

McMinnville Parks and Recreation Department

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES **PHYSICAL CONTACT AND TREATMENT OF CHILDREN**

1. Do not initiate physical contact with a child. If the child initiates physical contact refrain from hugging the child and as an alternative a gentle tap on the shoulder or head is appropriate. Use the high five method to let them know you are happy with them. Do not wrap your arms around them.
2. Do not allow children to sit on your lap or in-between your legs when sitting in a chair or on the floor. Have the child sit beside you.
3. Do not physically restrain or pick a child up unless the child is a danger to themselves or others.
4. Avoid being alone with a child. Stay in groups with your assistants and other children.
5. Do not engage in a wrestling match with a child. This is not to say that you cannot be interactive with children, just that you must avoid physical contact whenever possible.
6. When speaking with a distressed child, kneel to their level and hold their hand for comfort as opposed to picking them up.
7. Do not single out children for preferential treatment. No favorites. Children are intuitive and will wonder why they are not the favorite. This is a self-esteem issue.
8. Do not give gifts to children unless there are enough for each and all.
9. Avoid the topic of sex with children. This is up to their family and school to properly educate them on this issue.
10. Do not deprive children from restroom breaks, snacks or water.
11. When a child acts inappropriately do not subject them to group humiliation. Explain clearly and calmly why you are sitting this child aside from the practice or game situation, and give the duration of the penalty.
12. If you observe or hear from the child that they have been abused physically, emotionally, mentally or sexually, you must immediately report this to the program coordinators.