



Girls' Friendly Society-USA Code of Conduct For Protection of Children and Youth

Excerpted from the Policies and Procedures Manual of GFS-USA

Defining healthy and safe relationships through policies and codes of conduct is not meant, in any way, to undermine the strength and importance of personal interaction in our ministries. Rather, it is to assist in more clearly defining behaviors and practices that allow the church and the Girls' Friendly Society (GFS) to more fully demonstrate its love and compassion for children and youth in sincere and genuine relationships.

Relationships in ministry should, ideally, always be experienced as caring and without intention to do harm or allow harm to occur.

This Code of Conduct has been adopted by The Girls' Friendly Society USA to help the church and the organization create safe environments for children and youth and for those who minister to them. All Advisors, leaders, and volunteers are asked to carefully consider each statement in the Code and within the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse before agreeing to adhere to the statements and continue in service to the organization.

Code of Conduct for Protection of Children and Youth in the Girls' Friendly Society/USA

- I agree to do my best to prevent abuse and neglect among children and youth involved in GFS activities and programs.
- I agree to not physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or youth.
- I agree to comply with the policies for general conduct with children and youth as defined in these Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse.
- I agree as a Girls' Friendly Society volunteers agree to comply with the Guidelines for Appropriate Affection with children and youth.
- In the event that you observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children or youth, I agree to immediately report my observations. To the rector of the Parish.
- I acknowledge my obligation and responsibility to protect children and youth and agree to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to appropriate Advisor so the appropriate follow-up can be made.
- I understand that the church and The Girls' Friendly Society will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.

General Definitions

A. Definition of Volunteers includes any person who enters into or offers him or herself for a church related service, or who actually assists with or performs a service, whether or not they have been selected or assigned to do so.

B. Children and youth - A child is defined as anyone under the age of 12 years.

A youth is defined as anyone who is at least 12 years old, but not yet 18 years old. A youth may also be an individual who is 18 years old or older, but still in high school.

All GFS *personnel are required to take a SAFE CHURCH TRAINING workshop that is in compliance with their Episcopal Church Diocesan guidelines.

A current certificate of Safe Church Training needs to be in an active file at your Parish.