



YSO Policy: Medication Administration to Youth

Young people are on a variety of medications to control everything from asthma to ADHD and may need to access these medications while at your program. Agencies must meet basic, legal requirements for policies regarding medicine distribution. Many states have policies regarding medication administration in schools, but these policies do not always include Out-of-School Time programs. Check the legal requirements in your state regarding medication distribution to minors, as there are no national laws regarding medication distribution. It is important to have a person on staff who is trained in medication administration to avoid errors that could have dangerous consequences. BE SAFE suggests additional procedures and policy considerations that go beyond the basic legal requirements.

This policy is from a handbook for after-school youth programs. For this policy, BE SAFE recommends the following:

- Specify that the medication submission procedure is required for *each medication* parents/guardians submit for youth so that your organization has a complete understanding of the young person's needs;
- Consider making an exception for Birth Control pills (contraceptives) and STI prophylaxes and treatment, as well as Epi-pens and inhalers. (*Twenty-one states do not require parent/guardian permission for youth to access contraceptives or other sexual health related care, and in these states, youths' privacy should be protected. Check the laws in your state regarding youths' access to contraceptives.*) Consider whether or not it makes sense for youth to submit these medications through the same medical release policy in your organization.
- Include a procedure for dealing with medication sharing. For example:
 - *Inhalers, Epi-pens, birth control pills, and STI prophylaxes as exceptions must remain with the youth at all times, in the original pharmacy container with the original label and name. Youth are prohibited from sharing inhalers, Epi-pens, birth control pills, and STI prophylaxes with others. If a youth shares any medication in their possession, the youth's parent/guardian will be notified immediately and youth will receive a warning that they will be dismissed if this behavior persists.*
- Include a procedure for dealing with consequences of youth bringing unauthorized medications to the program. For example:
 - *If a youth is discovered to have any unauthorized medication in their possession (anything other than an Epi-pen, inhaler, birth control pills, or STI prophylaxes), the medication is considered an illegal drug, and will be met with appropriate consequences (See Drug and Alcohol Policy).*
- Include a policy that addresses youths' refusal to take medication. There could be multiple reasons for why a young person refuses medication, and compliance in medication administration should not be assumed. For example:
 - *If a youth is required to take a medication and refuses, the Program Site Manager will determine the reason of refusal and handle the situation on a case-by-case basis. If necessary, the youth's parent/guardian and/or doctor will be notified of the refusal.*
 - *If the Program Site Manager determines that the young person's reason for refusal is valid, (for example, if a young person's parent/guardian is forcing them to take the medication) the Program Site Manager will contact their immediate supervisor to determine if the situation requires a report be made to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) (Child Protective Services in other states, CPS) (See Mandated Reporting Policy).*

Most states do not have a state-wide policy on Medication administration outside of schools, and rely on organizations to develop their own policies.





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Our program will administer medication to youth only after receiving a completed medication release form from the parent/guardian. The medication form will be checked for completion by the Program's Site Manager. For each youth receiving medication at the program, the release form will include:

- a. The name of the medication
- b. The illness or condition being treated
- c. The dosage
- d. The route of administration
- e. The times and dates to be administered
- f. The parent/guardian signature

The program will only have medication administered to youth by trained staff. The staff will be trained to:

- a. Check the label and confirm the name of the youth
- b. Read the directions regarding administration of medication
- c. Properly document administration of medication
- d. The Program Site Manager will report any adverse reactions to a medication or error in administration to the parent/legal guardian. This will be reported immediately upon recognizing the error or reaction.

All medications will be kept in a secure location not accessible to youth. Medications stored in refrigerators will be in a covered container with a tight fitting lid. For over the counter and prescription medications, they must:

- a. Be in the original or pharmacy container
- b. Have the original label
- c. Include the youth's name
- d. Have child-proof lids
- e. Have instructions for administration

