

# QUESTIONS TO ASK A YOUTH ORGANIZATION BEFORE YOUR CHILD PARTICIPATES



Next time you're considering a youth program, child care, afterschool activity or summer camp, ask questions about safe child policies. Helpful questions include:

- 1 How are your employees and volunteers screened?** Listen for verification that all adolescents and adults are *at least* interviewed. For some positions, written applications, interviews, reference checks and even criminal background checks should be part of employment/volunteer screening processes.
- 2 Do you limit isolated one-to-one interactions between adults and my child, and between older adolescents and my child?** Ideally, at least two adults will be present with youth at all times. There should be routine monitoring if one-on-one time is part of the mission of the organization. Look for "no closed door" policies.
- 3 Tell me about your supervision policies. Are children supervised at all times?** Learn about the ratio of adults to children. Look for assurances that children are continuously supervised during activities, when changing clothes, on field trips, on bathroom breaks.
- 4 Do you have a code of conduct or ethics, and how is this code enforced?** Ideally, employees and volunteers will sign a document that they will adhere to policies and a code of conduct, demonstrating their understanding and agreement.
- 5 Tell me how you report incidents involving my child within your organization? When and how would I be contacted?** See that it's clear how misconduct or incidents observed by fellow staff or volunteers would be reported, and whether the organization immediately involves parents.
- 6 Are your staff trained to know the signs of sexual abuse grooming behaviors? Do they know how to prevent and report suspected or known abuse?** When such training is present, you have added assurance that this organization is serious about protecting youth. Job or volunteer application processes, policies and proactive training are strong filters that deter abusers from becoming part of an organization or acting on urges.

Pledge to Protect has a thorough training program for organizations to build strong prevention into their organizations. Please encourage organizations you know to gain this training. Contact [p2p@dakmed.org](mailto:p2p@dakmed.org).

**You protect your child and others when you encourage safe child policies.**