

A PROJECT OF THE DAVIS PHOENIX COALITION

**Davis LGBTQ+ Youth Group Policies and procedures**

Dear LGBTQ+ Youth Group Volunteer,

Welcome!

We take our responsibility to care for youth very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which LGBTQ+ youth can safely grow, gain resources and become inspired by themselves and those around them. The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for our volunteers. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for youth, protecting youth, you, and the mission of The Davis Phoenix Coalition (DPC). The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced. After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

The DPC board

**Safety Policies & Procedures for Davis LGBTQ+ Youth Group**

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**Overview of the Safety System at Davis LGBTQ+ Youth Group**

Because of the sensitive nature of our youth group population and our desire to provide a safe space to support, educate and inspire identity exploration, we require all volunteers working with youth to complete 5 SAFETY STEPS before volunteer placement begins.

STEP ONE: Mandated Reporter Training. Our policies and procedures require that DPC representatives and volunteers do not engage in abusive behavior of any kind.DPC representatives and volunteers are required to report any policy violations to a DPC representative or volunteer. DPC representativesand volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in ‘grooming’ a youth for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a youth, win the youth’s trust (and the trust of the youth’s parent or ‘gatekeeper’), manipulate the youth into sexual activity and keep the youth from disclosing the abuse. To equip our DPC representatives and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, we require all DPC representatives and volunteers to complete mandated reporter training at <https://mandatedreporterca.com/> Select the volunteer module. This training must be renewed every two years.

STEP TWO: Screening Process - DPC representatives and volunteers are required to complete our Screening Process, which requires a DPC representatives or volunteer to: -complete an application -complete a face-to-face interview -provide references to be checked.

STEP THREE: Criminal Background Check - DPC requires that all DPC representatives and volunteers working or volunteering in children’s or youth activities or programming, undergo a criminal background check, which can be done by completing the Live Scan fingerprinting process. This can be done at PDQ in Davis, 216 F St, Davis. Fees for processing can be reimbursed by providing DPC with a receipt for services and filling out a DPC reimbursement form. <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1lgHIODZYm-B6rpQw17oB2U3OW3WhkjXp>

STEP FOUR: Suicide Awareness Training, DPC requires that all LGBTQ+ youth group volunteers participate in SOS (signs of suicide) prevention program. This presentation is a program of Suicide Prevention of Yolo County. Upon acceptance as a volunteer in the Youth group program a presentation will be arranged.

STEP FIVE: Policies & Procedures -DPC representatives and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that they have read and understood the material and agree to comply with policy requirements.

**OVERVIEW OF DAVIS LGBTQ+ PROGRAM and Enforcing Youth Code of Conduct**

The Davis LGBTQ+ Youth Program is a youth drop in program of the Davis Phoenix Coalition. It’s purpose is to provide workshops, events, resources and community space for the LGBTQ+ youth of Davis. Participation in the group is confidential and will not be shared with outside sources without permission of the participant. A participant’s confidentiality status will only be known between the participant, the group leaders and a DPC liaison with the exception of mandated reporting obligations or an indication of self harm unless it is determined that a participant is in imminent harm (i.e participant indicates an intent for self harm…as listed below)

Participants are required to fill out an intake form at their first meeting of the group. Participants will be informed that group facilitators are mandated reporters. They will also be informed that their information may be used without identification for demographic purposes. Thereafter, youth will sign in with name only at beginning of meeting. Participant information will be kept in a locked file.

Meetings will start with check ins and group agreements. Group agreements should be arrived at with group participant’s input and can be modified as the group deems appropriate, with the exception that the group agrees to keep participants participation in the group confidential unless specific participants agree otherwise.

Check ins should be used as an opportunity to assess youth needs for outside resources, most importantly being the need for mental health intervention or contact with suicide prevention.

