

The Neeje Association for Women and Family

Guidelines for Activities Involving Minors

These guidelines apply to all those who oversee and carry out activities of the Neeje Association for Women and Family (hereafter referred to as "Neeje") in which minors take part. These activities include classes, retreats, workshops and other events offered by Neeje at or through Valrideau University Residence. The guidelines also apply to one-on-one counseling of the minors who take part in these activities. A minor is anyone under the age of 18.

1. Whenever adults are with an individual minor, they should always remain within view of other people and should avoid being alone in any isolated place.

2. Priests should hear confessions of and give spiritual direction to minors only in a confessional with a screen, in a room with a clear door allowing them to be easily seen, or in a place where they are in the sight of other people (but out of earshot).

3. When adults talk to minors alone, they should do so in a room with the door open or with clear door allowing them to be easily seen, or in another place where they can be easily seen by other people.

4. No adult should ever be alone with a minor in a bedroom. No minors should be in bedrooms of Valrideau University Residence, and it is better if minors simply do not enter the residential area of the building.

5. Any overnight activities or one-day trips involving minors should include a sufficient proportion of adults and never fewer than two. In overnight activities, no adult should share a bedroom with minors. If possible, minors should sleep either in single rooms or in rooms with three or more beds.

6. No adult should shower or dress in the presence of minors and vice-versa. Adults should have separate showers or use the showers at a separate time. Whenever minors need to dress with other minors present, they should be instructed to use bathrobes or at least towels. All showers should be individual showers or have individual stalls.

7. No adult should drive in a car alone with a minor, unless the parents have given their explicit approval. Longer trips alone with a minor (over half an hour) should be avoided altogether.

8. Before a minor attends an overnight activity (e.g., a retreat or a workshop), the parents should be informed and their approval obtained by those responsible for the activity.

9. No adult should invite or aid minors to smoke any substance, drink alcohol, or use illegal drugs.

10. Adults should avoid any physical contact that is sexual or could be misunderstood as sexual. In this area it is better to err on the side of caution. Prolonged physical contact, including roughhousing, should be avoided.

11. No adult should give or show to a minor pornographic or indecent reading materials, photographs, CD's, DVD's, websites, etc.

12. If anyone knows or reasonably suspects that abuse of a minor has taken place, she should inform the director of the activity immediately. She should also inform Neeje's safety officer. All those who work with minors should be familiar with the pertinent federal and/or provincial requirements for mandatory reporting of confirmed or suspected abuse of minors.

13. If a minor says that she has been abused, the adult should listen to her without disputing her story, ask for pertinent details (who, when, what), and tell her that she will speak to the Director. The minor should be encouraged to tell her parents.

I, _____, have read the above guidelines and agree to abide by them in all activities of Neeje involving minors.

Signature

Date

