

# Ethics Squad Policy and Behavior Consequences

(originated by youth and adult members of the YAC of the NRV Congregation  
Please reference the Policies and Procedures for a full definition of the Ethics Squad  
(revised September, 2006)

This document is a tool for the Ethics Squad for any YRUU Event to use as a guideline. The document is a collection of possible situations and reasonable repercussions. Remember that the best guide for any Ethics Squad member is to care. Common sense must be used when exceptions to the following situations arise.

An **Ethics Squad** is a group of youth and adults who, supported by adult advisors, watch over a YRUU event. They enable everyone at the event to have fun and feel included and safe by promoting an open and caring atmosphere and by enforcing the rules set forth in the covenants. Each YRUU member should be encouraged to serve on the Ethics Squad. Ethics Squad members attempt to prevent problems from developing, and through mediation or action, deal with problems when they happen. Parents/ and or guardians will be consulted should a YRUU member's behavior need their attention. It is recommended that each YRUU member have an emergency contact other than parents/guardians.

The Ethics Squad operates as a source of safety for all YRUU members and their advisors. There is no punitive intent.

**The Safe Zone:** is the physical space chosen by the YRUU that is private and appropriate to house any work of the Ethics Squad. Within the Safe Zone, all difficulties will be discussed, with fair, non-accusatory language, in reason and good temper; each person present will be encouraged to speak; a consensus should be reached. When there is a crisis at an YRUU event, it is the ethic of the YRUU to take that crisis as an opportunity for positive and decisive action, for learning about the function of community.

## **Facilitations:**

- Good listening
- Kind and thoughtful response
- Respect for cultural orientations
- Respect for psychological and physical boundaries
- Nurture of others; looking beyond self- needs
- Sharing in comfort
- Awareness of exclusiveness and inclusiveness
- Cooperation
- Creation of goal oriented synergy

It is not the obligation of the Ethics Squad to divulge the specifics of any intervention procedure to any member or adult advisor of the YRUU. But the legal authorities and adults will need to be informed as appropriate.

**\_YRUU realizes the importance of behavior guidelines, and adult members will be held to a higher standard of behavior. In the event that an adult breaks the**

**covenant, there will be harsher consequences and perhaps dismissal from the YRUU community.**

### **1. We promote inclusive behavior.**

YRUU events provide an atmosphere where youth are made to feel safe, accepted, and included. Exclusive behavior takes away from this sense of community. With the goals of safety and community in mind, participants are not allowed to leave the grounds of the event or leave the building after dark.

#### **Situations & how to deal:**

- 1) Being in a never ending conversation and being permanently unapproachable, exclusive whispering, etc.  
-Ethics Squad explains to the individuals how their exclusive behavior affects the community
- 2) Leaving the grounds or going outside after dark
  - a) Without asking the Ethics Squad or Advisor  
-Sent Home; parents notified
  - b) Not too far away / did not know was not allowed  
-Ethics Squad reminds the individual(s) involved of the rule
- 3) Sleeping in the same sleeping bag with another individual  
-Ethics Squad reminds the individuals of the rule and explains how their exclusive behavior affects the community

### **2. We promote respectful behavior.**

In YRUU, youth are encouraged and empowered to express themselves, but with the responsibility of being respectful towards everyone. The physical space must be respected and cared for; everyone will participate in clean up

#### **Situations & how to deal:**

- 1) Cruel mocking of a person, what they are saying, etc.  
-Ethics Squad mediates by facilitating a dialogue between the individuals involved; these proceedings are confidential, unless a member is at risk and outside assistance is required
- 2) Disrespecting or being irresponsible with the space we are in, or just involved in an accident that results in a mess or damage  
-Those involved are responsible for cleaning, repairing, and compensating, in order to return the room or object to its original condition as soon as possible
- 3) Going in a room that is designated off limits  
-Ethics Squad reminds the individual that the room is off limits and the youth is/are responsible for any changes in the room

### **3. We encourage open-mindedness.**

YRUU events foster an open community where people who are different as well as similar are made to feel welcome. Participants will try to remain open to growing in unexpected ways though the love and conflict experienced during the conference.

**Situations & how to deal:**

- 1) Constant negative and pessimistic views and opinions of the conference, its activities, or the people attending the conference
  - Ethics Squad meets with the individual to discuss what he/she wants to experience at the conference and how Ethics Squad can help

**4. Sexualized Behavior is not allowed.**

Exclusive relationships prevent the community from remaining inclusive and safe for all. Sexualized behavior of any kind is not permitted at a YRUU sanctioned event.

