

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

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Kimberley Hundley - Alumna
Sheary D. Johnson - Alumna; Author, Minister
Terra Jones - Student
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Diana Meza - Instructor, Learning, Technology & Leadership, College of Education
Sheena Ramirez - Director of Recruitment, College of Visual & Performing Arts
Deanna Reed - Mayor of Harrisonburg
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WORKING GROUP CHAMPION:

TITLE: Authorized Adult Training

PROBLEM:

Here at JMU, we offer hundreds of programs to diverse students from across the commonwealth and other states. However, we have not committed to preparing the program directors or camp counselors to offer safe spaces for participants regardless of their race, religion, or socioeconomic background.

Currently, there is a paper-based training course titled Authorized Adult Training.

https://www.jmu.edu/conferences/_files/Authorized-Adult-Training.pdf

The training is designated for the following:

"All individuals paid or unpaid, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee minors in programs or in recreational and/or residential facilities associated with programs that take place on property controlled by the University. This includes but is not limited to faculty, staff, volunteers, graduate and undergraduate students, interns, employees of temporary employment agencies, and independent contractors/consultants. For this training, individuals defined above will be referred to as "Authorized Adults."

Problem 1-This training does not address the support of participants of diverse backgrounds concerning race, religion, or socioeconomic background. We have individuals working on campus with students from diverse backgrounds, without any experience or education, to effectively interact with minors and moreover understand their diverse needs.

Problem 2-There is no accountability to ensure that the receiver reads this training. Receivers of this training sign a paper and return it to the sender.

Putting such training into place would show that the University is committed to protecting the safety of the entire University community, including minors visiting our campus. Therefore, the following recommendation supports the University's establishing expectations and requirements for minors' on-campus programs.

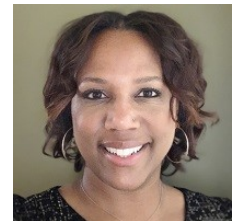
WORKING GROUP LEADERSHIP



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RECOMMENDATION:

The recommendation is to establish training and guidelines for the appropriate supervision of minors involved in programs held on University property, University facilities, or University-controlled locations. This training shall address the supervision, guidance, and protection of minors as well as an understanding of their diverse needs.

An example of a University manual for minors on campus is found here: <https://odu.edu/content/dam/odu/offices/risk-management/DOCS/minors/Youth-Programs-Manual.pdf>

RATIONALE:

This training will minimize the risk of harm to minors, limit the potential liability of the University, its faculty, staff, and students, and establish compliance with Virginia Code Section 63.2-1509 requiring persons employed by an institution of higher education to report certain injuries to children (minors). In addition, this training would include a policy that establishes guidelines for the appropriate supervision of minors involved in University-sponsored programs held at the University or other locations controlled by the University. This training will also support those involved with the minors on campus to understand the diverse needs of the minors and create an open, welcoming space for all youth.

Lastly, establishing training and guidelines for minors on campus will minimize the University's potential liability, risk of harm to minors, and decreased employee productivity due to distractions and disruptions.

The PreK-12 population is very vulnerable, and we can impact them negatively or positively through our interactions.

While we respect the expertise of the program organizers, their expertise may not be aligned with the diverse needs of the participants.

DEI training has been mandated for all staff and faculty on campus, yet there are people whom we hire from outside of campus who may not have the same training or level of experience.

Steps to implement this recommendation

1-Establish University guidelines for PreK-12 programs on campus, requiring all programs to be registered at the University. ODU has an excellent example of such guidelines and registration: <https://www.odu.edu/riskmanagement/youth-programs>

2-Review existing authorized adult training and include the support for diverse youth, recognizing the need for quality programming that recognizes the needs of people from different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc.

3-Create accountability for completing the training. Through live or self-paced training, create accountable and interactive content. The University of Oregon has an example of accountability and training established on this site: <https://hr.uoregon.edu/programs-services/youth-programs-protecting-minors/youth-programs-training-staff>. Old Dominion University has an additional example <https://www.odu.edu/riskmanagement/training/youth-programs>.

Though parts of this recommendation have been implemented here at JMU, we fall behind other universities with accountability and understanding diverse populations. This is a small step for JMU, but could allow us to be a model for other universities and enhance our ability to meet the needs of minors participating in our campus programs.

SUCCESS:

We have received input on this recommendation from various local community members and have incorporated their ideas into this recommendation. The success of this could be our offering various community PreK-12 program leaders to review the training and provide their input. Additionally, we can measure the number of participants who complete the training and the expansion of their knowledge through a pre-and post-test.

This recommendation's true measure of success will be minors, regardless of their race, religion, or socioeconomic background coming to our campus and feeling understood and safe. Additionally, this will allow those running the programs to feel well equipped and ask questions.