

Staff and Volunteer Manual



Updated 2024

I. Purpose

Ensuring the safety of AAUW Tech Trek Program campers is the most important responsibility of camp staff. The best way to prevent abuse of campers is conducting thorough staff background checks that are performed before each camp, staff interviews and basic training. Both on and off-site staff and volunteers are responsible for ensuring the safety of Tech Trek campers.

The following set of policies endeavor to protect camp attendees as well as staff during the preparation and execution of all AAUW National Tech Trek Programs.

All volunteers must review and act in accordance with the “Tech Trek Policies and Procedures” and “Diversity and Inclusion” regulations and complete training in anti-bullying and sexual assault.

II. AAUW National Tech Trek Program Education and Training Requirements

Camp Directors

Read this page from the American Camp Association about sexual abuse awareness and prevention:

<https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/articles/child-sexual-abuse-liability-issues-revisited>.

All 50 states require that professionals who work with children report reasonable suspicions of child abuse. Some states require that anyone with suspicions report it. Information about each state's requirements is available at the Child Welfare Information Gateway, www.childwelfare.gov. **It is mandatory that camp directors be aware of the requirements in their state.**

More resources:

- <http://www.acacamps.org/child-health-safety/child-abuse>
- <http://www.nsvrc.org/projects/child-sexual-assault-prevention/preventing-child-sexual-abuse-resources>
- <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/prevention-programs/sexualabuse/>

Camp Staff

Sexual Abuse training

All Tech Trek staff (including camp directors) must verify that they have taken the following pre-approved sexual abuse awareness training before the first day of the camp at which they volunteer.

This is a five-step training from the award-winning nonprofit organization Darkness to Light, whose mission is to stop child sexual abuse. This basic training will give Tech Trek camp staff information about abuse, how to identify it and how to report it so it does not happen again.

<https://www.d2l.org/education/5-steps/>

Anti-bullying training

All Tech Trek staff (including camp directors) must verify that they have reviewed the anti-bullying toolkit on the American Camp Association website:

<https://www.acacamps.org/staff-professionals/core-competencies/youth-adult-growth-development/bully-prevention>

All camp staff must sign the staff conduct agreement indicating that they have completed these trainings.

III. Monitoring and Supervision

1. Compliance with established ratios for adults and children must be followed at all times, including activities that occur off premises. (Pre- or post-camp activities, such as the family meet and greet or branch visits, are included.) The ratio for Tech Trek is 1 adult per 10 campers (or others under the age of 18).
2. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from being alone with a camper or multiple campers where other adults cannot easily observe them.
3. Tech Trek staff over the age of 21 must directly supervise Tech Trek staff under the age of 18 and be physically present during all activities.
4. Short term volunteers should never be alone with any campers without a trained Tech Trek staff/volunteer present.

IV. AAUW National Tech Trek Program Code of Conduct for the Protection of Tech Trek Campers

The following guidelines are intended to assist Tech Trek staff in monitoring and supervising behaviors and interactions with campers to identify and stop those that may be inherently harmful, that are the type used by child molesters to groom children, youth and their parents, or that may create the conditions where abuse can occur more easily. They are not designed or intended to address interactions within families. When exceptions to these guidelines must be made, they should be reported to the Tech Trek camp director as soon as possible.

1. All Tech Trek staff must agree to comply with the AAUW National Tech Trek Program Guidelines for Appropriate Affection.
2. Tech Trek attendees are to be released only to their parents or legal guardians or those designated by them.
3. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while participating in or assisting with Tech Trek.
4. Tech Trek staff will respond to campers and each other with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation,

