

CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

Professional child and youth care is committed to promoting the well-being of children, youth and families in a context of respect and collaboration. This commitment is carried out in a variety of settings and with a broad range of roles. As child and youth care professionals we are aware of, and sensitive to, the responsibilities in our practice. Each professional has the responsibility to strive for high standards of professional conduct. This includes a commitment to ethical concerns for child and youth care practice, concern with one's professional conduct, encouraging ethical behavior by others and consulting with others on ethical issues.

Principles and Standards

I. Responsibility for self:

- A. maintains competency by taking responsibility for identifying, developing and fully utilizing knowledge and abilities for professional practice and by obtaining training, experience and counsel to assure competent service.
- B. maintains high standards of professional conduct.
- C. maintains physical and emotional well-being.

II. Responsibilities to the client:

- A. Above all, shall not harm the child, youth or family by not participating in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, intimidating, psychologically damaging, or physically harmful to clients.
- B. Provides expertise and protection through recognition, respect and advocacy for the rights of child, youth and family.
- C. Recognizes that professional responsibility is to the client and advocates for the client's best interest.
- D. Ensures that services are sensitive to, respectful of and nondiscriminatory of clients regardless of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, national ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, abilities, mental or physical handicap, political belief, political affiliation and socioeconomic status by obtaining training, experience and counsel to assure competent service.
- E. Recognizes and respects the expectations and normal life patterns of clients by the design of individual programs of child, youth and family care to help meet the psychological, physical, social, cultural and spiritual needs of clients.
- F. Recognizes that there are differences in the needs of children, youth and families and meets these on an individual basis.
- G. Fosters client self-determination.
- H. Recognizes the client's membership within a family and community, and facilitates the participation of significant others in service to the client.

- I. Respects the privacy of clients and holds in confidence information obtained in the course of professional service.
- J. Ensures that the difference between professional and personal relationships with clients is explicitly understood and respected and that the practitioner's behavior is appropriate to this difference. Sexual intimacy with a client or family member is unethical.
- K. When appropriate refers the client to other professionals and/or seeks assistance to ensure appropriate services.

III. Responsibilities to the employer/employing organization:

- A. Treats colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith.
- B. Relates to the clients of colleagues with professional consideration.
- C. Respects the commitments made to the employer/employing organization.

IV. Responsibility to the profession:

- A. Recognizes that in situations of professional practice the standards in this code shall guide the resolution of ethical conflicts.
- B. Promotes ethical conduct by members of the profession.
- C. Recognizes competent service often requires collaboration.
- D. Encourages collaborative participation by professionals, client, family and community to share responsibility for client outcomes.

V. Responsibility to society:

- A. Contributes to the profession in making services available to the public.
- B. Takes reasonable actions to prevent and eliminate all discriminatory actions and practices.
- C. Demonstrates the standards of this code to students and volunteers.
- D. Encourages informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions.

(Adapted from the June 1994 draft of the Code of Ethics for North American Child, Youth and Family Care Professionals).