

Tennessee 4-H Teen Leader Statement of Principles

Parents and/or guardians trust Tennessee Extension to provide quality leadership and care for their children participating in all 4-H Youth Development programs. As a 4-H Teen Leader, you represent Tennessee Extension and are held to the high standards of behavior that fulfill this trust. Moreover, as a teen leader, you become a role model to the youth in the program, and your actions are often emulated by those youth. The following statement of principles is provided for teen leaders.

The following information, which is not all-inclusive, illustrates some examples of specifically expected and prohibited conduct. Engaging in prohibited behavior could lead to disciplinary action, including removal from the 4-H Program.

1. Ethical and responsible conduct:

In carrying out its educational, research, and public service missions, the University of Tennessee relies on the ethical and responsible conduct of all persons. Even the appearance of unethical or irresponsible conduct can damage the public's trust in the university. Teen leaders are expected to conduct themselves fairly, honestly, in good faith, in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards, and comply with applicable laws, regulations, contractual obligations, and university policies.

2. Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Child Sexual Abuse:

As a Teen Leader, the youth in your care may confide in you about possible child abuse, neglect, or child sexual abuse. If this situation arises, it is mandatory that you immediately report any knowledge of physical or mental harm of a child directly to your Extension Agent or Adult Volunteer Leader in charge of the program in which you are assisting. The adult in charge will then report the possible abuse or neglect to the appropriate authority. Law enforcement or the agency investigating the allegations may ask you additional questions.

3. Respect for Persons:

Teen Leaders are expected to be committed to creating an environment that promotes learning, fair treatment, and respect for others.

a. Disorderly conduct, including, but not limited to, using discriminatory, abusive, or threatening language; fighting, provoking a fight, or attempting bodily harm or injury to another teen leader or any other individual or threatening physical action or injury on university property or during university activities; or other conduct that threatens or endangers the health, safety, or well-being of any person is strictly prohibited.

b. Violation of any university policy against harassment, discrimination, or retaliation is prohibited.

c. Teen Leaders should treat others courteously and respectfully, demonstrating behaviors appropriate for a positive role model for youth.

d. Teen Leaders must recognize that physical punishment is not an appropriate form of discipline for youth and will not be allowed.

4. Respect for Property:

Obey the laws of the locality, state, and nation. This means no one will:

- a. Neglect or damage of university property.
- b. Steal or engage in dishonest behavior.
- c. Tamper with or wantonly destroy university data, records, or other information; gain unauthorized access to such information; disclose confidential information; misuse university data or information.
- d. Engage in unauthorized use of university vehicles, mail services, identification or credit cards, telephones, computers, computer equipment, or other university equipment or materials. Solicit, collect money, or circulate petitions on university property while in a 4-H Teen Leader role.

5. Standards of Safety:

- a. Possession of firearms, explosives, or other dangerous materials on university property or during university programs, activities, or events is prohibited unless a person is authorized by university policy or law to carry firearms (i.e. 4-H shooting sports).
- b. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of alcohol, illegal drugs, intoxicants, or controlled substances is prohibited.
- c. Refusal to obey security officials, Emergency Management personnel, or other proper authorities in emergencies.
- d. Failure to comply with safety rules, regulations, laws, or common safety practices.
- e. Failure to report an accident involving bodily injury or damage to university property.
- f. Smoking in violation of university policy.
- g. Failure to wear proper identification (name tag) in the prescribed manner as may be required by UT Extension, the University of Tennessee, and Tennessee State University.

6. Appropriate Dress:

Teen Leaders should follow these guidelines as they apply to being appropriately dressed:

- a. Dress appropriately to positively reflect the 4-H program.
- b. Refer to the “Preparing for 4-H Camp” Document on the Tennessee 4-H website for the suggested 4-H camp dress code.
- c. Extension Agents and designated Adult Volunteers can have you change your clothing if they deem it inappropriate.

With my signature, I confirm that I have read and understand the above statement of principles.

_____ (Signature) _____ (Date)

_____ (Print Name)

_____ (Signature of Parent or Guardian)

References: University of Tennessee HR0580 – Code of Conduct; University of Tennessee SA0575 – Programs for Minors; University of Tennessee, Knoxville Campus.