

POLICIES, EXPECTATIONS & COMMUNITY VALUES

We are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and creative environment for all participants. We want you to know that you are trusted and respected by AIR staff from the start. In order to provide the best place for teens to grow, thrive, and feel safe to express their creativity we strongly enforce our behavioral policies. These policies are designed to keep all participants physically and emotionally safe.



KINDNESS & COMMUNITY

AIR is dedicated to building inclusive, creative community.

At AIR, we take kindness seriously. We do not think that everyone will leave as best friends, but we do expect you to listen and respect all staff and teens. We do our best to practice the idea that people with differing (and sometimes conflicting) beliefs, faiths, and backgrounds can coexist in one flourishing community. Please come to AIR ready to listen, communicate, practice respect, and expect the best from those around you.

FIVE AREAS OF AWARENESS

Please treat these topics with sensitivity and mindfulness:

- 1. COLLABORATION not COMPETITION**— At AIR we don't think that participation in the arts has to be competitive. Our programs don't include auditions or artistic contests. There will be times when you learn from other people in the group, and times where you are sharing and teaching. Please try to collaborate and value the people around you rather than comparing and competing.
- 2. NEGATIVE TALK ABOUT OTHERS & OURSELVES**— Speaking badly about other people (in or outside of our AIR group) can create division and doesn't allow us to build a safe community. Talking negatively about ourselves or being very self deprecating can also be harmful to the group. If you are struggling with something or want to voice concern please do it without putting yourself down.
- 3. SHARING about TRAUMAS** —Please think carefully about how you choose to share very difficult issues with the group. If you have experienced any form of abuse or a different type of traumatic event, please make sure you are working with caring adults on these issues and refrain from sharing about them in detail at AIR. We are here to support you. AIR staff members are here if you would like to talk about this more, or if you have any questions.
- 4. CRUEL or HARMFUL LANGUAGE**—At AIR, we do not use words that are hurtful, condescending, or cruel. We are going to practice choosing our words wisely. Do not use language that judges people or puts people down based on ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, or socioeconomic status.
- 5. GIVE IT A TRY!**—AIR only feels like a fun and safe space when everyone commits to staying present, fully participating, and being sincere. If an activity or lesson doesn't interest you or seems too silly or weird at first, please still give it a try! We understand that there is a difference between not wanting to do something, and feeling too anxious or upset to do something. Different things may be challenging or uncomfortable for different people. Please communicate with the AIR staff if you are feeling especially nervous or anxious and we will work through it together.

A NOTE ON BEHAVIOR RULES

We want you to know that AIR staff trusts and respects you from the start. In most cases behavioral issues can be resolved through conversations. The following behavioral rules are in place as a safeguard - we do not typically need to use this warning system and these rules are not typically the focus of AIR programs.

SERIOUS BEHAVIORS & CONSEQUENCES

- Serious teasing
- Swearing/hurtful language
- Expressing anger with violence
- Rudeness to staff or peers
- Gossiping/talking negatively about others
- Cliques behavior (excluding others)
- Using electronics without permission
- Unexcused Absence
- Negativity/ refusing to participate

If an AIR participant practices unacceptable behaviors while at AIR, a warning will be given. After 3 warnings an AIR staff member will speak with the teen and contact a parent or guardian to talk about the best next step.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS & CONSEQUENCES

- Vandalism of materials or facility
- Verbal or physical violence, intimidation, or aggression
- Harassment/bullying
- Possession or use of weapons
- Stealing
- Verbal or physical threats
- Being in possession or under the influence of drugs/alcohol

Engaging in a serious tolerance behavior is results in the equivalent of three warnings. Parents will be contacted immediately, and the teen will most likely be dismissed from AIR programs.

OTHER PROGRAM POLICIES

DRESS CODE

Our dress code is about being able to fully and comfortably participate in all activities. Please don't wear clothing that has inappropriate writing or images, or that hinders your participation. If you are in a program with a lot of movement or messy materials you are welcome to bring clothes to change into for AIR.

NUTRITION

AIR programs may be long and active, so please remember to eat food and drink water. AIR provides snacks during programs. We're here to help! Please let an AIR staff member know if you or your family needs help getting enough food.

GUESTS

Family and friends are welcome to attend final showcases free of charge. Otherwise, program sessions and field trips are just for participating teens.

CELL PHONES

There is no cell phone use while at AIR. We want everyone to stay present, and take a break from technology. Cell phones should be kept out of site and not checked or used during program time. Appropriate cell phone use is permitted with specific permission.

COMMITMENT

We take attendance at AIR seriously because we want you to be able to focus on your creativity and be part of our community. Please give notice if you are going to be late, leave early or be absent. More than three missed days may result in being asked to exit the AIR program.

Thank you for respecting these policies. Please let an AIR staff member know if you have any questions or suggestions!