Electronic Communication Between Staff/Volunteers/Students and Participant: Any private electronic communication between university staff, students, or volunteers and participants, including the use of social media sites is generally not permitted.

In certain circumstances, communicating with a participant via email or another source of communication may be necessary. If such circumstances, you must receive express, written permission from the participant's parent or legal guardian and the director of the program in advance. The written permission should be given to the program director and even if permission is granted, the program director shall be included on communications.

The following are examples of appropriate and inappropriate electronic communication, not meant to be exhaustive:

Appropriate Electronic Communication	Inappropriate Electronic Communication
• Sending and replying to emails and text messages from participants **ONLY** when copying in a supervisor or participant's parent/guardian	• Private messages between staff and volunteers with participants under 18
• Communicating through official organization social media pages or other approved public forums	• Direct messaging through social media sites • Posting pictures of participants on personal social media sites/pages • Posting inappropriate comments on pictures related
• Social media profiles set to private so that participants cannot access personal information.	• Individual "friending" or "following" of program participants on social networking sites
	• Harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating comments
	• Sexually oriented conversations

General Reminders about Electronic Communications

- All communications sent electronically (email, social networking sites or platforms, notes, texts, or posts, etc.) are NOT CONFIDENTIAL and can be shared or reposted to others.
- Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or youth apply in the electronic world as they do in the physical world. Report any suspicion of abuse, neglect, or exploitation immediately.

Available Platforms for Electronic Communications

Be sure to obtain permission from parents or guardians to communicate with participants under the age of 18 before using the following or any other forms of communication.

1. **Email Messaging:** As much as possible, send mass emails to communicate with participants, and avoid sending individual emails. Always include another adult when messaging an individual. Save sent email

messages and keep a transcript of online exchanges. Use e-newsletter blasts to communicate with participants and parents.

2. **Zoom:** When conducting online meetings review the rules for using Zoom (programs-minors.yale.edu/rules-zoom). The private chat function must be disabled.

3. **Remind:** A group texting application used by participants and adults. Use Remind to text the group, share documents and links, and any other program content. This is an effective tool for mass communication to the entire community of participants, parents, and other adults. This is primarily used as a one-way communication tool, although there is a feature that allows users to respond. Users subscribe using the unique code assigned to your Remind account. Use the Messenger app to respond to inquiries only and not for personal communication. All inquiries should remain visible and not deleted after communication is completed, and multiple staff members should have access as account administrators.

4. **GroupMe:** A good group messaging tool for communicating with participants and adults. It is an effective way to share documents and links, and to conduct polls. Create one group for the participants and a separate group for the staff and volunteers of the program. Include at least two adults in the participant's GroupMe group. Use the Messenger app to respond to inquiries only and not for personal communication. All inquiries should remain visible and not deleted after communication is completed, and multiple staff members should have access as account administrators.

5. **Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.):** All social media contact must be made via official program/University social media accounts. Individual/private social media accounts may not be used for programmatic purposes. Do not share your private accounts with my minors. Never take or use photographs or videos of minors for personal use, including posting them on social networking sites or publishing them in any other form.