- gender identification, culture or socio-economic status, or any other category prohibited by applicable federal, state and/or local law.
5. Tech Trek staff will portray a positive role model for campers by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity.
 6. Tech Trek staff will avoid even the appearance of favoritism toward campers.
 7. One-to-one counseling with campers will be done in an open or public or other place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others.
 8. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from dating or becoming romantically involved with campers.
 9. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from having sexual contact with campers or each other.
 10. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing etc.) while on campus or while involved in off campus activities during the week of Tech Trek.
 11. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from using the Internet to view or download any sexually oriented materials on campus and/or in the presence of campers or other staff.
 12. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities, including dreams and fantasies, or discussing their use of sexually oriented or explicit materials such as pornography, videos or materials on or from the Internet, with campers or other staff.
 13. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags, tents, dorm rooms or other rooms with campers.
 14. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from dressing, undressing, bathing, or showering in the presence of campers. When using multi-person dorm/residence hall bathrooms for showering, staff must always be covered with a towel or other clothing unless inside a shower or bathroom stall.
 15. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of campers. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a camper or others.
 16. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from using harsh language, degrading punishment, or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.
 17. Tech Trek staff are prohibited from participating in or allowing others to conduct any hazing activities related to Tech Trek.

V. AAUW National Tech Trek Program Guidelines for Appropriate Affection

AAUW is committed to creating and promoting a positive, nurturing environment that protect campers from abuse, and Tech Trek staff from misunderstandings. When creating safe boundaries for campers, it is important to establish what types of affection are appropriate and inappropriate, otherwise that decision is left to each individual. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows Tech Trek staff to feel comfortable showing positive affection, and yet identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries. These guidelines are based, in large part, on avoiding behaviors known to be used by child molesters to groom children and their parents for future abuse. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all Tech Trek staff.

1. Affection and positive reinforcement are part of Tech Trek. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children.

Some positive and appropriate forms of affection are listed below:

- Brief hugs;
- Pats on the shoulder or back;
- Handshakes;
- "High-fives" and hand slapping;
- Verbal praise;
- Sitting beside campers.

2. The following forms of affection are considered inappropriate:

- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces;
- Kisses on the mouth;
- Holding campers in the lap;
- Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas;
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas or other private rooms;
- Occupying a bed with a camper;
- Touching knees or legs of campers;
- Wrestling with campers;
- Tickling campers;
- Piggyback rides;
- Any type of massage given by a camper to an adult or an adult to a camper;
- Any form of unwanted affection;
- Comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to physique or body development; (Examples: "You sure are developing," or "You look really hot in those jeans.")
- Snapping bras, giving wedgies or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing;
- Giving gifts or money to individual children;
- Private meals with individual children (outside of the campus cafeteria or the nurse's dorm room if a campers is not feeling well).

VI. Types of Abuse

There are many types of child abuse, but the following are some of the most common: (From the U.S. Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families)

1. Physical abuse is non-accidental injury, which is intentionally inflicted upon a child.
2. Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child and an adult. This includes any activity, which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or child.
3. Sexual abuse perpetrated by another child is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child and another child when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child has power over the other child. This includes any activity that is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any children attending the camp.
4. Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development or psychological functioning.
5. Neglect is the failure to provide for the basic needs of a child or the failure to protect a child from harm.

Economic exploitation is the deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of belongings or money of a child.

VII. Reporting Inappropriate Behaviors, Policy Violations or Abuse of Campers

1. When Tech Trek staff observe any inappropriate behaviors, behaviors that are inconsistent with the AAUW National Tech Trek Guidelines for Appropriate Affection, abuse of campers, or other behaviors which may violate any provision of these policies the for protection of Tech Trek campers, they must immediately report their observations to the Tech Trek camp director or national AAUW staff and where appropriate or required by law, to local law enforcement.

Examples of inappropriate behaviors or policy violations include seeking private time with campers, taking campers on over-night trips without other adults, swearing or making suggestive comments to campers, and the other inappropriate forms of affection listed above.

2. Such inappropriate behaviors, possible policy violations or abuse should be reported in one of the following ways:
 - a. A telephone call or meeting with the camp director
 - b. A telephone call or meeting with AAUW National Staff Member (techtrek@aauw.org)
 - c. Submit a Notice of Concern (located in AAUW_Box, our sharepoint site), signed or unsigned, to the camp director or national staff.
3. All reports of inappropriate behavior, policy violations, or abuse will be taken seriously.
4. Where appropriate or required by law, the camp director will notify local law enforcement. AAUW and Tech Trek staff will cooperate with any investigation by local law enforcement to the fullest extent.

