



## Child Protection Training for First Priority

### First Priority of Tampa Bay Child Abuse Prevention Statement:

First Priority of Tampa Bay considers the safety and well being of the youth in our programs as paramount, and we strive to put safety first with our programming and policies. Our organization prohibits bullying, abuse, or other violence and we strive to proactively address reports of this type of conduct. First Priority of Tampa Bay (FPTB) ensures the protection of its youth by complying with the following abuse prevention guidelines:

1. Through screening and selection of employees and volunteers
2. Guidelines on interactions between individuals
3. Monitoring behavior
4. Ensuring safe environments
5. Responding to inappropriate behavior, breaches in policy, and allegations and suspicions of child sexual abuse
6. Training about child sexual abuse prevention

### Policies and Procedures:

First Priority of Tampa Bay has developed and implemented the following policies and procedures in an effort to provide a safe environment for our clubs. The Board of Directors shall annually review these policies and update as needed, including the defining of prohibited and discouraged behaviors. All procedures and policies shall be available to the public.

- 1** The **Volunteer Recruitment** process shall include the following:
  - a. Volunteer Application – Every volunteer serving in FPTB programs is required to complete a written application for FPTB and for the school district for which they are serving. The volunteer clearance process which sets forth appropriate background information and requires disclosure of any prior claims or allegations of sexual abuse or other inappropriate conduct. The school district's volunteer application must be completed each year and possibly for each school where the volunteer will be serving, even if the volunteer is returning from the previous year/season.
  - b. Screening – Each school district provides background screenings through the organization of their choice and includes specific questions regarding the existence of any prior criminal offense, felony, misdemeanor or other criminal charges.
  - c. Background Check – All potential volunteers must agree to an employer/criminal background check with a contracted vendor of the school district's or FPTB's choice. FPTB reserves the right to disqualify any volunteer based on results of the background check.

- 2** An **Abuse Prevention Orientation** shall be conducted annually.
- a. A representative of the Board of Directors will review this policy with volunteers and employees. All volunteers and employees will certify that they have reviewed and accepted our policies with respect to abuse prevention.

**3** Defining **Situations for Prohibited and Discouraged Behavior:**

- a. Prohibited Behavior
  - i. Use of profane, degrading language and abusive/aggressive behavior. Volunteers will not encourage or support disrespectful language or behavior between team members or students; including sexual jokes or harassment.
  - ii. Threatening or intentionally inflicting physical injury upon a minor.
  - iii. Committing any sexual offense against a minor, or engaging in any sexual contact with a minor.
  - iv. Making any kind of sexual advance, or making a request for sexual favors, or engaging in other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
  - v. Volunteers shall not take pictures or video of students without written parental consent of a minor or consent of student over the age of 18 years old. Consent forms shall be kept on record by FPTB indefinitely.
- b. Discouraged Behavior
  - i. Our organization does not approve of non-related one-adult/one-child interaction in the situations identified below.
    - Rides to/from meetings unless there is parent/guardian approval.
    - During or after club meetings; at program events.

**4** **Reporting of Suspected Child Sexual Abuse:**

- a. A "Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect" form for reporting suspected abuse must be made available to all FPTB volunteers. After following the appropriate steps, FPTB will keep all communications including the incidence report on file for at least 3 years.
- b. The Board of Directors shall appoint at least one member of the organization who shall be responsible for receiving reports of sexual abuse or other inappropriate conduct and for taking appropriate action upon receiving such a report.
- c. All volunteers are directed to immediately report any incident of abuse or suspected abuse to the Florida Abuse Hotline. Volunteers must also report to the designated representative and/or the school principal and a FPTB staff member.
- d. The appointed member of the Board of Directors may also notify the proper law enforcement agencies with any incidence of possible abuse.
- e. In the event that a suspected incidence of abuse by a volunteer is reported, the volunteer in question may be temporarily suspended from duties while an investigation takes place.
- f. The Board of Directors, when appropriate, shall communicate reports of child sexual abuse to the appropriate school leaders. The confidentiality of any who makes such a report will be protected.

As a volunteer who is directly or indirectly supervising minors, you are mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse, child neglect, child sexual abuse, and/or exploitation of children. This includes, but is not limited to a minor telling you that he/she is:

- Being harmed by someone else
- Is harming someone else
- Is harming themselves
- Is going to harm themselves

For more information on the Florida Statutes pertaining to abuse reporting visit:  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2013/39.201>

For more information on what constitutes abuse or neglect:  
<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/abuse/publications/mandatedreporters.pdf>

If you are on school property, you must also immediately notify the school's principal. In all cases the state of Florida requires that the incident be reported to the State Abuse Registry at 1-800-962-2873. The Executive Director must also be notified the same day of reporting the incident.

If a parent, guardian, teacher or supervisor is suspected of child abuse and/or neglect:

- 1) The Abuse Registry is called immediately.
- 2) The school's Principal is notified immediately.
- 3) Complete a "Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect" form.
- 4) DO NOT CALL THE PARENT.
- 5) DO NOT CONTACT THE TEACHER.
- 6) DO NOT INTERVIEW THE CHILD.
- 7) All information collected on incident is kept confidential by the First Priority staff.

If you report an incident, please use the "Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Form" found on the First Priority of Tampa Bay website under the "resources" tab: [www.firstprioritytampa.org](http://www.firstprioritytampa.org). This form will be required by First Priority and by the school district.

Record Keeping:

A copy of the "Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect" form will be filed appropriately with the Executive Director or appointed Board Member.

Please keep a copy of this form for your records and for regular review.