

# **James Madison University Authorized Adult Training**

*Reading of this packet and successful completion of the comprehension quiz at the end is required of all adult leaders on the Greenfield Hill Church ASP trip, per JMU and GHCC requirements.*

*Although this document specifically references JMU, all the information contained within applies also to Greenfield Hill Church policies.*

*No adult may participate in the 2026 ASP trip without completion of these requirements.*

# Introduction

## Background

In today's world, it is not uncommon to see a report of sexual abuse of minors in the news. Places that were once considered safe, such as elementary schools, sports camps, and even churches have been associated with potential abuse. To protect minor children (under the age of eighteen) who participate in activities and programs on property controlled by the university, James Madison University has implemented policies for programs involving minors.

## Who must comply?

The policy for hosting minors at James Madison University affects various units of the university, such as athletic camps, academic camps, other programs, and similar activities intended for minors. Specifically, the policy applies to:

Program staff, paid or unpaid, 18 years or older, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in programs or in recreational and/or residential facilities associated with the programs. This includes, but is not limited to: faculty, staff, JMU affiliates, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants. The authorized adults' roles may include positions as teachers, counselors, chaperones, coaches, instructors, drivers, etc. Authorized adults are considered to be mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect, as defined by Virginia Law. Further guidance on mandatory reporters is provided in Policy 1406-Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and

Neglect. For the purposes of this training, individuals defined above will be referred to as "Authorized Adults."

## What do I have to do?

As an Authorized Adult, you must complete this training and quiz with 100%. Results will be provided to program directors.

## Training objectives

After completing this training, you will be able to:

- Protect minor children who participate in activities and programs
- Act as a positive role model and avoid putting yourself in a risky situation
- Comply with university policies for programs involving minors

## The Facts About Sexual Abuse

Most people consider child sexual abuse to be unacceptable behavior. At the same time, one in four girls and one in six boys experience sexual abuse before their eighteenth birthday. Therefore, we have to assume that child sexual abuse is **happening** to **both** boys and girls in our community today.

Sexual abuse thrives in an environment where adults are inattentive, in denial, or afraid to take action. We must actively work to prevent it. We must take steps to create a safe environment for minors. The earlier that abuse is caught, the better the chance of recovery for the minor.

## What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse is any sexual act between an adult and a minor or

between two minors when one exerts power over the other.

There can be no case of a consensual act between an adult and a minor due to the inherent power dynamic. Forcing, coercing, or persuading a child to engage in any type of sexual contact is sexual abuse. However, sexual abuse doesn't always involve bodily contact. If an adult engages in any sexual behavior with a child to meet the adult's sexual interest or needs, it is sexual abuse. Exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, voyeurism, sexting, and other communication in a sexual manner over the phone or internet is sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse can occur between members of the opposite sex or members of the same sex.

Sexual abuse is a crime. Aiding and abetting a sexual offender is also a crime.

### **What is sexual harassment?**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical sexual conduct, which because of its severity and/or persistence interferes significantly with an individual's work or education, or adversely affects an individual's living conditions. Harassment also occurs when a person uses a position of authority to engage in unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

### **Warning signs**

Sometimes there are no warning signs.

Warning signs differ by the age of the minor. You should be aware of the following possible warning signs.

### Emotional or Behavioral Signs

- Sexual behavior that is not appropriate for the child's age
- Sexual language that is not appropriate for the child's age
- Overly compliant behavior
- Too perfect behavior
- Withdrawal
- Depression
- Unexplained anger
- Rebellion
  
- Refusal to be left alone
- Finding reasons not to go home
- Finding reasons to avoid being with a specific person that the minor used to spend time with
- Problems sleeping such as nightmares or sleepwalking
- Bed---wetting or bowel---movement accidents in children who have previously outgrown it
- Fire---setting
- Self---destructive behavior
- Suicidal gestures
- Self---mutilation
- Running away
- Making degrading comments about themselves and considering themselves as "damaged goods"
- Falling grades or a change in school behavior
- Using alcohol or drugs

## Portrait of an abuser

A myth of sexual abuse is that the abusers are usually strangers. On the contrary, most child sexual abusers are known to the victim. The abuser could be a family member, friend of the family, teacher, older youth, or coach. In addition, one third of all child sexual abuse is committed by another child under the age of eighteen.

Some abusers are careful and calculated about the process they take to earn the victim's trust. This process of slowly introducing a child to sexual activity is called grooming.

These abusers set up the situation so that they can take advantage of the child. They **become friends with potential victims and their families**. They earn trust and seek time alone with the children.