VIII. Camp Rules

The below rules apply to campers, staff and volunteers as appropriate.

1. Lanyard with ID and room key must be worn at all times.
2. Campers must never be alone outside of the dorm. Unless given permission otherwise, all campers must stay with their dorm group and be supervised by their dorm monitor.
3. Cell phone/electronic devices may only be used in the case of an emergency. (See cell phone/electronics policy below)
4. In respect to other groups which may be using the campus, campers must observe quiet hours and "lights out" from 11 PM to 7 AM.
5. Respect the personal property of others at camp.
6. Be respectful of university property and inform a staff member if anything is damaged. You will be held responsible for any damage to university property.
7. Use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal substances will not be tolerated, any items found will be confiscated and the camper will be sent home.
8. Possession of firearms or other weapons will not be tolerated, any items found will be confiscated and the camper will be sent home.
9. Observe the camp schedule, including meal times and other activities.
10. Obey all campus rules for summer program attendees.
11. Cooperate with chaperones, teachers, and group leaders at all times.
12. Participate in all classes and activities.
13. Stay safe and always lock dorm room when leaving.
14. Be polite and respectful to everyone.
15. Bullying and any verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated

Safety

Girls will live in locked, secured dormitories and eat in the dining hall. Dorm/room keys and a dining card should be worn at all times, attached to a highly visible lanyard. This lanyard functions as an ID badge and allows others to see that the students are part of Tech Trek. It also guarantees access to the dormitory and meals. This is a very important rule – make sure that campers know from the first day that they are always expected to wear the lanyard.

Girls must be told to never, ever go off alone. Occasionally there is some free time for a walk or tour on campus – they must go in a group with a dorm monitor. The girls' safety is our primary concern. If a girl refuses to follow these simple rules, call parents to take her home immediately.

It is helpful to use a buddy system, often girls are asked to use their roommate in this capacity and make note of where they are during group outings.

Privacy

Personnel should take every precaution to protect campers from inappropriate or unpermitted use of their name, personal information or photographic image in social media.

Photographs or videos may be taken during Tech Trek educational or recreational activities. This may be done as a group or individual photo during camp or as part of a media story, and may appear on a Tech Trek website or Facebook page, news stories or reports on the camp. No camper will ever be identified by her full name, and photos of campers in bathing suits must not be displayed publicly.

Roommates

Roommates are assigned at Tech Trek so girls are not staying with someone from the same school. This allows the girls to get to know someone new and hopefully make a friend for life!

Sometimes girls are not a good match as roommates. If this is the case, switch girls if there is someone else who has agreed to room with them. If there is a more serious problem, girls may need to say in their own room. See the “Problem Campers” section for more information.

Supervision

There is a minimum 1:10 ratio of adults to minors at all Tech Trek camps (adults include teachers, dorm monitors, junior/student counselors over 18 and camp director(s)). This ratio shall be maintained at all times, including on field trips.

If junior counselors are under the age of 18 they should be assigned a staff supervisor.

Each group of 7-12 girls is assigned to one Dorm Monitor, depending on the total number of campers. The Dorm Monitor should be assigned a room in the same dorm area as her girls so she is available if problems arise, to answer questions and just to be there as needed. The Dorm Monitor’s main activity is making sure the girls know where they are supposed to be and when, and that they are safe and happy.

All staff members and teachers must undergo and be cleared through a federal background check. When campers are with anyone who has not undergone a background check approved through Tech Trek, an adult staff member must be in the room or vehicle at all times.

