



YSO Policy: Appropriate Clothing and Attire

BE SAFE recognizes the utility of an “Appropriate Clothing and Attire Policy”, but raises caution because of the complicated gender politics surrounding dress and appearance. The clothing choices of girls’ and gender non-conforming young people are more often scrutinized than boys. Young people are often told that their outfits are “distracting” to others or that by dressing in a certain manner they will attract negative attention. This attitude puts the onus of responsibility onto potential victims while, letting potential perpetrators off the hook for their harassing behavior. It is an individual’s responsibility to refrain from assaulting, and the community’s responsibility to support survivors of sexual violence and hold assailants accountable for sexual violence. Clothing policies should not reinforce double standards for young people based on gender.

This policy is from a recreational fitness program for youth. For this policy, BE SAFE recommends the following:

- Specify “prejudiced ideology” to align with a program’s discrimination policy;
- Write procedures that specify consequences.

Policy:

Clothing style is a widely used form of self-expression and a means through which individuals convey their identities. Program X fully supports this ideal and believes in upholding one’s freedom to use clothing as a form of self-expression. However, foremost, Program X is a public place; therefore clothing must be acceptable for such settings. Additionally, because Program X is a fitness program, appropriate clothing must be worn for physical activity. Outfits should not contain images or words that will induce altercations, and should promote a safe environment.

- a. Pants and shorts must sit at the waist or just below.
- b. Boxers and underwear must be fully covered.
- c. Pant legs must be worn at the same length.
- d. Shirts and shoes are required at all times.
- e. Clothing advertising sex, drugs, alcohol, profanity, **hateful sentiments, gang-related** and prejudiced (**racist, sexist, homophobic, or able-ist**) ideology either in written or graphic form is prohibited.
- f. Clothing should cover mid-drift.
- g. Clothing should fit properly for physical activity.
- h. Rags or clothing with gang related colors or symbols are prohibited, with the exception of bandanas used on the sports courts to absorb sweat.

Procedure:

- a. If someone upon entering the facility is in violation of the dress code they will be asked to immediately fix the violation.
- b. If they are unable or unwilling to do so, they will be given a warning by staff and be notified of consequences if behavior occurs again.
- c. **After the initial warning, consequences include a call to the individual’s guardian and a second warning that if the behavior continues, the individual will be prohibited from participating in program activities.**