Sometimes they spend time doing what the child wants. Sometimes, they give gifts. Their goal is to spend time with the child in one---adult and one---child situations. Then, they may threaten or force the child to participate in sexual contact and maintain secrecy.

Another kind of abuser is a **situational offender**. They take advantage of the situation and opportunity to find and abuse a victim. These abusers are impulsive and abuse minors to meet their own sexual or control needs.

## **The effects of abuse**

The most damaging effects of child abuse are the emotional effects. Abused children can blame themselves, lack trust, and have difficulties forming relationships into adulthood. Often, these children feel that they are worthless or damaged at their core.

As an adult, this may cause the victim to fall short of reaching his or her potential. Also, abused children have trouble regulating their emotions. As they grow into adults, they can struggle with emotions and turn to drugs or alcohol. While not every abused child repeats the cycle as an adult, these children are more at risk for abusing their own children as an adult. The effects of child sexual abuse affect not only the individual, but the community, and the future community.

## **Definitions and Terms**

### **Authorized Adult**

Program staff, paid or unpaid, 18 years or older, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in programs or in recreational and/or residential facilities associated with the programs. This includes, but is not limited to: faculty, staff, JMU affiliates, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants. The authorized adults' roles may include positions as teachers, counselors, chaperones, coaches, instructors, drivers, etc. Authorized adults are considered to be mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect, as defined by Virginia Law.

Further guidance on mandatory reporters is provided in Policy 1406-Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect.

## **Minor**

A person who is under 18 years old.

## **One---On---One Contact**

Personal, unsupervised interaction between any Authorized Adult and a minor participant without at least one other Authorized Adult, parent or legal guardian being present.

## **Programs**

Activities offered by various academic or administrative units of the university, or by non--- university groups using university facilities. This includes but not limited to workshops, sport camps, academic camps, conferences and similar activities where minors come to the university or any property controlled by the university, whether for a part of a day or multiple days, to participate in specific activities.

## **University Facility**

All buildings or properties owned by, or under the control of, the university.

## **University Housing**

Residential facilities owned by, or under the control of, the university.

## **Responsibilities**

Authorized Adults are responsible, at a minimum, for the following:

- Informing program participants about safety and security procedures, university rules, rules established by the program, and behavioral expectations.
- Following and enforcing all rules.
- Being able to respond to emergencies.

## Reporting Potential Abuse

If a program participant discloses any type of assault or abuse (at any time previous to or during the program) or an Authorized Adult has reason to believe that the participant has been subject to such assault or abuse, the Authorized Adult, as a mandatory reporter under Code of Virginia

§63.2-1509, must inform the program director, JMU Public Safety, and other appropriate offices/agencies immediately. Authorized Adults must make all reasonable efforts to ensure the safety of minors participating in programs and activities covered by this policy, including removal of minors from dangerous or potentially dangerous situations, irrespective of any other limitation or requirement. Reporters must be protected from retaliation, i.e., individuals shall not retaliate against a person who reports a violation of policy.

## 2. Behavior Expectations

Authorized Adults participating in programs covered by this policy shall not:

- Have inappropriate one-on-one or electronic contact with

minors.

- Engage in abusive conduct of any kind, neither with a minor nor in the presence of a minor.
- Strike, hit, administer corporal punishment to or touch in an inappropriate or illegal manner, any minor.
- Engage in rough or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow inappropriate touching, including between minors.
- Swear, use or respond to sexual innuendo or make sexually suggestive comments.
- Shower, bathe or undress with or in the presence of minors.
- Tell minors “this is just between the two of us” or use similar language that encourages minors to keep secrets from their parents/legal guardians.
- Pick up minors from or drop off minors at their homes, other than the driver’s child(ren), except as specifically authorized in writing by the minor’s parent or legal guardian.
- Use or provide alcohol or illegal drugs to any minor.
- Provide prescription drugs or any medication to any minor unless specifically authorized in writing by the parent or legal guardian as being required for the minor’s care or the minor’s emergency treatment.
- Make sexual materials in any form available to minors participating in programs or activities covered by this policy or assist them in any way in gaining access to such materials.

### **3. Failure to Comply**

Failure to comply with university policies may lead to disciplinary action and/or revocation of the opportunity to use property

controlled by the university. Therefore, the entire program or activity may be restricted based on the actions of a single program staff member.

In addition, if you are accused of sexual abuse of a minor, you will be subject to the appropriate investigations and actions by the criminal justice and social services systems. These actions are separate and apart from the university policy and process.

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**Please proceed to Authorized Adult Training Quiz (results will be seen only by Rev. Alida Ward and yourself)**

**<https://forms.gle/kr1DNpMP6q4opQeF7>**