Dorms

Girls at Tech Trek stay in campus dormitories or residence halls, unless otherwise discussed with the AAUW national office. Girls stay two to a room, there should never be more than two girls staying in one dorm room. Dorms that are “suite” style should have 4 girls in a room, dorm monitors and student counselors should stay in “suites” together, with separation of student counselors that are minors. This allows for fewer opportunities for adults to be alone with children.

Neither Tech Trek staff, nor campers, are allowed to let anyone in the dorms that are not part of Tech Trek.

Meals and Snacks

All meals will be taken in the dining hall of the campus, unless circumstances prevent this, such as attending a field trip for the day. On field trips, lunch should be prepared beforehand and brought on the trip. Vegetarian options are available at every meal at the cafeteria, girls or staff with food related health or religious needs will be accommodated.

Ensure girls are not sitting alone during meals. Ask girls to welcome anyone sitting alone to their table.

Camp Photography

The camp director or assistant camp director is responsible for reserving a photographer outside of camp staff (a student or professional) to take pictures (using a camera, not a cell phone) throughout at least 2-3 days of camp. Specific events that should be captured are the following:

- Hands-on workshops with compelling visuals (chemical demonstrations, robots, etc.)
- Professional Women’s Night
- Any evening activities that are STEM related
- Field trip
- Keynote speakers

Photos should capture a variety of activities, and show the girls both posed and candid, and demonstrate the diversity and inclusion the program strives for. It's important that the girls are shown being active rather than passively sitting at a computer in a majority of the pictures.

When not to photograph:

- Anytime girls are in bathing suits
- When girls are in the dorms or at meal time
- Girls are doing sedentary activities like listening to a presentation

There are cases where a girl/parents do not want to sign the photo release. If there is a camper with this situation either put a dot on the girl's badge that indicates she is not able to participate in photos or simply let photographers know that she should not be in the pictures.

Dress Code

It is the responsibility of the dorm monitors to enforce the dress code. Campers represent their families, their schools and their communities at some of the world's great universities while at Tech Trek. They also represent Tech Trek, which encourages a professional future for campers. Middle school dress codes are a good rule of thumb. If a girl is wearing any of the below she should be asked to change into something more appropriate.

Not allowed:

- Very short shorts
- Bare midriffs or sheer tops
- Backless, strapless or spaghetti strap tops
- Flip flops or sandals during class time
- Clothing with profanity or offensive slogans or messages
- Alteration of the official Tech Trek T-shirt

Number of Campers

We recommend that no camp exceeds 100 campers. You should always consult your insurance policy regarding stipulations pertaining to camp size.

Strategies for Camper Communication

Staff should work to ameliorate and improve camper behavior if it is a minor infraction, such as forgetting to wear a lanyard or being late to a class or meal, through a basic reminder of the rules. The next step after that might be something similar to revoking the privilege to attend a non-class activity.

Camper behavior that will not be tolerated:

- Behavior that is unsafe to themselves or others
- Camper repeatedly violates the camp rules
- Camper presents difficulties beyond the scope of camp staff
- Camper participates in bullying, verbally or physically abusing others

If the above behavior is exhibited, the best practice is a "three strikes you're out" rule.

- Strike one: Camper is given a verbal warning
- Strike two: Camper's parents are called
- Strike three: Camper's parents are asked to remove them from camp

Any final discipline decision is at the discretion of the Camp Director(s), up to, and including, removal from camp.

Behavioral issues are to be tracked, recorded and stored by camp personnel.

ACA resources:

<https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/under-influence-respect-responsibility-conduct-camp-counselors>

<https://www.acacamps.org/news-publications/blogs/counselors-corner/how-handle-difficult-camper-behavior>

Camper and Staff Record Retention

Camper medical forms are to be scanned and sent to the AAUW national office after camp is completed. Paper forms are to be destroyed. Electronic forms will be kept by the AAUW national office for no less than 12 years.

