

# UCS STAFF AND VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Primary Role**

The top priority for an Underdog Crew staff member or volunteer is to always prioritize young people's needs, rights, and responsibilities. When working with young people, we expect staff to wholeheartedly embrace the individual, refrain from passing judgment, actively promote inclusivity, and take a firm stance against negative or inappropriate behaviours.

## **Young peoples participation**

Staff members and volunteers should consistently provide support and motivation to young individuals, ensuring their active involvement in the process of planning, organising, and carrying out various tasks and activities. This includes providing opportunities for young people to express their ideas, contribute to decision-making, and take on meaningful roles within the group or organization. Staff should actively mentor and guide young people, fostering their sense of ownership and responsibility in the successful implementation of projects and initiatives.

## **Professionalism**

Our professionalism is not based on payment but on service quality, staff qualities, and organizational culture. Staff and volunteers are expected to understand the following:

- Boundaries, values, and ethics
- Commitment to the needs of young people
- The need to present a public persona that is respectful and respected is important.
- The issues faced by young people.
- Practical and organizational skills
- How the actions of individual workers affect the public's views of youth work.

## **Working with partner agencies**

We welcome partnerships with other agencies that share our mission. Our staff and volunteers will provide professional feedback and criticism directly to colleagues or other agencies when necessary.

## **Working boundaries**

It is crucial to maintain professional boundaries when working with young people. Workers should never share their addresses with young people under any circumstances.

## **Confidentiality**

Staff and volunteers will abide by the Underdog crew's privacy policy and follow GDPR guidelines. Staff and volunteers should always be very clear when explaining limitations and boundaries to young people, that we cannot always guarantee confidentiality on all issues.

## **Gaining consent**

Staff will request parental consent for any project activity that takes place outside the regular meeting location of a group, or any activity that involves transporting young people, or any planned activity that carries any level of risk.

All young people under the age of 18 require the authorized consent of their parents or guardians. Participants who are 18 years and older can provide their own written consent.

If workers suspect that a parent or guardian's signature of consent has been forged or falsified, they will contact the parent or guardian in person or by phone to verify their consent. Young people should be informed that this is the standard procedure to avoid any confusion.

## **Alcohol and drugs**

It is considered an act of gross misconduct subject to instant dismissal for employees/volunteers of the Underdog crew to use alcohol or drugs during work time or to smoke tobacco/vape in the presence of young people.

Young people will not be able to use drugs, alcohol, smoke or vape during any activity organized by the Underdog Crew.

## **Insurance**

All project activities will be covered by appropriate insurance. It is the company director's responsibility to ensure that relevant insurance is in place in advance of any planned activity.

## **Legal issues**

Our staff and volunteers must always comply with the law. This means they may need to contact the police if they know about a serious crime. They must also answer truthfully if questioned by the police about a less serious offence. In both cases, they are not allowed to lie on behalf of young people, and young people must be informed about this.

Staff and volunteers must not condone any risky or illegal behaviour by young people, even if they can't stop it.

Our staff and volunteers will collaborate with the police and other authorities when it's in the best interest of young people. However, they should not compromise their dedication to the needs and rights of the young people they serve.

It's our responsibility to understand the law as it applies to our work and to help the police understand our role, how we work, and the ethics and boundaries we employ.

### **Health & Safety**

Staff are expected to always comply with the underdog crew's health and safety policy.

### **Grievance and Disciplinary**

Failure to uphold the Underdog Crew Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary proceedings as set out in our disciplinary procedures.