

Faith's Law Notification

Statement of Intent

The Illinois Center for Autism is committed to providing a safe learning environment and healthy relationships with personnel for all students/clients*. Employee conduct with students/clients, at a minimum, shall comply with the Illinois Educator Code of Ethics, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Per ILCS 5/22-85, it is important for staff to maintain a professional relationship with students at all times and to define staff-student boundaries to protect students from sexual misconduct/grooming by staff and staff from the appearance of impropriety during:

- Any ICA sponsored education program or activity
- While in ICA, on ICA property, or in ICA vehicles
- At any ICA- sponsored or ICA- sanctioned events or activities

***For the purposes of this policy, a student/client is defined as anyone who attends ICA for the sole purpose of receiving special education and/or related services.**

What is Sexual Misconduct?

"Sexual Misconduct" means any act, including, but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, by an employee, or agent of the school district, charter school, or nonpublic school with direct contact with direct contact with a student that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student.

Such an act includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- A sexual or romantic invitation
- Dating or solicit a date
- Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog
- Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student
- Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
- A sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the student

What is Grooming?

"Grooming" as defined in Section 11-25 of the Criminal Code is when a person knowingly engages in unlawful sexual conduct with a child (defined as "person under 17 years of age) or with another person believed by the person to be a child. Acts committed by, but not limited to, any of the following means:

- Use of a computer, on-line service, Internet service, local bulletin board service, or any other device capable of electronic data storage or transmission
- Performance of an act in person or by conduct through a third party

- Use of written communication to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child, a child's guardian, or another person believed to be the person to be a child or a child's guardian to commit any sex offense as defined in Section 2 of the Sex Offender Registration Act,
- Distribution of photographs depicting the sex organs of the child,
- Otherwise engaging in any unlawful sexual conduct with a child or with another person believed by the person to be a child.

Expectations for Maintaining Professional Relationships

Illinois Center for Autism employees and their agents breach employee-student/client boundaries when they misuse their position of power over a student/client in a way that compromises the student/client's health, safety, or general welfare. Age and developmental level of the student/clients must be considered when interacting with students/clients. To prevent violations of these boundaries, the following behaviors are prohibited:

- Meeting with a student/client off-campus without parent/guardian knowledge and/or permission
- Dating, requesting, or participating in a private meeting with a student/client (in person or virtually) outside of a professional role
- Inviting a student/client to an employee's home
- Adding a student/client on personal social networking sites as contacts when unrelated to a legitimate educational purpose
- Privately messaging a student/client
- Transporting a student/client in an ICA or private vehicle without administrative authorization
- Transporting a student/client in an ICA or private vehicle without another Illinois Center for Autism employee present
- Transporting a student/client in an employee's private vehicle
- Taking and using photos/videos of students/clients for non-educational purposes
- Taking and using photos/videos of students/clients without proper documentation signed by parent/guardian
- Making comments about a student/client's physical attributes, including excessively flattering comments
- Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog
- Sexual or romantic invitations toward or from a student/client
- Making sexually suggestive comments directed toward or with a student/client
- Self-disclosure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
- Discussing personal issues with a student/client
- Disclosing confidential information to a student/client

Employees, students, parents, and any third party can report prohibited behaviors and/or boundary violations pursuant to Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting procedures, or to the Executive Director or administrator or staff member the person feels comfortable reporting to.

All ICA employees **MUST** report behaviors and/or boundary violations pursuant to the **Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act** and/or under **Title IX** of the federal Education Amendments of 1972.