Camps can send medical forms to AAUW National in one of three ways:

- Ship a password-protected thumb drive to us with your files (least secure option)
- Upload your files to SharePoint (Email techtrek@aauw.org to request an individualized, secure folder)
- Email your files to techtrek@aauw.org using [SECURE] in your subject line (MUST use brackets)

California Record Retention Schedule

Records shall be retained according to the following time periods:

<u>Camper Information</u>	
Application/Parent Guardian Certificate	2-3 years
Attendance Agreement	7 years
Transportation Plan	2 weeks post camp
Biographical information	2-3 years
Permission (photo and field trip)	In perpetuity
Incident reports	7 years
Early release	7 years
Camper evaluations	Purpose served
Camper contact information	10 years
Tracking campers	Purpose served

<u>Volunteer/Staff Information</u>	
Biographical information	Purpose served
Staff evaluations	Purpose served
Parent evaluations	Purpose served

JC recommendations	4-6 years
Live Scan report	3 years after last activity
Medical releases	7 years
Branch Coordinator information	purpose served
Letter of Agreement	3 years post service

Branch Information

Branch Reservation	Purpose served
Camper Tracking Form	Purpose served
Transmittal forms	7 years

Disposal Methods

Following the retention schedule, records are disposed of in the following manner:

- Paper records containing sensitive information are to be shredded at the time of disposal.
- Delete electronic records from hard drive of all computers.
- Hard copies of electronic records (CDs or DVDs or other current media) are to be destroyed. Shredding done professionally is a camp expense.

Records Storage

- The camp director stores paper and electronic records until disposal, and transfers all records to new camp director.
- Electronic records shall be updated regularly to the current media for usability until the time of disposal.
- Financial records are kept by the camp treasurer and, when a new treasurer takes over, transferred to the new Camp Treasurer.
- The Live Scan Coordinator keeps Live Scan records. Live Scan records shall be kept under lock and key at all times.

Cell Phone/Electronics policy

- Girls may bring cell phones to camps, but they are only to be used in case of emergency or to discuss pick up information.
- All cell phones should be kept with charger in a plastic bag labeled with camper name.
- Cell phones should always be put back into storage in dorm monitor's room, or other safe location.

Camper Arrival/Departure

Arrival

- Upon arrival a family member must sign-in their camper. The sign-in form should include:
 - Printed name
 - Relationship to camper
 - Signature
 - Date
 - Time

- Name of individual picking up the child on final day of camp
- You should not be missing any forms, but if for some reason there is a form which you have not received it must be provided upon arrival.
- Check-in is the time to introduce family members to the nurse/health aide, especially if their camper has any special medical needs. It is important that medications, food allergies or other issues are discussed at this time and families feel secure.
- Be sure to also discuss when and where they will pick up their camper at the end of the week and who will pick them up.
- A Transportation Form is available in the Appendix, all California camps are asked to use this form.

Departure

- Only the individual indicated on the sign-in sheet from the day of arrival should pick up a camper on the last day. If another individual comes to pick up a child without notice from a parent/guardian a parent/guardian must be contacted and give permission for that individual to leave camp with the child.
- Upon departure campers must be signed-out. The sign-out form should include:
 - Printed name
 - Relationship to camper
 - Signature
 - Date
 - Time
- Make sure dorm monitors have done a final sweep of the dorms to ensure no child has left behind any belongings.
- Collect room keys and meal cards, or any other property of the university.

Medical Care

The Tech Trek nurse/health aide resides in the dorms for the entire week and should be available 24 hours a day. The nurse will handle mostly routine issues, such as distributing medication that has been approved by parents, cuts, scrapes, and menstrual issues.

If a serious medical problem arises, the nurse should contact and consult parents before acting. Each child's medical care information and insurance card will be available should an emergency arise.

Parents are to disclose any medical conditions and medical equipment required by camper BEFORE arriving on campus.

If a medical form arrives with indication that a camper has a disability that may require special accommodation, parents should be sent the Tech Trek Americans with Disabilities Act Policy.

If a camper arrives at camp with medical equipment or conditions that have not been previously disclosed contact the national office staff immediately. It is up to the camp director's discretion whether the camper can be accommodated and they may be asked to leave.