

# Volunteer Information



Heartspring

# Heartspring Information

**Thank you for volunteering your time and talents to make an impact on children with special needs in our community!**

## **Mission**

Our mission, in partnership with parents, professionals, and the community, is to be a leader and innovator in providing clinically supported services through education and therapies for children with special needs to empower them to grow and learn on a path to a more independent life.

## **Vision**

Creating hope and opportunity that changes the lives of children with special needs and their families

## **Our Story**

Heartspring, located in Wichita, Kansas, began in 1934 as a not-for-profit institution, serving children with speech defects and disorders. Today, Heartspring provides a wide range of services and therapies through several programs, including the Heartspring School and Heartspring Pediatric Services.

The Heartspring School is a therapeutic residential and day school program for children with severe developmental disabilities from across the United States. Many of these children cannot be served adequately through programs in their home school districts and look to Heartspring for its unique individualized programming, which utilizes evidence-based and emerging best practices. Students often have multiple diagnoses, including autism spectrum disorders, cerebral palsy, speech and language impairments, visual impairments and other developmental disabilities.

Additionally, the Heartspring School offers training and consultation services to parents and professionals within the United States and around the world. Through its international outreach efforts, Heartspring professionals attend international conferences and work collaboratively with individuals from other organizations to forge a brighter pathway for children with special needs worldwide.

Heartspring's Pediatric Services offers occupational, physical and speech therapies, audiology, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and psychological services to children ages birth to 21. As an outpatient comprehensive facility, Heartspring Pediatric Services follows medical model practices and works with families and other professionals from Wichita and the surrounding communities to ensure progress across multiple settings. Therapists use hands-on therapeutic interventions in an individualized setting, while teaching families how to continue therapy at home and in the community. Additional community services include autism outreach efforts for children and young adults on the autism spectrum. Programs consist of a summer day camp, weekly social groups, and consultation services for families and training for businesses to provide greater opportunity to those impacted by autism spectrum disorders.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact **Bianca Velo**, Volunteer Coordinator and Administrative Assistant for the Director of Development, at **316-634-8791** or **bvelo@heartspring.org**.

**Heartspring**

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Wichita, KS 67226

316-634-8700

[www.heartspring.org](http://www.heartspring.org)

# **Volunteer Information**

## **Application/Background Check**

All volunteers that are interested in volunteering on our campus and working directly with our students or children must complete a volunteer application available online ([www.heartspring.org/support/volunteer-application](http://www.heartspring.org/support/volunteer-application)). Once an application is received, a background check will be run on all volunteers 18 and over. When the background check is cleared, the volunteer will be notified and given additional information on volunteering.

Those volunteering for special events will not need a background check. Information about special event volunteer opportunities will be sent via email. Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian.

## **Boundaries/Interactions**

Each child responds to situations differently, and many of our students have particular behavior challenges or sensory issues. We ask that you maintain professional boundaries with the children/students. Ask your supervisor if you are unsure about certain interactions.

## **Behavioral Interventions**

Staff members are trained to deal with certain behaviors and may at times ask you to remove yourself from a potentially difficult situation. Please respect the quick actions of our staff in these circumstances as they may seem a bit harsh or aggressive. Do not try to intervene or aid in a behavioral intervention as our staff have gone through intensive training to manage these situations.

## **Cell Phones**

Please do not use your cell phone in the classrooms or when working with children. If necessary, please step out of the classroom or move to an appropriate area to use your phone. We also ask all phones be placed in silent mode.

## **Check-In**

All volunteers will check in upon arrival of shift assigned. For on campus opportunities please check in at the front desk of the building you enter. You will be asked to wear a volunteer badge and sign a release when you check in. Upon completion of task or shift, return to desk to sign out and please contact us if you are unable to fulfill a volunteer assignment or are unable to serve due to illness.

At special events, there will be a designated Volunteer Check-In area. All volunteers must check-in and out at this area in order to receive credit for any service hours. If unable to fulfill a volunteer position for a special event, please notify the volunteer coordinator as soon as possible.

## **Child Abuse and/or Neglect**

If at any time while working in the Heartspring school you suspect that a student has been a victim of physical, mental, emotional or sexual abuse and/or neglect you are required to report it to your supervisor (see Reporting of Suspected Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation policy). This may be a classroom teacher or another Heartspring employee. A staff member will then take the necessary steps to ensure we handle the situation accordingly.

Reports are confidential and under no circumstances should the parent or guardian be notified or photos taken by the volunteer.

### **Contact Information**

Heartspring collects information from volunteers in order to match them with the most appropriate opportunity. Your contact information is entered into our database so that we can contact you regarding future volunteer opportunities. Please inform us of any changes in your information so that we may provide the best volunteer experience for you.

### **Dress Code**

We ask that volunteers dress appropriately while representing Heartspring and maintain a modest, clean appearance. For special events, specific attire will be communicated with volunteers.

### **Harassment**

Harassment of any kind, including discrimination, psychological and sexual harassment, physical violence and threats, will not be tolerated on campus or at special events. Volunteers will be immediately released from their duties and will not be allowed to volunteer in the future.

### **Photography**

For their privacy, we ask that you refrain from taking pictures of the children and students that you are working with, unless you receive permission from your supervisor. We also request that volunteers sign a media release allowing us to use photos/video of you volunteering.

### **Safe Environment**

Heartspring campus is a peanut-free campus, meaning all peanuts and related products are not allowed in any Heartspring buildings. Please refrain from bringing any food items that may contain these products.

Drugs, tobacco, and weapons are also forbidden on Heartspring property. Failure to comply with these policies is means for immediate dismissal.