**Keeping the space safe for youth involves enforcing the youth code of conduct, attached at the end of of document .**

**YOUTH SAFETY POLICY**

It is the responsibility of every DPC representative and volunteer to act in the best interest of youth in every program. In the event that DPC representatives or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations to their immediate supervisor or a member of DPC.

DPC recognizes that youth who identify as LGBTQ+ report higher levels of depression, substance abuse, and mental health issues than their heterosexual peers, all of which are closely linked with suicide. Support working with the youth program will have regular training in recognizing and supporting youth they may suspect are in crisis. Immediate support can be reached at **Suicide Prevention & Crisis Services of Yolo County 24-Hour Prevention lines Davis: (530) 756-5000 Woodland: (530) 666-7778**

**REPORTING ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

DPC is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for youth and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate sexual behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to our Board and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency. An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information. Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ youth for abuse, it is possible a DPC representative or volunteer may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a youth for sexual abuse. DPC representatives and volunteers are asked to report ‘grooming’ behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors.

**MANDATED REPORTER POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**Policy**

When DPC representatives or volunteers see evidence of child abuse or neglect, or hear a report of alleged child abuse or neglect they will refer to this document. The range of behaviors that cover abuse and neglect can be broad, and treated more stringently for impaired youth or younger children who will be more dependent on their families for their physical and emotional well-being.

It is not our role to decide whether a claim is legitimate, or to act in an investigatory capacity. Center volunteers or DPC representatives involved in direct service care are mandated reporters of all suspected abuse/neglect.

**It is important that youth know volunteers are mandated reporters and may break confidentiality when made aware of abuse or neglect**. The mandate to break confidentiality is specific to abuse or neglect, not other information, which remains privileged.

Reportable Non-consensual activity:

* Must be reported if there was non-consensual sexual activity and the child is under the age of 18.
* Reportable Consensual Sexual Activity:
* The youth is 11 years old or younger
* The youth is 14 years old with someone 4+ years older
* The youth is 15 or 16 with a person 10+ years older
* The youth is 17 or younger with a person 18 years or older

Non-Reportable:

* If sexual activity is consensual and both youth are peers (same age and same ability) and 12 years or older.

Additional Reportable:

It is required to report allegations of current/past, physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuse in all of the following circumstances:

* If the child/adolescent is no longer around the adult who allegedly abused them.
* If the adult is no longer alive
* If the abuse reportedly occurred in another State
* If the abuse happened many years ago

In addition, if the youth is no longer a minor (age 18 or older), abuse that happened when they were a child must be reported.

**Procedure**

Step 1: Call the Youth Programs Manager ask soon as you are made aware of the behavior and before reporting so that you have

* Protection since you will be breaking confidentiality.
* Ideas and strategies that can help “make reporting” a way to build/strengthen your relationship with the youth and their family.
* If you cannot reach the Youth Programs Manager, contact them after you have made the report.
* Step 2: Making the report
* Suspected Child Abuse Reports (SCAR) must be submitted with 24 hours of learning about suspected abuse or neglect.
* Complete the [Suspected Child Abuse Report](https://www.yolocounty.org/home/showdocument?id=55319) before you call the Child Welfare Services Abuse Reporting Hotline at 530-669-2345.
* During the evening, at night, weekends and on holidays, Dispatch will contact the on-call social worker to respond to phone calls or investigate emergency situations of abuse and neglect. Supervisors are also on duty for case consultations and supervision. Reports should be as detailed as possible, but please do not investigate. Provide information on the child and family’s support network. Also, consider if the parent is taking any steps at ensuring the child’s safety or if the parent and child have any strengths that CWS can rely upon to help in safety planning with the family\*\*let’s discuss this

Step 3: Talking to the youth

* When reporting, attempt to get the youths buy in by thoroughly explaining the reporting process and what to expect afterward.
* Remind the youth this in their best interest and an investigator may come to their house.

Step 4: Take a deep breath

* Learning of suspected abuse or neglect can be emotionally exhausting.
* Be sure to protect your own mental health by taking time to decompress.

**ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

DPC representatives members and volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all our policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the DPC board. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to an immediate supervisor or DPC representatives. All supervisors, DPC representatives or volunteers receiving reports must pass information on to the DPC board. Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for dismissal or exclusion from participation. Any person having cause to believe a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect must make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency. If the DPC representatives or volunteer prefers, theDPC representatives or volunteer may request reporting assistance from an immediate supervisor or DPC board member; together with the immediate supervisor or DPC board member, theDPC representatives or volunteer will make a report to the appropriate authorities. **This must all be done within 24hrs**. If theDPC representatives or volunteer makes a report regarding a suspicion of abuse or neglect without assistance, the DPC representatives or volunteer will immediately notify an immediate supervisor, or DPC board member. In no way

does any provision in this policy discourage any DPC representatives or volunteer from reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

**Youth Group Monitoring Plan:**

Monitoring of DPC representatives and volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe DPC representatives and volunteer interactions with youth.

1. A DPC board member conducts an unscheduled observation at least once each quarter.

2. A DPC board member conducts periodic evaluations that include items that address participation in risk management training and adherence to risk management procedures and general program.

**BUILDING SAFETY**

The front door, at 405 L street, is to be locked at all times. No youth will ever be left unattended or unsupervised during youth programming or meetings. Youth DPC representatives or volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual youth in any room or building. In the event a DPC representatives or volunteer finds themselves alone with a single youth, that DPC representatives or volunteer will take the youth to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: If a youth desires additional conversation or counsel with a DPC representatives or volunteer after regular programming has concluded, move to an adjoining room where other DPC representatives are present.) After every programming event,DPC representatives and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.DPC representatives will ensure all youth have safely left the area.

**VOLUNTEER TO YOUTH RATIO**

DPC is committed to providing adequate volunteer supervision in all Youth activities and programs. The primary youth leader should be at least 3 years older than the oldest youth, and any main helpers be 1 year post high school or equivalent and 3 years age difference from oldest youth participant. Accordingly, the following ratios will be observed for Youth group activities and programs: For groups up to and including 30 youth, there will be a minimum of 2 unrelated DPC representatives or volunteers supervising. For groups larger than 30 youth, there will be a minimum of 3 unrelated DPC representatives or volunteers supervising. For every additional 15 youth, 1 DPC representatives or volunteer will be required. If a worker is out of ratio it is their responsibility to immediately notify the responsible Youth Leader. This person will make diligent efforts to immediately bring sDPC representatives/volunteer to youth ratios into compliance with this policy. \*The above ratios are minimum recommendations. Where supervision is concerned, more is generally better

**INTOXICANTS**

DPC representatives and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while at any of our youth group activities, while traveling with youth, or while working with or supervising youth.

**NUDITY** DPC representatives and volunteers in our youth group should never be nude in the presence of youth in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), DPC representatives/volunteer will submit a plan for approval to their supervisor concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes with adults and youth separate.

**ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH YOUTH**

We recognize that meeting the emotional needs of youth may occasionally require DPC representatives and volunteers to talk with them on an individual basis. DPC representatives and volunteers should observe the following guidelines when interacting with youth. Individual members and volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual youth at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed.

**TRANSPORTATION**

DPC representatives and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for youth. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of youth: 1. Youth should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a nonpublic place should be avoided. Best practices recommend two adults in every car. Never will there be a youth alone with an adult in a vehicle. 2. DPC representatives and volunteers should avoid physical contact with youth while in vehicles. 3. Drivers must obey all laws associated with driving, including, but not limited to, no cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving.

