

CoDA's Minimum Behavioral and Safety Requirements for CoDAteen

To ensure the safety of CoDAteen members, at the recommendation of the CoDA Board of Trustees and the CoDAteen Committee, all CoDA members who work with CoDAteens are required to be sponsored and approved by an adult CoDA group, intergroup, region, or voting entity and meet the qualifications listed below.

Through group conscience, a sponsoring group is required to adopt a process to approve adult hosts/sponsors who work with CoDAteen members and register with CoDA World. The approval process must meet the minimum requirements listed below.

1. Every adult CoDA member or host/sponsor involved with CoDAteen service **must**:
 - Be a CoDA member regularly attending CoDA meetings who has a sponsor and is working the CoDA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions according to the CoDA program of recovery.
 - Be at least 25 years old with a minimum of three years of recovery in CoDA and has participated in CoDA service work.
 - Not have been convicted of a felony.
 - Not have been charged with any form of child abuse.
 - Not have been charged or demonstrated any inappropriate sexual behavior or be named on any sex offender list.
 - Demonstrate emotional stability and sobriety.
 - Remain free from mind altering substances during meetings and service work.
 - Not have demonstrated violent tendencies or coercive abuse that could harm a CoDAteen member.
2. There must be two CoDA hosts/sponsors at every CoDAteen meeting, but if this is not possible, one adult host/sponsor who is approved and sponsored by a CoDA group and meets all other requirements may be acceptable.
3. The group requirements must prohibit overt or covert sexual interaction between any adult and a CoDAteen member.
4. The group requirements must prohibit conduct contrary to applicable laws. Research your local area for requirements according to the law.
5. The group requirements must contain procedures which include parental permission and medical care for the teen to participate when necessary. In some circumstances, it might be possible to accept a referral from a counselor, teacher, or doctor. (*See sample Parental Permission Letter in Section 5- Service Forms in the CoDAteen Handbook*).
6. Adopt a process for training adult hosts/sponsors using recommendations and resources from CoDAteen on coda.org.
7. Adopt a process for addressing problem behaviors within the group, using recommendations and resources from CoDAteen on coda.org

Other points for groups to think about or consider are:

1. Requiring two CoDA hosts/sponsors at every CoDAteen meeting.
2. Having background checks, many areas require this by law to work with minors.
3. Deciding on age ranges for your group. In general, CoDAteen is for “teens” ages 13 to 18, however there may be younger children who are ready for CoDAteen who can participate safely in a sharing and learning experience. Each group may decide through group conscience on an acceptable age range, or they may decide to divide their meetings based on the age range. It is encouraged that older teens begin to attend CoDA adult meetings while still attending CoDAteen meetings to have a smooth transition or they may form a “young adult” CoDA group.
4. Connecting CoDAteen conferences or conventions with CoDA intergroups,-regions, or voting entities.
5. Hosting a CoDAteen meeting that meets at the same time and place as the sponsoring CoDA meeting or group.
6. Being conscious about gender diversity.
7. Avoiding one-on-one interactions.
8. Always having an appropriate ratio of CoDA adults to CoDAteen members.
9. Ways CoDAteen members can be transported to and from events.
10. Organizing informational and awareness activities for example, inviting CoDA speakers, setting up workshops, and/or information booths etc. about codependency for teens, adult hosts/sponsors and/or the community.
11. Having local legal counsel review the group requirements for working with minors

The coda.org website has many resources and free downloads to help, including CoDAteen Meeting Handbook found on the CoDAteen webpage at www.coda.org.