

Keeping Kids Safe! **4-H Event Chaperone Responsibilities**

Thank you for agreeing to serve as an adult chaperone during an overnight 4-H event. The policy of Michigan 4-H Youth Development programs is that all overnight youth events must include adult chaperones, and these chaperones must have completed the MSU Extension Child Well-Being Volunteer Selection Process (VSP). We appreciate your willingness to serve as a chaperone and positive role model for young people.

In your role as a chaperone, you are responsible for helping to ensure the safety and well-being of the youth participants. This goal is connected in the second of the seven 4-H Guiding Principles for positive youth development, which states that youth will be physically and emotionally safe during their 4-H experiences. This is achieved through a structured yet flexible environment that encourages honesty, trust and respect among all youth and adults.

In your role as a chaperone at this event, please keep the following in mind:

- **Be a positive role model and lead by example!** Let your behavior reflect the widely used CHARACTER COUNTS! six pillars of character that 4-H believes in: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.
- Keep in mind that, just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes all the adults at an event to contribute to a positive experience for the participants. Provide support, guidance and feedback to all the young people who are present.
- Communicate regularly with participants and use the language of the six pillars of character in your interactions. Point out examples of positive behaviors in action (for example, recognize good behavior as being respectful and caring of others).
- Be familiar with the Michigan 4-H Youth Development “Conduct Policy,” which is:
Positive behavior is a key expectation for youth and adults participating in state-sponsored 4-H activities – behavior that reflects trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Participants are expected to follow all workshop and event guidelines. Theft, vandalism, the use of illegal drugs and alcohol, inappropriate or threatening behavior that violates the rights of others, and other such offenses are strictly prohibited, and anyone involved with these offenses will immediately be sent home at his or her own expense. If it is determined by 4-H staff or persons in charge of the activity that the offense warrants it, the offender will be turned over to the proper authorities.
- Encourage, support and monitor the full involvement of all participants in all activities – including your own involvement.
- Help supervise participants both before and after lights-out and during recreation and free time.
- Actively enforce and follow the policy of males only in males’ rooms and females only in females’ rooms.
- Help participants evaluate what they see, hear and do at the event.
- Remember that as a chaperone you may be housed with young people from your own and other counties.
- Keep in mind that the use of tobacco is prohibited in all sleeping rooms and in all common areas (including meeting rooms, lounges and stairways) of events. Smoking areas are usually provided outside of buildings.
- Promptly alert the event coordinator of situations that need to be addressed. The event coordinator is insert name and can be contacted at this cell phone number: insert cell phone number.