



SACRAMENTO DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE EVENTS

CHILD SAFETY GUIDELINES: PREVENTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Revised: October 8, 2024

WELCOME TO THE SACRAMENTO DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Dear Event Staff Director, Leader, and/or Volunteer,

The Sacramento District takes seriously our responsibility to provide the safest possible environment at our events. SACNAZ has created a Sacramento District Events Child Safety Policy (hereafter known as, Policy) and this companion Sacramento District Events Child Safety Guidelines (hereafter known as Guidelines) documents. The *Guidelines* document is intended to facilitate the safest possible Sacramento District event experiences for participants and leaders. Both the *Policy* and the *Guidelines* have been adopted by the Sacramento District Advisory Board and are to be followed.

Sincerely,

Sacramento District Advisory Board

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OVERVIEW & DEFINITIONS

OVERVIEW

This document is two parts. The first is a policy document: ***Sacramento District Events Child Safety Policy*** (hereafter *The Policy*). The *Policy* is for all events in which children participate in an age-specific ministry. The *Policy* was established to identify the intent of SACNAZ to provide a safe ministry environment at each district event for minors.

This second document, ***Sacramento District Events Child Safety Guidelines***, includes guidelines for providing the safest possible environment. The Guidelines contain helpful training materials, management methods, and reporting strategies.

DEFINITIONS

- **AGE VERIFICATION & DATE OF BIRTH:** Date of birth information provided along with a parent's signature (including electronic signatures) certifying all statements are true and correct.
- **CHILD:** Under the age of 18 (Code of Sacramento).
- **CHILDCARE:** During a SACNAZ EVENT, it shall be the responsibility of the Event Director to identify childcare participation (what ages are included in the childcare) and the duration (specifically stating start and stop times each day and including all days in which childcare is made available during a SACNAZ EVENT) shall be clearly stated in writing and communicated to all parent/guardians and SACNAZ EVENT STAFF and volunteers. All minors, before or after these designated times and days shall be the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian.
- **DO:** Sacramento District Church of the Nazarene – District Office.
- **EVENT & EVENT DURATION:** A SACNAZ-sponsored event that includes participants under the age of 18. The Event Director will establish and communicate the beginning and end date and time for the event for which they are responsible. All other times not included in the event day/time schedule will be the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian.
- **EVENT GUESTS:** All speakers, musical guests, and guest support (including tech support and others).
- **EVENT STAFF/VOLUNTEER:** Any person who has a leadership role or a serving role in the Event, including, but not limited to, directors, counselors, staff, and any adult volunteers.
- **HOUSING:** Any sleeping areas, rooms, dorms, etc. provided by the event for the use of participants.
- **PARENT OR GUARDIAN:** Parent or guardian means any parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person having immediate control or charge of a child. (Code of Sacramento)
- **PARTICIPANT:** A registered child in attendance at a SACNAZ event.
- **TRANSPORTATION:** When transportation is provided by the event director and/or volunteers during an event. Event transportation does not include transportation from the participant's home/church.
- **SACNAZ:** Sacramento District Church of the Nazarene.
- **SACNAZ ADMIN:** Sacramento District Superintendent, Sacramento District Staff, and/or Event Director.

SACNAZ EVENTS CHILD SAFETY GUIDELINES

ABUSE ZERO TOLERANCE

SACNAZ has a zero tolerance for abuse. It is the responsibility of every SACNAZ staff member and volunteer to act in the best interests and safety of participants in SACNAZ events.

GUIDELINES FOR ENSURING SAFETY IN THE EVENT OF A REPORT OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE

ENSURING SAFETY

The Event Director will take the steps necessary to ensure that a participant believed to be in harm's way is directed to and provided a safe place in a safe environment. Such action constitutes a first step upon learning of a report of or a suspicion of abuse.

Steps may involve:

- (1) Assuring the participant is out of harm's way and in a safe environment.
- (2) Assuring that, if necessary, the person suspected of inappropriate behavior is administratively and physically sequestered (removed) from being in a position of responsibility/authority.
- (3) Contact the SACNAZ ADMIN.

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

REPORTING VIOLATION OF GUIDELINES

To maintain a safe environment for participants, SACNAZ staff members and volunteers accept a responsibility to report questionable circumstances, inappropriate acts, or situations that are a violation of the *Guidelines*. Questions/concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior is to be reported immediately to the Event Director who in turn reports to the SACNAZ ADMIN.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Staff members and volunteers at a SACNAZ event are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or inappropriate behavior of a colleague or co-worker, to the Event Director, who in turn reports to SACNAZ ADMIN as soon as possible.

Commonwealth of Sacramento Code of Mandatory Reporters:

CA Mandatory Reporting Penal Code 11166; 11165.7.

