



RICE UNIVERSITY

# Office of Ethics, Compliance and Enterprise Risk

## Missing Child Protocol

\*As of December 2023\*

### General Reminders

All program staff are required to keep track of all children assigned to their group at all times. Staff members are expected to do the following:

- Frequently count the number of children in their group to make sure that no one is missing.
- Remind children to speak to the program staff if they need to leave the group
- Remind other children in the group to alert program staff if they notice that their assigned buddy or anyone else in the group is not present.
- Remain diligent and observant of all youth assigned to your group including during focused activities. Ask for assistance from other program staff to ensure you can observe all participants in your care.

### Missing Child Protocol

If a child goes missing, the following steps must be followed:

- Remain calm to avoid frightening the other children.
- Stop the activity and ask the children about the last time they saw the missing child and if they know where he or she went.
- Alert the program director and tell them that a child is missing from your group. Provide the name, basic characteristics of the child (hair color, age, size, weight), any description you may have that would help others search (such as apparel that he or she was wearing), and how long it has been since anyone has seen the child. The program director will arrive on the scene with other support personnel as soon as possible.
- Search the last location the group was in. Search the immediate premises including halls, restrooms, and other activity areas. Call the child's name as you search.
- If the child is not found in the building, go outside and do a sweep around the perimeter of the building. If other adults are around the outside of the building, ask them if they have seen a child fitting the description.
- If you find the child, call the program director immediately so that the search can be called off. The program director will confirm the child is located by personally meeting with the child at the child's location. If you don't find the child after searching the building and perimeter, immediately call RUPD and the parent(s) or guardians.
- Once RUPD arrives on the scene, they will assume command and control over the search.
- Once the child is located, REMS shall be dispatched to the child's location for a medical evaluation.
- The program director must complete the Youth Protection Incident Form within 24 hours of an event of this nature.