If you need to discontinue your volunteer position, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator. Heartspring reserves the right to terminate a volunteer at any time. We welcome feedback from our volunteers as well as referrals for new volunteers. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us by phone, email, or mail.

## **Confidentiality**

Heartspring Regulations regarding confidentiality are mandated by State and Federal Law.

As a Heartspring volunteer working in an area where you come into contact with written or spoken information and data regarding our students or clients, it is imperative that you always keep in mind your responsibility to keep this information confidential.

The information concerning an individual student or client is to be shared only with those who have a demonstrable "need to know. Giving exact information about a student or client's

particular behaviors, diagnosis or other protected information is violating confidentiality even if a name is not given.

You are **breaking confidentiality** when:

1. You discuss a student with:
  - Another student's parent
  - Your neighbor
  - A friend
  - Any individual employed or not employed at Heartspring that is not on the student's team
2. You pass along information about a student that you overheard.
3. You do not destroy personally identifiable material appropriately before you dispose of it.
4. You leave personally identifiable material lying in an unguarded area.
5. Post student's pictures, names, information about behaviors or personal information on your personal/public social networking sites. (I.e. Facebook, YouTube, MySpace, etc.)
6. Utilize your cell phone to take pictures of the students and send them to other individuals.
7. Take pictures of students for your personal use and keep them in your home.

When you breach confidentiality you are breaking the personal conduct and confidentiality policies, as well as state and federal rules designated to protect patient confidentiality. This can be grounds for disciplinary action and/or dismissal of the volunteer.

**I have read, understand, and have received a copy of the Confidentiality policy of Heartspring.**

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**Your Signature**

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**Date**

# Reporting of Suspected Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation

Sponsor: School

Effective Date: 08.01.2015

Revised: 06.16.2016

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## Policy Objective

Heartspring School seeks to protect its students from abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation. This policy defines the different types of abuse/neglect/exploitation (ANE), and defines the responsibilities of Heartspring employees for reporting any suspected cases.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Heartspring staff and volunteers.

## Definitions

**Physical abuse** – defined as a non-accidental physical injury to a child. The most obvious signs are: multiple or extensive bruises, bruises shaped like hand prints, belts or hangers, burns, soreness, unexplained swellings, bald spots that might indicate hair pulling, overreaction to being touched.

**Physical neglect** – defined as a failure by the caretaker to meet the child's basic physical needs. Signs include: dirty clothing, unclean (poor hygiene), inordinate hunger, severe fatigue, inappropriate dress for the weather, craving affection.

**Emotional abuse** – refers to belittling, rejecting, and in general, not providing a positive, living atmosphere for the child. Yelling at the child, calling the child names, making fun of the child, and teasing the child could all be considered emotional abuse if extreme or continuous.

**Sexual abuse** – defined as a sexual act (including, but not limited to: petting, masturbation, intimate kissing, as well as intercourse) that is forcibly imposed, coerced, or consensual between any Heartspring staff and any Heartspring student or client. Other examples may include verbal and/or visual forms of contact and/or stimulation, such as comments, pictures, magazines, and movies that are sexual in nature. Possible indications of sexual abuse may include, but are not limited to: bruising around the mouth, anus, or vagina, frequent urinary tract infections, in-depth sexual play, seductiveness toward others, or inordinate fear of persons of one sex.

**Exploitation** – defined as misappropriations of a person's property or intentionally taking unfair advantage of a person's physical or financial resources for another individual's personal or financial advantage, by the use of undue influence, coercion, harassment, duress, deception, false representation, or false pretense by a caretaker or another person.

Examples of exploitation may include but not be limited to the following: using a student's items for personal satisfaction/gain, personal items missing such as clothing, jewelry, or other personal property, infrequent or inaccurate financial recordkeeping, items charged to the person's account that he/she is not likely to want or use, etc.

## **General Procedure**

### **The Law**

All Heartspring employees are required by law to report suspected child abuse, neglect or exploitation to the proper authorities. Failure to do so can result in criminal charges (fine and jail sentence). The law protects these persons (mandated reporters) if they make a report in "good faith" or "have good reasons to suspect abuse or neglect." A report can be made anonymously, but it may be thrown out of court.

### **Employee Responsibilities**

1. If a Heartspring employee or volunteer witnesses or suspects an abusive act involving a Heartspring student (whether a child or an adult), they should tell the person doing it to stop.
2. After ensuring that the student is safe, the employee or volunteer should report the incident within 24 hours. This can be done one of two ways:
  - a. **PREFERRED METHOD:** Report the incident using the online form on the Heartspring Intranet. Go to: Request Report > Abuse Neglect Report. Fill out the form completely and notify the designated investigator as indicated at the top of the form. If you need to login to the Intranet from off-campus, use the following web address: <https://inside.heartspring.org>.
  - b. **ALTERNATE METHOD:** Report the incident directly to the Kansas Protection Report Center at 1-800-922-5330, which is part of the Department of Children and Family Services. Telephone lines are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
3. Depending on the incident, staff may be directed to take the student to the Health Office for examination (or a nurse can be requested to come to the student's location).
4. Once a report has been submitted and screened in, the ANE Investigation procedures will begin and an investigation will take place. (See ANE Investigation document.)

**Note:** The presence of one symptom, in isolation, may not constitute the existence of abuse, neglect or exploitation. In such situations, Heartspring employees are directed to promptly communicate to their supervisors their observations or concerns and immediately submit an Abuse/Neglect/Dignity/Respect Reporting form online in order to respond in a manner that protects the safety and welfare of the children and staff involved.

### **Forms**

ANE Procedure (attached)