

GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH AKTION CLUB MEMBERS

Aktion Club members have a wide variety of ability levels. It's what makes Aktion Club a unique, diverse, and vibrant program. Kiwanians are being entrusted to become valuable adult mentors in the lives of these individuals, and thus, need to be concerned with their safety and protection. The following guidelines should be read, understood, and put into practice when working with Aktion Club members.

Use of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco: While attending any Kiwanis event, Aktion Club members will follow guidelines set forth by the conference center/camp/hotel and/or their chaperone regarding alcoholic beverages and tobacco use.

Reporting: If a Kiwanian, chaperone, or anyone observes troubling behavior involving a member at an event or becomes aware of a situation that is illegal or potentially unsafe, he/she must immediately contact the appropriate personnel at the event and chaperone, as well as provide notification to law enforcement personnel as appropriate. All local, state, provincial, and federal laws regarding reporting must be followed.

Overnight Stays: If planning or attending an Aktion Club event that requires overnight stay in a hotel or camp/conference setting, consult with the agency and the members' legal guardians for their expectations for chaperoning and room sharing.

Chaperone: A chaperone is defined as a Kiwanis member, agency member, parent, legal guardian, or person who is in loco parentis, twenty-one (21) years of age or older, that has been approved by the agency or Kiwanis Club and is registered with the agency or Kiwanis Club to accompany the members at the specific event.

Transportation: All transportation decisions should be made in accordance with local laws and agency policies.

Medications: The possession of prescription and non-prescription medications at a Kiwanis event should be permitted and handled by a member's caregiver and chaperone when necessary.

Criminal History Background Checks: Criminal history background checks – conducted and verified by Kiwanis International - are required of any member serving as a Kiwanis Advisor(s) to an Aktion Club. Kiwanis International's criteria shall be followed to determine whether the background check is considered 'clear.' Background checks shall be valid for no more than two years.

Clubs are strongly encouraged to ensure confidential background checks for all adults who will be working directly with Aktion Club members.

Members of Aktion Club attending International events such as the Aktion Club Training and Leadership Conference hosted in conjunction with other Kiwanis events with youth participants such as the Key Club International Convention are exempt from criminal history background checks.

However, chaperones/caregivers of Aktion Club members attending these events are not exempt, and must have a valid background check on file.

Conflicts with Other Rules: Whenever these guidelines conflict with agency policies or rules, or local state/provincial, or national laws or regulations, the highest applicable standards for conduct shall prevail.

Personal Information: All documents bearing personal information of any Aktion Club member attending a Kiwanis event, including registration forms, medical information forms, permission to treat forms, etc. should be treated as confidential. Processes that protect this information must be created, including minimizing the number of people who have access to any such documents. The documents shall be maintained a minimum of three (3) years or longer as may be required by applicable state/provincial laws and regulations. After the maintenance period has expired, the documents shall be destroyed in a way that maintains confidentiality, such as shredding. The disposal and destruction of all confidential information shall conform to applicable state/provincial laws and regulations.

Social Media: For any social networking site that involves requesting a connection (such as inviting someone to be a friend on Facebook), Kiwanis members should never initiate such connections with Aktion Club members. If an Aktion Club member requests such a connection from a Kiwanian, he/she should use their best judgment in responding. Adults should treat their interaction with members on social networking sites as though the interaction were occurring in public, in front of other adults and members. In other words, if it would not be appropriate to say something to a member in public, it should not be said as a comment on a social networking site either. Kiwanians should refrain from interactions that can be seen as excessive (such as constantly “liking” or commenting on a person’s posts on Facebook). Prior to posting any media online, such as photographs, obtain permission from any and all individuals (or parents or guardians) that appear in that media; it could be illegal to do otherwise. (See Kiwanis International Policy B for complete social media guidelines.)

Behavioral or Health Issues: Kiwanians are often seen by an Aktion Club member as someone to trust with personal and/or sensitive information. Kiwanians should refrain from counseling members and should instead find, or assist the member in finding, appropriate expert assistance.

Education: Every Kiwanis club that sponsors an Aktion Club is expected to inform and educate its members on these guidelines, best practices, and what individuals must do when aware of Aktion Club members in potentially harmful situations. This education must occur annually, including providing a copy of these guidelines to each club member.

Every Kiwanis district is expected to provide an educational forum or workshop at every district events on guidelines and best practices for interactions with Aktion Club members, using materials provided by Kiwanis International.