August 3, 2012

Dear Program Operator:

I am writing to you because you have been identified as an individual affiliated with an on or off-campus program or activity for minors that is associated with Boston University.

The University requires anyone who works with minors on or off-campus to adhere to all appropriate standards of conduct with regard to minors, their families, and each other. Program staff at Boston University accept a legal duty to conduct their programs/activities in a manner that assures the safety and well-being of all participants. In order to assure that the University maintains a safe environment for all members of the BU community and beyond, including minor children under the age of 18, the following guidelines and standards of conduct will apply for all program/activity operators and employees.

1. **Criminal and Sex Offender Background Checks**: All programs are responsible for having a policy in place that mandates successful completion of a criminal and sexual offender background check before any employee or volunteer is permitted to have supervision over or unaccompanied access to minors. For assistance in setting a process for these background checks, please contact either Lore Glaser (hglaser@bu.edu) or Catherine Flaherty (cmflhrty@bu.edu) in Human Resources.

2. **Insurance Requirements**: All programs that are not run directly by Boston University must carry appropriate insurance that meets requirements designated by the Office of Risk Management. At a minimum, such programs shall carry General Liability insurance with limits of at least $1 million per occurrence, including coverage for Sexual Abuse or Molestation.

3. **Appropriate Behavior and Boundaries with Minors**: All program/activity staff, must avoid being alone with a minor, particularly in areas that are not part of the regular daily operation of the program/activity, such as vehicles and/or isolated areas or rooms on campus. If a meeting with a minor must take place in an office, keep the door open and have another staff member in the room, whenever possible. Never be alone with a child in a dorm room or a staff member’s room. Never shower or change clothes around minors, or in an area that is accessible to children. Avoid any physical contact with minors that could be misinterpreted: an occasional pat on the back, or a touch on the arm to get one’s attention is acceptable; back rubs, massages, tickling, rough-house play and caressing or intimate touching is inappropriate and unacceptable. Do not take photographs of children for personal use. If staff is given photographs of children, do not post them on social networking sites or publish them in any other form. Families must give written consent to a program/activity operator before any photographs of their child can be used or published publicly.

4. **Communication with Minors**: If it is necessary to take a minor aside for a private conversation relating to behavior or some other issue s/he wants to discuss, do so in full view of other people, or in the presence of a second adult. During conversation, do not disclose confidential information about yourself or seek to learn confidential information
about the minor (particularly about sex, sexual orientation, and physical or emotional intimacy). Use words with care: never berate, harass, intimidate, degrade or belittle a child. Issue praise appropriately, and avoid excessive praise or criticism of any minor. Do not tell sexually-oriented or off-color jokes to or in the presence of minors. Also remember that young children interpret information in concrete ways and they typically do not understand idioms or abstract language. Using concrete language will help to avoid any misinterpretations or confusion on the part of the minor.

If you suspect or have reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, or if a child confides in you that s/he has been abused or neglected, you must immediately report your concerns to the Boston University Police Department (617/353-2121) or phone the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (formerly Department of Social Services) Child-At-Risk hotline: (800/792-5200).

Please go to the link below for assistance on how to move forward with this process. The Background Check Process is the first link on the webpage. Thank you for your attention to these important guidelines. Please contact me with any questions.

http://www.bu.edu/hr/home/forms/background-check-forms/

Sincerely,

Peter Fiedler
Vice President for Administrative Services

cc: Vice Presidents & Deans