

Adequate Adult Supervision Help Sheet

This guide is not intended as a substitute for the Safeguarding God's Children: Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth. References to relevant sections in the policies are provided for your convenience

Two (and Three) Adult Rule

1. For **on-site activities**, minors shall be supervised by at least **two unrelated adult personnel who are at least two years older** than the eldest child or youth participant. (Section III.D) An adult is defined as being over 18 and out of high school. (Section I.A)
 - Only one adult may be sufficient in a well-monitored, visually accessible program space provided that other adult personnel can maintain visual contact with the lone adult. (Section III.D)
2. For **off-site activities** other than travel (as defined in Section I.C), there shall be at least two unrelated adults, with one being **age 25 or older**. (Section V.B)
3. For **travel** (as defined in I.C), at least **three** unrelated adults shall chaperone the trip, with **one being age 25 or older**. (Section V.B)

Adult to Child Ratios (Section III.G and Section V.B)

1. **Schools or camps** that are accredited or licensed may observe the adult to child ratio as established by the accrediting or licensing agency.
2. For **any other program or activity except travel**, the minimum ratio of adult to children or youth is:
 - Infants (0-11 mo.), 1:3
 - 1-5 years, 1:5 for overnight participants and 1:6 for day participants
 - 6-8 years, 1:6 overnight and 1:8 day
 - 9-14 years, 1:8 overnight and 1:10 day
 - 15-18 years, 1:10 overnight and 1:12 day
3. For **travel** (as defined in Section I.C), the minimum ratios increase as follows:
 - 9-14 years, 1:5
 - 15-18 years, 1:7

Other General Rules

1. If **unanticipated circumstances result in an adult's being alone with children or youth**, that adult shall report those circumstances to the Responsible Person, Supervisor, and Clergy in Charge as soon as possible. (Section III.E)

2. No person will be allowed to supervise an **immediate family member**. Related persons may minister together if at least one other adult personnel is present. (Section III.F)
3. One of the supervising adult personnel must be designated as the **Responsible Person** by the Program Supervisor. (Section III.C) See [Responsible Person Help Sheet](#).

Additional Rules for Private Activities: Restrooms, Locker Rooms, Showers, or Diapering

1. Although no adult may shower, bathe, or use restroom facilities in the presence of children or youth, **children and youth must be supervised at all times** to prevent peer abuse, even during private activities. When supervising or assisting private activities, adult personnel will remain in an area observable by other adults or work in pairs. (Section III.J.2)
2. **Diapering** must be done at diapering stations in proximity to other care providers and not behind closed doors or in isolated places. (Section III.J.4)
3. **Appropriate Restroom Supervision** (Section III.J.5)
 - **Child age 2 through 5th grade**
 - May go alone into a single toilet restroom attached to a classroom or activity room. If a child requires assistance, the adult must leave the outer door ajar while assisting the child.
 - In a restroom with a stall, the child goes into the stall alone. If the child needs assistance in the stall, then the stall door remains ajar and, if possible, also the outer door.
 - If the restroom is located some distance from the activity or classroom, follow the “rule of three:” two adult personnel, or one adult personnel and one youth personnel, or one adult personnel and at least one other child should accompany the child to the restroom.
 - In a public restroom, an adult must check to make sure there are no adults (or older youth) before allowing a child who is in fifth grade or younger go into a restroom alone. If it’s not possible to prevent other adults or youths from entering a public multi-stall restroom, then the adult must enter the restroom and be especially diligent in supervising the child.
 - **Youth in sixth grade and older**
 - A youth may go **alone** to the restroom even when it is not attached to a classroom or activity room.
 - If the restroom is located a considerable distance away from the classroom or activity or when the restroom is a public restroom, follow the “**rule of three**” described above. Groups of adolescents must always be supervised in the restroom to prevent peer abuse.
 - When there are **special needs or extenuating circumstances**, a specific policy may be formulated and approved by the Safeguarding Minister.

