



Adopt A Class Safety Agreement

**TO FORMALLY SIGN OFF ON THIS AGREEMENT, PLEASE CONTACT
MARIE RUSINCOVITCH: marie@aacmentors.org**

Program Overview

Our Mission: AAC connects businesses and civic groups with students in our economically challenged schools. By pairing teams with individual classrooms, our adult adopters expose the students to a breadth of experiences and training to be job and career ready. For the organization, this engagement fosters a culture of teamwork and increased knowledge of our community's needs & the challenges faced by our youth.

Our Vision: A Greater Cincinnati where all students have access to caring adults who expose them to a breadth of life and career experiences so they can unleash their full potential.

Who We Serve: Elementary and Secondary students (Pre-K - 8th grade) in schools where at least 75% of the students receive free & reduced lunch. On average, 92% of the students we serve are eligible for free or reduced meals.

How We Work: Adopting teams visit their classroom for **1 hour once a month**, during the school day between September and May, where they engage in **educational activities**. The teams also coordinate **field trips and pen pal** with the students to spur conversation, build awareness and deepen learning.

Best Practices

Establish a positive relationship with your class by:

- Creating mutual trust and respect. Be on time. Follow through with promised visits or email teacher in advance if you need to cancel a visit so he/she can prepare the class.
- Maintaining regular interaction and consistent support. Schedule team visit to the classroom once a month. If you cannot make a visit, make sure your team does have enough members available to keep the 1 to 4 ratio. Many of the students in our program do not receive enough stability from the adults in their lives; adopters can help fill this void with dependable, sincere, and consistent attention and concern.
- Making your time together enjoyable and fun!

Be mindful of communication. Do not make comments of any kind that relate to a student's physical appearance, development, financial or life situation. Remain neutral and non-judgmental.

No physical contact. Encouragement and friendship should be conveyed through words and gestures, not through touching.

Set Limits. The AAC program ***is to take place in a group setting at all times*** under the supervision of the classroom teacher or identified school staff person. ***At no time should an AAC adopter be alone with a student.***

Adopter Agreements

- Adopters will follow all school, district and program policies and procedures.

- No adopter will go on or participate in the field trip unless they have visited their classroom in the school and checked in through the schools designated security system (i.e. LobbyGuard, Raptor, background checks).
- Adopters will maintain strict confidentiality concerning information they learn about students and staff, including student grades, records, abilities, and life/family situation.
- Adopters will not discipline students. Report discipline problems to the teacher.
- Adopters will not supervise a classroom or give permission for a student to leave a classroom.
- Adopters will set a good example for students in their manner, appearance, and behavior.
- Adopters will not take photographs of students, unless given permission by the teacher. Adopters will not post any student photographs or student information on social media without permission from the teacher.
- Adopters will not interact with any student outside of our program.
- Adopters will not give their contact information to any student nor shall they take contact information from students.
- Adopters will not transport students in vehicles.
- Adopters may not use their time in the classroom to promote partisan politics, religious matters, or other personal affiliation.

Adopters Must Never:

- Leave the classroom with a student.
- Transport any student in a car.
- Escort any student to the restroom.
- Be alone with any student for any reason.

While engaging in the program, Adopters will not engage in:

- Discriminatory or racist statements or behaviors.
- The use of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Any unlawful activity.
- The carrying of a firearm.
- Sexual harassment including jokes, innuendos, insults, sexist or sexual remarks, the display of derogatory or pornographic pictures, leering, touching or kissing.

Volunteer Dismissal

AAC will reassign or dismiss volunteers when such action is in the best interest of AAC, the volunteer, the student and/or the school. Possible reasons for dismissal may include:

- Refusal to attend required trainings.
- Excessive lateness.
- Disclosure of confidential information.
- The use of drugs, alcohol or other inappropriate substances.
- Involvement in any illegal activities.
- Failure to adhere to any AAC or school policies, guidelines or procedures.
- Engaging in any of the prohibited behaviors specified above or any behavior deemed inappropriate by program administrators.

Reporting Process

If any adopter has any questions or concerns about their time in the classroom, questions about appropriate behavior of ANY volunteer in the program, or any complaints about inappropriate behavior by another volunteer, a student, teacher, or AAC representative, he or she should contact Julie Shifman, AAC Executive Director, at julie@aacmentors.org.

Safety Agreement

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What do I do if there is more than one team lead on my team?

- a. Each team lead is required to sign off on the agreement page, but only one team lead needs to submit the list of team members.
2. What should I do if we want to add a new member to our team?
 - a. If you would like to add a new person to your team, they must go through New Adopter Orientation (either in person or the video [via this link](#)), read the safety agreement and then the team lead should send an email to Marie Rusincovitch, AAC's COO at marie@aacmentors.org with the new team members name, phone number and email address.
3. What do I do if I get to the school and the LobbyGuard machine isn't working?
 - a. Follow directions from the school's front desk staff and notify Marie Rusincovitch, AAC's COO at marie@aacmentors.org who will work with the school to address the broken machine.
4. Can someone go on a field trip who hasn't been on a classroom visit?
 - a. No. Anyone participating in a field trip must have gone on at least one classroom visit AND gone through the front office security procedures (LobbyGuard/Raptor/background check).
5. Can Adopters serve as chaperones on field trips?
 - a. Usually, no. The only exception is if they have gone through independent background checks administered by the schools.
6. Who do I contact with questions?
 - a. For questions about the safety agreement or any other aspect of the AAC program, please contact Marie Rusincovitch, AAC's COO at 513.604.7743 or marie@aacmentors.org.

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