**CAREGIVER CONTACT**

Caregivers who are aware that their youth are participating in the LGBTQ+ youth group and who’s youth have given permission for contact, will be contacted if their youth becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in youth group. In the event that youth do not wish their caregivers to be aware of their participation in youth group and there is a need for medical assistance or intervention due to disruptive behavior. Steps taken to remedy the situation while keeping youth’s identity status intact shall involve:

1. Attempts to garner permission to contact caregivers or a trusted adult will be employed. If this is not possible, youth will be transported to an emergency facility or 911 will be called.
2. Disruptive youth will be asked to leave youth group. If there is concern regarding the disruptive youth and self harm, the police will be called. If there is lack of cooperation and there is permission to call caregivers, caregivers will be called. In instances of escalation, for the safety of other youth, programing will end immediately and police will be called. Leaders will attempt to stay within the involved youth’s space until help arrives.
3. Either incident will be reported to DPC board.

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

We at DPC recognize the value of caring supportive caregivers for our youth. We encourage caregivers to reach out to our parent support group, Yolo Rainbow Families to find ways to be supportive and engaged in their youths journey. Parents are not allowed to attend or linger in the LGBTQ+ Youth Group Space **(physical or electronic)**. Parents are welcome to ask questions before or after Youth Group meetings.

**PHYSICAL CONTACT**

DPC is committed to protecting youth in its care. To this end, DPC has implemented a ‘physical contact policy’ which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our youth group. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in the youth group: 1. Side hugs, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between DPC representatives or volunteers and youth are important for youth’s development and are generally suitable in the group setting. 2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, the Youth supervisor or DPC board. 3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the youth, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a DPC representatives or volunteer. 4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other youth or youth DPC representatives and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted as such when physical contact is open to observation. 5. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior ofDPC representatives or volunteers in the Youth group must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach. 6. Do not force any physical contact, touch or affection upon a reluctant youth. A youth’s preference not to be touched must be respected. 7. Youth DPC representatives and volunteers are responsible for protecting youth under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others. 8. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by DPC representatives or volunteers must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor or the DPC board.

**SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS**

DPC representatives members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with youth and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any youth in the program. However, it is expected that from time to time youth group discussions and lessons may address age appropriate issues related to dating, sex and human sexuality. These lessons will help the youth explore safe relationships based on mutual respect. Any discussions of this nature should, as much as possible , be done as part of a pre-organized and scheduled presentation.

**SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS**

DPC representatives and volunteers of youth group are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented printed materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) in youth group, unless part of a previously approved and scheduled educational presentation.

**TOBACCO**

DPC requires DPC representatives and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in youth group, and while in the presence of youth.

**VERBAL INTERACTIONS**

Verbal interactions between DPC representatives or volunteers and youth should be positive and uplifting. Our DPC representatives and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging and constructive. To this end, DPC representatives members and volunteers should not talk to youth in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, DPC representatives and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of youth.

Respecting Identity-Youth should be addressed with their preferred names and pronouns.

**Appendix A -ELECTRONIC POLICIES (Discord, Zoom, Group me, etc)**

All above policies will apply to any meetings held electronically. Facilitators of electronic spaces must also be vetted per the rules for in person facilitators. Youth code of conduct, attached below. will be strictly enforced by youth facilitators in electronic spaces.

In addition to the rule of always having more than one adult facilitator present in an electronic meeting space, the following rules apply.

* No one on one electronic contact will be allowed between facilitators and youth. This includes chat spaces, emails, discord channels.
* No screen shots or recordings will be allowed that include youth.

**Appendix B - Youth Code of Conduct**

**Davis LGBTQ+ Code of Conduct***.*

Code of Conduct

Davis LGBTQ+ Youth Program is a youth-serving, community-based program under the aegis of The Davis Phoenix Coalition. dedicated to providing a safe space for LGBT+ youth to gather.

Participation in the organization’s programs (in person or over an electronic platform) is subject to the observance of the organization’s rules and procedures. *The activities outlined below are strictly prohibited.* Any participant or staff member who violates this Code is subject to discipline, up to and including removal from the program. Any participant can reach out to a DPC volunteer to report a breach in the code of conduct. A facilitated conversation will be arranged with the participants in conflict.

