



LINC NORTH TEXAS

PROTECTION OF MINORS AGREEMENT

PO Box 702863 Dallas, TX 75370

I, _____, agree to uphold the following policies:

LINC North Texas takes the protection of minors (persons under 18 years of age) very seriously. If you have any concerns about your dealing with minors, please seek advice from the Executive Director. LINC NT will comply with all laws and will notify the appropriate authorities within 48 hours when an employee or volunteer (from this point onward “personnel” will refer to both employees and volunteers) is accused of breaking the law, including any illegal contact with minors. If an employee is accused of illegal activities with a minor, LINC NT will suspend the employee with or without pay until the matter is investigated. If an employee engages in suspicious activities, he/she may be put on leave until the matter is resolved. If a volunteer engages in suspicious activities, he/she may be asked to cease volunteering until the matter is resolved. LINC NT has a zero tolerance policy for inappropriate conduct with minors.

LINC North Texas is highly concerned for the safety of minors on our campuses and at our events and programs. Therefore LINC NT pledges to maintain the highest level of integrity, accountability, and transparency when working with minors. We strive to receive and maintain the trust of the parents in our communities, as this is a necessary first step for ministry to take place. Therefore, LINC NT has adopted the following specific guidelines for working with minors:

- We hope to keep our personnel free from any accusation, regardless of the truth of the accusation. For this reason LINC NT discourages any personnel from being alone with any minor. In as many situations as possible, two adults should be present when minors are present. Any exceptions must be immediately reported to the Executive Director.
- Ministry to minors is at the service of the parents who have the first responsibility to care for and educate their children. Therefore, activities with minors are to be conducted with the explicit knowledge and consent of parents or legal guardians.
- LINC NT personnel are responsible for releasing minors in their care only to parents, legal guardians, teachers, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities. In the event that LINC NT personnel are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a minor, they are to immediately locate or contact their immediate supervisor before releasing the minor.
- LINC NT personnel are to immediately report uncontrollable or highly unusual behavior of minors to parents, teachers, or other legal guardians as necessary. If a minor reveals evidence of abuse or neglect to LINC NT personnel, it must be reported within 24 hours of receiving the information to the Executive Director, applicable program director, and, if applicable, the minor’s teacher. Further steps will have to be taken based on district policy or applicable laws. LINC NT personnel who fail to report evidence of abuse or neglect may be held legally responsible for withholding information.
- Ordinarily, minors are never to be transported without the permission of their parents, and must be transported directly to their destination.

- While working with minors, LINC NT personnel are prohibited from the use, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal drugs. They are prohibited from furnishing alcohol or illegal drugs to minors or permitting minors to use such in their presence.
- LINC NT personnel are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minors. However, it is expected that from time to time youth ministry lessons and discussions for teenagers may address human sexuality issues. These lessons will convey to youth the Church's views on these topics. If youth have questions not answered or addressed by their individual teachers they are to be referred to their parents or guardians for clarification and counseling. In addition, LINC NT personnel are never permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with minors. These conversations must be held within the context and blessing of the parents and responsible parties.
- LINC NT personnel are prohibited from sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags or small tents with minors.
- Counseling areas should have transparent windows or open doors. Care should be made to have another adult in the general vicinity during counseling sessions.
- Great care must be exercised by LINC NT personnel to both convey appropriate values and to keep relationships appropriate in contact with minors outside of normal LINC NT events and programs. Any contact must be monitored carefully and approached in a serious manner. This includes, but is not limited to, any type of electronic communication and any meeting of minors, spontaneous or planned. LINC NT personnel wishing to engage in regular electronic communication with minors must discuss the matter with the appropriate program director and the Executive Director. Care must be taken to ensure that online profiles are clear from messages that do not convey Christian or LINC NT values.
- LINC NT personnel should never reveal any personal information about minors. This includes, but is not limited to, pictures, videos, names, and any other information that could be used to identify a minor's identity.
- LINC NT personnel are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of minors. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior by minors. Inappropriate contact of any form is strictly forbidden and will be immediately disciplined.
- LINC NT personnel are forbidden from developing excessively close relationships with any minors, including excessively singling out or showing unusual attention to a minor. This could include presenting gifts or giving unusual opportunities to certain minors above others. LINC NT personnel are to report any unusual emotional attachments within 48 hours of their discovery, whether from personnel toward a minor from a minor toward personnel, to the Executive Director and applicable program director. If any student is acting inappropriately, LINC NT personnel must keep all communication public and keep records of communication.

All employees and volunteers involved in working with minors must sign this agreement. If any LINC NT personnel engage in inappropriate contact or relationships or violate any of the preceding principles, the employee or volunteer will be subject to immediate termination or dismissal without possibility of severance pay or future re-hire.

Signature

Date