

PRISM Board Boundaries & Best Practices  
Wednesday, February 15, 2006  
Second Draft

This document is intended to provide guidelines for boundaries and best practices related to potential situations between PRISM board members and PRISM youth. Members used APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct as well as American School Counselor Association Ethical Standards documents as references.

- I. PRISM adult advisory board shall treat PRISM youth with respect in language and actions.
- II. No PRISM adult board member shall provide or engage in use of illegal or legal substances with PRISM youth.
  - a. These substances include, but are not limited to: illegal drugs, cigarettes, alcohol, prescription medications, controlled substances, and hormone therapy medications.
  - b. No PRISM adult board member shall come to PRISM meetings or functions under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- III. No PRISM adult board member shall engage in dating and/or sexual contact with PRISM youth.
  - a. In the case of former PRISM youth, PRISM adult board members are discouraged from engaging in romantic relationships when the parties met through PRISM and should refrain from dating and/or sexual contact for a minimum of two years beyond the termination of contact through PRISM.
    - i. If the parties were acquainted outside of PRISM and after the youth has left the group, the best practice is for the PRISM board member to consult with the other board members.
- IV. Care should be taken to avoid inappropriate contact that could be misinterpreted by PRISM youth. It is the adult's responsibility to address any lack of clarity about boundaries with the youth, coordinators, counseling liaisons and the board itself as necessary to uphold the standards of this document. This is imperative for the protection of the youth, the adult board members, and the organization.
- V. PRISM adult board members should avoid driving PRISM youth one-on-one in the car. When possible, adult board members should bring along another board member or adult.
- VI. PRISM adult board members should be aware and mindful of multiple relationships and dual roles with PRISM youth.
  - a. Multiple relationships occur when board members have interactions or relationships that exist outside of PRISM.
    - i. PRISM adult board members should be mindful that they have more power than the youth in most cases.
    - ii. It is the adult board member's responsibility to address the dual role with the intention of reducing any negative consequence for the youth.

- VII. PRISM adult board members should be mindful of dual roles and multiple relationships while on-line.
  - a. This may apply to chat rooms, LGBTQ on-line services, dating services, blogs, journals, etc.
  - b. If questionable situations arise, the adult board member should seek consultation with other board members.
- VIII. PRISM adult board members should be aware of their power and roles while spending time in LGBTQ bars in mid-Missouri as bars are some of the few queer gathering spaces.
  - a. PRISM adult board members should be mindful of their behavior in LGBTQ bar spaces while serving board terms.
  - b. PRISM youth sometimes show up in these spaces. Extra care should be taken in these instances.
    - i. Adult board members should always alert bar staff if PRISM youth are there underage or drinking underage.
- IX. PRISM adult board members who are privy to personal information related to youth may consult with adult coordinators, counselor liaisons, or the board itself. Care should be taken to maintain confidentiality and, if possible, anonymity of the youth.
- X. PRISM adult board members should meet to discuss any potential or real boundary-violation situations. It is best practice for adult board members to consult with one another when in doubt in any situation concerning PRISM youth.
- XI. Intentional and unintentional violations of any of the above guidelines must be brought to the attention of the board, which must then meet with no youth present to discuss appropriate action. The adult board member whose action is under discussion has a duty to present her/his view of the situation and then remove him/herself from the meeting until a decision has been reached. Involved youth may also address the board in privacy without the presence of the involved adult board member or any other youth. Appropriate action can range from a formal clarification of boundaries to a confidential written warning (especially in the case of a repeated minor violation) to resignation or expulsion of the board member.
  - a. In case of violations of Articles I and II, the adult board member has an obligation to resign immediately, or face expulsion. The adult board also has a duty to consider clear violations of law and take appropriate steps to report these violations.
  - b. In the case of disputed violations, if adult board members unanimously agree that there is strong suspicion that a violation of Articles I or II occurred, the suspected adult board member should either resign or be terminated in order to protect the integrity of PRISM. Adult board members may also be asked to resign or be terminated by unanimous vote in the case of repeated violations or a pattern of suspected violations of guidelines. A written warning should be issued by the board before such an action is taken except in sudden cases that are deemed dangerous to the integrity of PRISM.