Additional Rules for Off-Site Events (Section V.D)

1. If the off-site event originates and/or terminates at the facility of the organization:
 - All **drivers** must be at least **21 years of age** and provide proof of insurance, a current driver's license appropriate to the vehicle, and a completed volunteer driver information form. It is recommended that the driver have a satisfactory DMV records check to be kept on file by the organization.
 - When transporting children or youth, two adults must be in each vehicle, except when multiple vehicles travel in a caravan. A roster of children assigned to drivers must include names and contact numbers for all adults and be provided to all drivers.
2. Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation and safety of their children or youth to and from the facility of the organization or directly to off-site events that do not originate and terminate at the facility. This responsibility includes the transportation of any other passengers in their vehicle.

Additional Rules for Travel (Section V.B and C)

1. The **Responsible Person** shall be at least age **25** and be responsible for all aspects of the trip, including carrying all necessary documentation and cash and/or credit card capacity to address emergencies. See [Responsible Person Help Sheet](#).
2. It is recommended but not mandatory that one adult at least 25 years old hold a current medical certification to manage administration of necessary and permissible medications, first aid, and to triage medical situations to determine if an individual needs a higher level of care.

Additional Rules for Overnight Events (Section V.E)

1. When both boys and girls are participating in overnight activities, it is recommended that both **male and female adult personnel** be present. Exceptions may be made after consultation with the Safeguarding Minister.
2. Sleeping arrangements must be safe and supervised. **No bed, cot, or sleeping bag shall have more than one person sleeping in it.**
3. Supervision by two unrelated adults is required in any space where one or more youth or children are sleeping unless
 - the children or youth are participating in a program that meets the licensing requirements to which it is subject, or
 - the Safeguarding Minister approves in writing an alternative arrangement.
4. All participants may sleep in the same open area where dressing rooms and bathrooms provide appropriate privacy.
5. It is recommended that in the case of a **hotel stay**,

- there be at least three children or youth per room and that consideration be given to the relative age and size of the children or youth,
- adult personnel have rooms on the same floor, scattered among the rooms with children or youth, and at least one adult room is by the stairs or elevator, and
- the Responsible Person assigns the rooms and room occupants.

Special Considerations for Online Interactions

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant increased online interaction with children and youth, especially in school settings. Generally, the two-adult rule still applies, with the same exceptions being made for accredited programs that are made for in-person settings.

1. **Social Media (Section III.K):**

- Ministry presence on social media platforms should have more than one adult administrator.
- Supervision of **Online Groups** should follow the same Safeguarding policies as all other diocesan entities.

2. **Online Learning**

In online instruction, utilize the principle of two-deep leadership, that is, classes should be “observable and interruptible” by another adult.

- a. For both group instruction and one-on-one tutoring with minor(s), obtain **parental approval** in advance, **including approval for recording** the online instruction.
- b. If the online platform allows a **private chat function** among participants, take appropriate precautions to minimize the risk of bullying or verbal peer abuse, including setting standards of behavior, encouraging reporting, and, monitoring such chat when possible.
- c. When engaging in **one-on-one online tutoring** with a minor,
 - Hold all tutoring sessions on a professional account.
 - Schedule all tutoring sessions in advance on a calendar available to both the child and the parent with links to the meeting that are available to both.
 - Have a parent or adult caregiver in the home who is physically available and able to observe the session casually in person or who is virtually present and able to observe the session casually online, OR
 - have a second adult personnel who is able to observe the session in person (by being onsite with the tutor) or virtually, by being able to observe casually the session online, OR
 - record the entire session and promptly provide parents and Program Supervisors with links to time-stamped recordings.
- d. All online **communications should be documented** including date, start time, end time, agenda, names of participating adults and names of participating children. Recordings may be utilized if permission has been obtained from the parents.

3. Virtual Coffee Hours or other Congregational Gatherings on Online Platforms

- Be mindful of online gatherings where unsupervised children and youth may be present, such as virtual coffee hours after worship.
 - It is recommended that at least one adult personnel certified in SGC monitor the event, or if the group is divided into virtual “rooms,” that one adult personnel certified in SGC monitor each room.
 - When possible, provide participants in advance with basic protocols for the gathering and include that children and youth should be supervised by a parent and that an adult participant who finds himself or herself alone with children or youth should promptly notify a person designated to receive such reports.
- For gatherings that are designed specifically for children or youth, like virtual Vacation Bible Camp or youth group, follow the same adult supervision rules as you would for in-person gatherings, taking into consideration the strategies used above to safeguard **Online Learning**.