**\***First violation of this code will result in conversation with the youth facilitator.

\*Second offense will result in removal from the program for 14 days

\*Third offense will result in removal from the program for 30 days or possible permanent removal from the program.

Consideration will be given to length of time between offenses at the discretion of the youth facilitator for escalation level.

**\*Depending on the severity of the offense a first violation may result in removal from the program for 30 days for possible permanent removal from the program.**

* Abusive language towards a staff member, volunteer or another  
  participant.
* Possession or use of alcoholic beverages  
  or illegal drugs on The Davis Phoenix Coalition’s property or reporting to the  
  program while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
* Bringing onto The Davis Phoenix Coalition’s property dangerous or unauthorized  
  materials such as explosives, firearms, weapons or other similar items.
* Discourtesy or rudeness to a fellow participant, staff member or  
  volunteer.
* Verbal, physical or visual harassment of another participant, staff  
  member or volunteer.
* Actual or threatened violence toward any individual or group.
* Conduct endangering the life, safety, health or well-being of others.
* Failure to follow any agency policy or procedure.
* Bullying or taking unfair advantage of any participant.
* Failing to cooperate with an adult  
  supervisor/leader/mentor.

**Discord/GroupMe-specific Code of Conduct**

1. Be respectful

You must respect all users, regardless of your liking towards them. Treat others the way you want to be treated.

2. No Inappropriate Language

The use of profanity should be kept to a minimum. However, any derogatory language towards any user is prohibited.

3. No spamming

Don't send a lot of small messages right after each other. Do not disrupt chat by spamming.

4. No pornographic/adult/other NSFW material

This is a community server and not meant to share this kind of material.

5. No advertisements

We do not tolerate any kind of advertisements, whether it be for other communities or streams. You can post your content in the media channel if it is relevant and provides actual value (Video/Art)

6. No offensive names and profile pictures

You will be asked to change your name or picture if the staff deems them inappropriate.

7. Server Raiding

Raiding or mentions of raiding are not allowed.

8. Direct & Indirect Threats

Threats to other users of DDoS, Death, DoX, abuse, and other malicious threats are absolutely prohibited and disallowed.

9. Follow the Discord Community Guidelines

You can find them here: https://discordapp.com/guidelines

10. Do not join voice chat channels without permission of the people already in there

If you see that they have a free spot it is alright to join and ask whether they have an open spot, but leave if your presence is not wanted by whoever was there first.

The Admins and Mods will Mute/Kick/Ban per discretion. If you feel mistreated, DM an Admin and we will resolve the issue.

All Channels will have pinned messages explaining what they are there for and how everything works. If you don't understand something, feel free to ask!

Your presence in this server implies accepting these rules, including all further changes. These changes might be done at any time without notice, it is your responsibility to check for them.

**Key DPC representatives/Volunteers**

Indicated below are the names of person who hold these key areas of leadership (whetherDPC representatives or volunteer) and their contact information. This list will be updated on an annual basis or when changes occur and provided to all active volunteers. It will be maintained with the official policy document.

Gloria Partida - Chair

[Gloria@davisphoenixco.org](mailto:Gloria@davisphoenixco.org) (530) 304-0548

[Anoosh Jorjorian](mailto:anoosh.inc@gmail.com) -Youth Coordinator

**Policies and Procedures Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of the LGBTQ+ Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service in the Youth Group. Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by DPC. Any changes will be made public. I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in my youth group position description. While, ideally, I will serve in this youth group for the full term specified in the position description, I understand that my service is volunteer and that I can choose to end this relationship at any time (if possible, by providing two weeks’ notice to my supervisor). I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between DPC and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation, unless a prior understanding is acknowledged, for hours that I have worked. Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the volunteer policies and procedures manual. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ DPC representative or Volunteer’s name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ DPC representative or Volunteer’s signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[This page to remain attached to the DPC representatives/Volunteer Safety Policies]