



## CODE OF CONDUCT

The Strength in Me program relies heavily on the contributions of staff and volunteers. The main objective of this document is to provide guidance to Strength in Me staff, volunteers, and program participants on fostering healthy and safe relationships with both children and adults. Additionally, it aims to support Strength in Me members in their interactions with minors involved in Strength in Me sponsored and affiliated programs. It is important to note that this document does not cover interactions within families.

In this policy, Strength in Me members encompass Executive Board Members, the Executive Director, Strength in Me employees or contractors, and volunteers. A minor is defined as an individual who is under the age of 18.

### General

1. Members of Strength in Me are required to conduct themselves with decorum, consideration, and respect towards others. This entails wearing appropriate attire and refraining from public displays of affection. They are expected to serve as positive examples for minors, using positive methods of guidance like redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement, instead of participating in inappropriate competition, comparison, or criticism.
2. Members of Strength in Me are expected to exercise caution and cultural sensitivity when engaging with minors. It is strongly advised to refrain from initiating or engaging in sexually oriented conversations with minors. For members in mentoring or counseling roles, it is important to avoid responding to sexually oriented questions or comments from minors, as even innocent remarks could have serious consequences within a minor's home.
3. It is important for members of Strength in Me to promptly inform the parents or legal guardians if they observe any unmanageable or unusual behavior displayed by minors.
4. Unsanctioned activities sponsored or affiliated with Strength in Me should not take place at the private residences of any Strength in Me member. While private interactions between members and minors are permitted, the interactions are to occur in public view or in emergency situations.
5. It is strictly prohibited for any Strength in Me member:
  - to engage in the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal drugs while in the presence of minors.
  - to administer any medication, including Acetaminophen or Epinephrine, without obtaining proper authorization.
  - to engage in behavior that can be perceived as coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
  - to be involved in any sexual or romantic relationship with a minor or engage in any relationship with a minor beyond their role as a Strength in Me member.
  - To possess any sexually oriented materials during Strength in Me programs or engage in discussions of a sexual nature, including personal activities.



## **Special Circumstances**

1. If a Strength in Me member, who must be at least 21 years old and possess a valid Class G driver's license, provides transportation for minors to and from events, the following guidelines must be strictly followed, unless otherwise permitted in writing by the Executive Director:
  - Obtain written permission, except in extraordinary circumstances.
  - Avoid making unauthorized stops.
  - Minimize unnecessary physical contact.
  - Whenever possible, ensure that two adults are present.
2. In the event programs and activities require changing and showering facilities, separate facilities should be provided for adults and minors where possible. In cases where facilities are shared, shower schedules should be established.

## **Physical Contact with Minors**

The purpose of these guidelines is to foster a positive and supportive atmosphere while ensuring the safety of minors and members of Strength in Me.

The appropriate displays of affection among program participants, members, and associates are encouraged to promote healthy growth and development.

## **Behavior Management Procedures**

Strength in Me members are not allowed to resort to physical force as a method to retaliate or correct inappropriate behaviors displayed by program participants.

The following actions serve as examples of prohibited techniques for managing behavior and are considered unacceptable:

- Isolation, unless it is necessary for a child to regain self-control, and only under the supervision of an adult, for a maximum duration of 30 minutes.
- Withholding essential needs such as food, water, medication, or personal hygiene necessities.
- Degrading forms of punishment, such as imposing group consequences for the actions of one child or excessive exercise.
- Any form of physical restraint, including the use of ropes, tape, or similar methods, unless in exceptional situations where the safety of other members or program participants is at risk.

## **Misconduct**

Strength in Me is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all participants. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of misconduct, including but not limited to harassment, discrimination, bullying, or any behavior that compromises the well-being of others.

Participants, coaches, volunteers, and staff are expected to conduct themselves with respect, integrity, and sportsmanship at all times. Any instances of misconduct will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, which may include suspension or expulsion from the program.



We encourage all individuals involved in our program to report any concerns or incidents of misconduct promptly to the designated authorities. By upholding these Code of Conduct policies, we aim to foster a positive and inclusive environment where everyone can enjoy the benefits of recreational sports in a safe and respectful manner.

**Code of Conduct Attestation**

I, [REDACTED], acknowledge that I have received, read, and understood the Code of Conduct of Strength in Me. I understand that the Code of Conduct outlines the expected behavior and ethical standards for all staff and volunteers at Strength in Me.

By signing below, I agree to abide by the principles and guidelines set forth in the Code of Conduct and commit to upholding the values of integrity, respect, and professionalism in all my interactions with participants, colleagues, and the community.

I understand that any violation of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of my position or volunteer role at Strength in Me.

Signature:

Name:

Date:

Thank you for your commitment to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment at Strength in Me. Your adherence to our Code of Conduct is essential in upholding our organization's values and ensuring the well-being of all individuals involved.