In California, mandated reporters are people who are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect; This includes but is not limited to teachers, school administrators, guidance counselors, school nurses, janitors, cafeteria workers, coaches, and others who work in schools. It also includes people who work in youth organizations, medical fields, government agencies, child welfare agencies, religious organizations; there is a penalty for failure to report.

Staff members and volunteers are required to verbally report an incident to the Event Director as soon as possible after the incident. After receiving a report from a staff member or volunteer, the Event Director will speak with a staff member or volunteer to gain as much detailed information as possible.

SACNAZ ADMIN will be notified as soon as possible (within 24 hours). Together with the Event Director and/or SACNAZ ADMIN, the staff member or volunteer will make a report to the appropriate Commonwealth of that area authority.

In no way does any provision in this policy discourage any staff member or volunteer from reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate state authorities.

A written incident report is to be completed at the time of the report by the immediate supervisor for the event and a copy is provided to SACNAZ ADMIN within 24 hours of the reported incident. The original written report is to be retained by the Event Director with a copy maintained by the SACNAZ ADMIN. These reports are to be maintained as Confidential Files and will be stored through the DO.

CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED OR HARMFUL ACT

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act will be suspended from participation at the SACNAZ event. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protection agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act will be removed from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involve participants at any SACNAZ event. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from SACNAZ.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the Event Director is a violation of these *Guidelines* and grounds for termination of a staff member or dismissal of a volunteer. Failure to report a prohibited act to the SACNAZ ADMIN and appropriate authorities by the Event Director is a violation of these *Guidelines* and grounds for termination or dismissal of the Event Director.

GUIDELINES FOR EVENT CULTURE – STAFF MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The physical appearance of staff and volunteers makes a statement to participants and others. While serving at a SACNAZ event, we ask staff members and volunteers to limit freedom regarding certain preferred styles (e.g., hairstyles, clothing, tattoos, outward physical accessories, and fashions).

Questions about the appropriateness of these personal choices are at the discretion of the Event Director.

MODESTY

Your choice of clothing makes a statement and SACNAZ expects all staff members and volunteers to dress with modesty. What determines what is modest is at the discretion of the Event Director.

TATTOOS

All tattoos that portray explicit or vulgar (at the discretion of the event director) pictures/words must always be covered.

DATING

Dating and inappropriate public displays of affection between dating couples are not permitted under any circumstances. The determination of what is appropriate is left to the Event Director.

MODELING BEHAVIOR

What we do in moderation, participants will do in excess. Participants will look to staff members and volunteers to set the boundaries and participants will likely test these boundaries. The way staff members and volunteers dress, and even how they respond to the smallest circumstance – participants are watching. Please read and understand the guidelines below follow closely:

- No Verbal Abuse
- Never touch a child in an aggressive manner
- Absolutely No Profanity
- No Displays of Public Nudity at Any Time
- No Mooning, De-Pants-ing, Wedgies or Swirlies
- No Descriptive Stories Regarding Drinking, Drug Use, or Sexual Behaviors
- No Urinating in public at Any Time by Anyone
- No Sleeping, No Napping, and No Bed-Sharing with Any Participant at any time for any reason
- No Body Shaming
- No Bullying
- No Racial Put-Downs or Racial Jokes
- No Active Ear or Body Piercing of Any Participant
- No Tattooing of Any Participant
- No Tickling Participants
- No Wrestling

APPROPRIATE & INAPPROPRIATE PHYSICAL TOUCH

All staff members and volunteers should exercise good judgment when expressing physical touch. Appropriate physical touch may include the following:

1. An arm around the shoulder (side hug)
2. Short, congratulatory, or greeting hugs
3. A brief, assuring pat on the head or shoulder, but NOT to those kids who feel that such touch is offensive to have their heads patted or hair fluffed.
4. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the participant, never based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
5. A few NEVERS:
 - a. We don't touch kids in anger or disgust.
 - b. We don't touch kids in any sexually connotative manner.
 - c. No staff member will ever (day or night) be on or in a child's bed.
 - d. Never touch a child's private parts (for any reason).
 - e. Never tickle a child; this can be misconstrued as sexual contact.
 - f. Never ignore a participant's request not to be touched.
 - g. Never express or require physical affection or touching in any form from a child who shows or expresses discomfort with physical touch.
6. Altar calls:
 - a. SACNAZ events often include opportunities for participants to respond to God's prompting in their lives during special times of prayer that we refer to as "altar calls." These are special, important, and formative spiritual moments in almost every SACNAZ Event.
 - b. Altar calls are public events. If a person responding to an altar call requires more privacy, then other guidelines about appropriate one-on-one conversations are to be followed.
 - c. During times of worship and devotional at a SACNAZ event, there may be a time of prayer around an altar. During these altar times, persons are often in proximity to one another. While we will maintain our heritage of altar calls including prayer with and for others at the altar, all touching during these times of prayer must remain appropriate.
 - d. Appropriate behavior includes female staff praying with female participants and male staff praying with male participants. A male or female staff member may pray with a person of the opposite sex when others are nearby and participating.
7. Staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting participants under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touching by other adults and participants.

