Index but records are maintained at the County Social Service office.

How NDSU Extension Youth Protection Policy Uses Information?

If a name submitted by Extension for clearance through the Index indicates a “services required” case, North Dakota Child Protection Services will contact the Extension staff member who requested the clearance and will provide contact information for the county office where additional information is located.

Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website

The Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website (NSOPW), coordinated by the U.S. Department of Justice, is a cooperative effort between Jurisdictions hosting public sex offender registries (“Jurisdictions”) and the federal government. These Jurisdictions include the 50 states, Puerto Rico, Guam, the District of Columbia, and participating tribes. This website is a search tool allowing a user to submit a single national query to obtain information about sex offenders through a number of search options.

To check a name against this list, send a written copy of the name (sample letter 2) to the Center for 4-H Youth Development. The request will be returned to the county office indicating if the name appeared on the list. Keep this clearance on file with other written information about the applicant.