**Situations & how to deal:**

- 1) Heavy Petting
  - a) First Offense
    - The individuals are asked to stop and reminded of the rule
  - b) Second Offense at the SAME event
    - The individuals are sent home; parents called
  - c) At the NEXT con
    - The individual(s) are sent home without warning and are suspended from next event
- 2) Heavy Petting and Sex (all types included)
  - a) First Offense
    - The individuals are sent home and are suspended from the next event; parents / guardians called
  - b) Second Offense
    - The individuals are sent home and are suspended from all YRUU events for one year

**5. Possession or Use of Drugs and Alcohol are prohibited.**

Possessing, using, or being under the influence of illegal drugs is not permitted at any YRUU sanctioned event. They destroy the safe atmosphere, as well as put all of the participants at risk. We must deal with these infractions with care and we are legally responsible.

**Situations & how to deal:**

- 1) Alcohol and abuse of other mind altering substances
  - a) Coming to YRUU Event under the influence, first time
    - Sent home; police may be involved; parents/guardians called
  - b) Coming to a YRUU Event under the influence, second offense
    - Sent home and suspended from any YRUU event for one full year;\* police may be involved.
  - c) Possession and/or Use, first offense
    - Confiscation by adult and the individual(s) is sent home; police may be involved; parents/guardians called
  - d) Possession and/or use, second time

-Confiscation by an adult, the individual is sent home, parents/guardians called and member suspended from any YRUU sanctioned event for one full year;\* parents/guardians called, police may be involved.

2) Hard Drugs

-Police and parents notified, the individual is sent home and is suspended from any YRUU sanctioned event for one year\*

## 6. Violence and Abuse are Unacceptable.

All forms of violence, physical, verbal, sexual, or otherwise will not be tolerated during any YRUU sanctioned event. Weapons **are not permitted**, and will be viewed as intending or ignoring the possibility of a violent outcome. No one can vouch for how others will behave if they were to mistakenly come into possession of a weapon.

### Situations & how to deal:

a) Verbal and/or physical fighting, first time

-Ethics Squad member will find help from at least one Ethics Squad member to stop the fight. Ethics Squad will then facilitate a dialogue between the individuals involved

b) Verbal and/or physical fighting, second time

-Further mediation, or individual(s) sent home; parents/guardians called

c) Possessing a weapon

-Ethics Squad confiscates the weapon and explains our stance against weapons, and depending on the situation, the individual might be sent home.

d) Alleged sexual, verbal, or physical abuse

-Ethics Squad enlists the help of a main advisor, assesses the situation and complaints by having a dialogue with the individuals separately, the adult(s) facilitate getting help or mediation for the individuals involved. If needed, a crisis center, the authorities, or any organization that may have expertise outside of the scope of those present should be consulted. Parents/guardians called

## 7. The "no" rule.

Saying "no" to anything or not wanting to participate at anytime is fine and is respected, with consideration for the community being built at the event.

Any infractions of the above mentioned policies will be referred to the Ethics Squad, which will then take the appropriate measures.

\*When an individual is suspended from any YRUU sanctioned event, before he/she is allowed to re-enter the community he/she is required to speak to the Ethics Squad.

### Policies regarding sexual behavior at YRUU Events:

That sexual intercourse and patently sexual behavior between participants under the age of eighteen be prohibited at UUA sponsored or financed events. Their recommendation is prompted by the following considerations: The UUA recognizes its responsibility to the parents/guardians of youth conference participants who are under the legal age of majority. We are also concerned that YRUU be as inclusive as possible. Although

sexuality is something to be valued and developed in persons of all ages, the variance in readiness for sexual relationships among youth can make patently sexual activity at YRUU events and difficult for all. Indeed patently sexual activity by participants of any age can detract from our goal of inclusiveness.

**Policy regarding housing arrangements at YRUU events:**

That separate housing arrangements shall be provided for males and females under the age of eighteen or for others upon request, at all UUA sponsored or financed youth events. Adequate adult supervision shall be provided when this is not feasible.

**Policy regarding the responsibilities of the YRUU planning committees:**

That planning committees be responsible for making behavioral expectations clear to participants well in advance of the youth conference; and that the planning committees determine the consequence of failure to abide by them.