Each Event Director will give guidance in this area to the staff and volunteers of their specific event. If a question ever arises as to what constitutes an appropriate or inappropriate touch, consult an Event Director or SACNAZ ADMIN.

TRANSPORTATION

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide (as driver or passenger) transportation (personal vehicle, rental, SACNAZ vehicles, loaned or local church vehicle) for participants during an event. The following guidelines should be observed when workers are involved in the transportation of participants:

1. Participants should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops in a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one participant in transport. The presence of two or more staff members or volunteers is suggested and ideal. Exceptions from this guideline may only be made with the approval of the Event Director.
2. Staff members and volunteers are to avoid physical contact with participants while in vehicles.
3. The use of cell phones while driving SACNAZ vehicles (owned or rented) is prohibited, unless in an emergency. In other non-emergency circumstances, staff members and volunteers are to stop the vehicle before using a cell phone.
4. Absolutely NO TEXTING is allowed by the driver of a moving SACNAZ vehicle.
5. No drivers under age 21 may drive SACNAZ-owned or rented vehicles.
6. In no case will a staff member or volunteer be in a vehicle with only one participant.

DISCIPLINE

It is the expectation of SACNAZ that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline for the behavior management of participants. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by participants. If a participant is unruly or fails to comply with verbal warnings or instructions from a staff member/volunteer, the Event Director will contact the participant's parent/guardian. If the behavior persists, the participant's parent will be contacted to pick up the participant. In the event of a fight or physical altercation, a staff member or volunteer will verbally redirect participants involved, trying to avoid physical intervention. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to an Event Director and/or SACNAZ ADMIN.

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and participants should be positive and uplifting. SACNAZ employees, staff members, and volunteers strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging and constructive.

To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk to participants in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, employees, staff members, and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing or using profanity and especially so in the presence of participants.

Avoid the attempt of humor at the expense of a participant.

Any infraction of the above *Guidelines* can result in immediate dismissal from the event.

GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISION OF PARTICIPANTS

STAFF MEMBER/VOLUNTEER TO PARTICIPANT RATIO

SACNAZ is committed to providing adequate employer member and volunteer supervision in all camp activities and programs. Accordingly, the following ratios will generally be observed, as a minimum, for event activities and programs:

For all groups of participants, the ideal ratio is two staff/volunteers per every ten participants (10:2), and the ideal ratio in larger groups should be 10:1.5.

The Event Director will make an effort to bring staff member/volunteer to participant ratios into compliance with this *Guidelines* document.

MONITORING HIGH-RISK AREAS

Staff members and volunteers need to be aware of *high-risk* areas at any event, along with methods to effectively lower risks in these areas. Any areas on camp property where participants are not directly supervised is a high-risk area. In these areas, participants can more easily bully and abuse one another (verbally, physically, or sexually). It is the responsibility of all staff members and volunteers to be aware of the potential for bullying and abuse, and to monitor camp locations where participants can be alone.

For activities involving large numbers of participants, staff members and volunteers will be assigned to monitor high-risk areas for the duration of the activity. Monitoring of high-risk areas will be built into the programming and planning for these events.

High-Risk Areas include:

- all bathrooms at the event location
- night activities locations
- locations with low visibility
- water activities
- clothes changing areas (during day and night)

APPROPRIATE ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH PARTICIPANTS

SACNAZ recognizes that meeting the emotional needs of participants may occasionally require staff members and volunteers to meet with them on an individual basis. Staff Members and volunteers should observe the following guidelines when interacting with participants.

Staff members and volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual participant at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed unless prior approval is obtained from SACNAZ ADMIN.

In the event, a one-on-one closed-door meeting must occur with a participant, after obtaining approval from SACNAZ ADMIN, the staff member must inform another staff member and ensure the door remains unlocked. The door must have a window. This is an exception to the standard guidelines for extreme cases only.

No participant will ever be left unattended or unsupervised during camp ministry programming or activities. SACNAZ staff members and volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual participant in any room or building. In the event a staff member or volunteer finds himself/herself alone with a single participant, that staff member or volunteer will take the participant to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others.

(Example: If a participant desires conversation or counsel with a staff member or volunteer, the staff member or volunteer to relocate the discussion to a place where other staff members are present, or which is easily observed.)

After every programming event, staff members and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked before leaving to ensure that there is no participant left unsupervised.

Any two participants together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area.

PARTICIPANT CONTACT GUIDELINE – CURRENT & FORMER STAFF

COMMUNICATION WITH PARTICIPANTS OUTSIDE OF AN EVENT

The SACNAZ safety standards are established to protect participants and ensure healthy relationships during each event should be respected outside of camp as well. In addition to camp safety standards, the following guidelines should be respected in all interactions with participants occurring outside of the event.

