

PNQM Youth Safety Policy And Guidelines

Approved by PNQM 2/6/2016

Amended by Continuing Committee 2/9/2019 (see safety guidelines 4.)

Introduction

PNQM is committed to making sure that children and youth are safe while participating in PNQM-sponsored child/youth events. These policies and guidelines are meant to provide a structure for parents, teachers, and youth care workers to help ensure child and youth safety.

Definitions

PNQM-sponsored child and youth activities can be grouped into two categories:

1. The Children's Program and babysitting at Quarterly Session: The Children's Program includes nursery care for infants and toddlers, and teacher-led classes for children in grades pre-K through 8th grade, at scheduled day times during Quarterly Session. The Children's Program is overseen by the CP Coordinator, who is nominated and approved through PNQM's nominating process.

2. Overnight events Junior Friends (JF): Junior Friends are high school aged youth (grades 9th through 12th). Overnight events include the JF program during Quarterly Session, where JF have their own separate program and separate meeting place.

JF events are led by two JF Advisors. In addition, JF overnight events may be led or assisted by "Friendly Adult Presences" (FAPs). JF Advisors are adults who are initially selected by the Junior Friends, and who are subsequently screened, nominated and approved through PNQM's nominating process. Friendly Adult Presences (FAPs) are adult volunteers who assist with a JF event.

PNQM Youth Safety Policy

1. Screening

a. Child and youth workers should be at least 17 years old, and at least 4 years older than the group of youth they are working with.

b. JF Advisors and FAPs should be active in a Monthly Meeting, Preparative Meeting or Worship Group for at least 6 months prior to consideration for approval or prior to the event. This will be verified with MM/WG clerk.

c. Child and youth care workers, except volunteers, will be subject to a criminal background check.

2. Prior to each event, or when they are approved, child and youth care workers are provided a job description as well as clearly defined responsibilities and expectations as laid out in the PNQM Youth Safety Guidelines.

3. Safeguards are provided through careful monitoring and staffing. Classrooms and gathering spaces for children and youth are set up according to PNQM youth safety guidelines. Where a guideline cannot be complied with in specific situations, there should be documentation about how safety concerns will be addressed.

4. Teen programs remain separate, with age-appropriate activities. Central Friends (middle school) Quarterly Session program should be only for children entering 6th grade through the summer after 8th grade; Junior Friends (high school) programs should be only for youth entering 9th grade, through the summer after 12th grade. Young Adult Friends (YAF, adults who have completed high school, generally age 18 through 35) are expected to participate with the Young Adult Friends group or with other adults.

5. The age grouping of the children's programs groups is done for the best interest and safety of the individual children and the group. Age groupings are a guideline and may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis according to the experience and agreement of the parents or guardians, the children's program teachers and the Children's Program Coordinator.

PNQM Youth Safety Guidelines

BEFORE A CHILD/YOUTH CAN PARTICIPATE

1. Each child must have a signed PNQM medical release form, which must be given to the teacher/leader before the child can be left in the care of the teacher/leader. The medical release form includes a phone number for the parent, guardian or sponsor, which can be used during the session to contact the parent, guardian or sponsor if needed. These forms can be filled out in advance of the event and sent to the registrar; or may be filled out upon arrival. The original form will remain in the classroom/gathering area, or carried by the adults in charge during an outing. Copies of each medical release form should be kept with the PNQM registrar if possible, as well as the sponsor (if applicable).

IN THE CLASSROOM/GATHERING AREA

2. At least 2 adults will be present in each classroom during scheduled youth program times. Where it is not possible to have 2 adults, a roamer should check in frequently.

3. Isolated situations of one adult to one child are not allowed. This should be stressed to teachers and volunteers.

4. At least two adult leaders must be present at each overnight JF event. Junior Friends are encouraged to consider gender diversity in their selection of adult leaders.

5. Nursery care and the pre-school programs should be located in close proximity to each other.

6. Volunteers are welcome and greatly appreciated in PNQM children and youth programs at Quarterly Session; however, youth and child care workers who have not

been approved through the official PNQM screening process, including “walk-in” volunteers, will be under the supervision of approved workers.

7. Minimum ratios of adults to children are as follows:

*Nursery (infants and toddlers) 1:4

*Children’s Program/CF (age 4 through 8th grade) 1:8

*High school 1:10

8. Classroom/gathering area doors should be left open at all times during a scheduled youth event (unless the door has a large window).

9. The teacher/leader in charge of each class or youth group must ensure that there is a signed medical release form in the classroom or gathering area before a child/youth may be left there without parent, guardian, or sponsor. (does not apply to nursery)

10. (Nursery and Children’s Program) The teacher/leader in charge of each class must have a check-in sheet, and must ensure that each child is checked in and checked out by a responsible adult for each session. During or after class, a child must not be allowed to leave the teacher/leader’s presence unless accompanied by a responsible adult.

*Children in the Central Friends and Jr. Friends groups may check themselves in and out at the appropriate times, as long as they are at least 11 years old.

11. Each classroom or group must have ready access to a first aid kit, and each teacher/leader must know where it is kept.

GOING OFF CAMPUS

No Children’s Program activities will take place off-campus, except for the Junior Friends group. The following requirements apply whenever a Junior Friends group leaves the campus as part of a scheduled or unscheduled PNQM youth event, whether driving, walking, taking public

transport, cycling, or traveling by other means. (Note: these guidelines do not apply to transportation to or from the PNQM event.)

1. Parent/guardian/sponsor pre-approval: Junior Friends must have the written pre-approval of their parent, guardian or sponsoring adult in order to leave campus.

2. Drivers must be a Junior Friends Advisor or FAP, at least 21 years of age, and must have a valid driver’s license. Owners of any privately owned vehicles being used to transport youth must have proof of car insurance. Drivers are responsible for ensuring that vehicle safety measures (seat belts, child safety/booster seats, etc.) are adhered to.

3. First aid kits: When a youth group leaves the campus, the leaders or adults in charge should carry a basic first aid kit with them and carry working cell phones.

4. Medical release forms: When a youth group leaves the campus during a PNQM youth event, the leaders or adults in charge must carry a signed medical release form for each

child participating in the off-campus field trip. (Note: These should be already available in the classroom.)

5. High school aged youth leaving campus with a Junior Friends advisor or FAP must inform the 2nd Junior Friends advisor, who will stay on campus. The Junior Friends advisor staying behind must know the JF's destination, who they will be with, a phone number where the youth can be reached, and when the youth will return; the youth must then check back in upon returning to campus. It is expected that at least one person in any JF group leaving campus will carry a working cell phone so the JF advisor on campus is able to contact them if necessary.

See separate Junior Friends Code of Conduct