Interactions between participants and/or event staff and volunteers beyond the event are always at the discretion of the participant's parent/guardian.

SAFETY GUIDELINES & EVENT CULTURE FOR PARTICIPANTS

By “Event Culture” we mean the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, practices, and atmosphere that characterizes any SACNAZ event.

BULLYING

Verbal, physical, or emotional bullying will not be tolerated.

Staff members and volunteers are to maintain vigilance for bullying behavior.

Verbal, physical, or emotional harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. At the first sign of verbal or other attacks, leaders will act decisively. There is no “harmless putdown” when dealing with kids.

1. First instance comes with a warning to the participant and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is inappropriate. Make sure not to embarrass or chastise them.

2. Second instance requires that you pull the offending participant(s) from the group and discuss the inappropriateness of bullying behavior. Set clear parameters and behavioral goals for them to achieve. However, let them know that the next step is a visit to the Event Director.

3. Make sure that any participant who is the brunt of bullying attacks is handling the situation well. Have a private dialogue with him or her to assess the situation. **DO NOT SINGLE PARTICIPANTS OUT IN FRONT OF THE GROUP!** Be discreet and protect the participant’s dignity.

4. Third instance results in a trip to the Event Director and a phone call to the parent(s) and/or guardian(s).

RESPECTING PARTICIPANT PRIVACY

Make sure participants understand the importance of respecting each other’s privacy. A participant’s bed is his/her home and the participant’s personal items are off-limits to anyone but the participant. In addition, shower time is a very private time. During showers, only those who are taking showers should be in the shower area or shower stall.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

SACNAZ is committed to protecting participants in its care. To this end, SACNAZ has implemented a ‘physical contact guideline which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our camp programs. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working or volunteering at a SACNAZ event:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and participants are important for participant’s development and are generally suitable in the camp setting.

2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Inappropriate physical contact, touching, or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, the Event Director, and SACNAZ ADMIN.

3. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other participants or staff members or volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or interpreted as such when physical contact is open to observation.

4. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by any staff member, volunteer, or participant must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, the Event Director, and SACNAZ ADMIN.

SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

By design of the event and with stipulated dates and times for each event, the following sleeping arrangements apply. Staff members and volunteers and participants will observe the following guidelines:

1. Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn to bed.

2. During bed checks, staff members and volunteers should never physically touch a participant.

3. Participants will not share a bed, bunk, or sleeping bag with another participant or staff member/volunteer. Each staff member, volunteer, and participant will use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances, a “one-person-to-one bag or blanket” rule will be observed.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS

Staff members, volunteers, and participants are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations and are not to discuss any inappropriate or sexually explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with others. If it is necessary to address issues related to purity, dating, sex, and human sexuality, such discussions are to be cleared with the Event Director.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS

Staff members, volunteers, and participants at a SACNAZ event are prohibited from possessing sexually oriented materials or images (magazines, cards, phone pics, videos, etc.). At no time should a participant be exposed to sexually oriented material at a SACNAZ event.

NUDITY

Staff members and volunteers at a SACNAZ event should never be nude in the presence of participants in their care.

TOBACCO & VAPING

Staff members, volunteers, and participants are asked to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco and vaping products while on SACNAZ property. SACRC is a tobacco-free facility.

INTOXICANTS

Staff members, volunteers, and participants are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug or intoxicating/recreational drug while in any SACNAZ event or facility while traveling to or from an event.

The Event Director will be notified by the event staff member/volunteer if the staff/volunteer is taking drugs (medical or other) that impairs or inhibits the judgment and actions of an event staff/volunteer.

PRESCRIPTIONS

Event Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from sharing with a participant any prescription medications they have for personal use. These prescription drugs should be maintained in an area that is non-accessible to a participant.

Participants who must, due to a documented medical condition, carry prescriptions to a SACNAZ event, must notify the Event Director of the medication and need. All participant prescriptions are to be maintained by the Event medical staff.

PERSONAL WEAPONS

No personal weapons are allowed at a SACNAZ event by any participant. The only exception is for adults with a valid Sacramento State-issued (or Sacramento State-recognized) concealed weapons permit. Those individuals are accountable and responsible for the safety of their weapons.

POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE EVENT DIRECTOR

Failure to abide by the Safety Guidelines and Event Culture section places the participant at risk of being expelled from the event at their own expense.

POLICY & GUIDELINES ACKNOWLEDGMENT

When a volunteer signs the acknowledgment of having read and agreed to the *SACNAZ Events Child Safety Policy* such acknowledgement also constitutes agreement to the *SACNAZ Events Child Safety Guidelines for preventing abuse and neglect*.