

# MEDIA POLICY HANDBOOK



Youth Haven, Inc.  
5867 Whitaker Rd, Naples, FL 34112  
Media Policy Handbook



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. About Youth Haven
2. Introduction
3. Communications
4. Roles and Responsibilities
5. Graphic Standards
6. Social Media Policy
7. Media Guidelines
8. Public Information

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - Process for sending out Press Releases
- Appendix 2 - Process for Press Inquiry
- Appendix 3 - Templates
- Appendix 4 - Employee Handbook
- Appendix 5 - Editorial Calendar



**MISSION**

Protect and empower children and strengthen families in Southwest Florida through comprehensive care and community collaboration.

**VISION**

Every child in Southwest Florida will grow up in a safe and nurturing environment

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Youth Haven works with the media to develop a positive public image by being knowledgeable and informed on issues regarding child welfare, teen homelessness as well as family support and counseling services.

Media inquiries should only be handled by the Director of Development, Executive Director and Marketing and Development Coordinator.

This policy ensures Youth Haven’s values are open and transparent while representing the clients of Youth Haven as well as upholding its reputation with media, external audiences and partner agencies.

**AIM**

This handbook is designed to help Youth Haven staff, board members and volunteers understand the policies and procedures in relation to media.



## **INTRODUCTION**

It is Youth Haven's policy to actively develop and maintain good relationships with the media. The Director of Development should be prepared to speak with media whenever it is appropriate. This ensures that Youth Haven maintains a consistent message to the public.

Hence forth "media" includes local and national newspapers, radio and television and electronic communications such as the internet and social media.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Adopt, wherever possible a proactive approach towards the media, by recognizing the value of the media as a means of communicating with the public
- Ensure the messages about Youth Haven are clear, consistent and positive
- Promote positive media coverage on relevant matters to the public
- Promote positive media coverage to help maintain public confidence in Youth Haven
- Effectively deal with difficult media issues

## **KEY PRINCIPLES**

- Youth Haven will protect the rights of staff, volunteers and clients
- Youth Haven will respond effectively to relevant requests for comment and information from the media in a timely manner
- Youth Haven will work with partner agencies, organizations and local authorities to ensure we communicate in an open and consistent way, avoiding conflicting messages



## **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

External communications are necessary to attract and retain donors, raise public awareness and increase understanding and funding for the organization.

It is essential that external communications are clear, consistent and positive, and the policies set forth in this handbook are followed by all staff, volunteers and board members.

Public understanding of Youth Haven's policies and programs is facilitated by establishing solid relationships with the media. These relationships are solidified by providing honest and helpful information in a timely fashion in an atmosphere of mutual respect as coordinated and facilitated by the Development Team.

## **INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Internal communications are necessary to the organization's overall effectiveness by helping inform, decision making and influence employee behavior in ways that benefit the organization, the public, and the employees themselves.

It is essential that internal communication motivates, informs and counsels employees and volunteers and to set the stage for excellent external communication. The Development Team is responsible for providing news and information to the staff, volunteers and board members.

The main goal of internal communications is to support the organization to achieve the overall goals described in the mission and strategic plan. Furthermore, internal communications shall strengthen the organizational culture and feeling of commitment among the staff, board members and volunteers.

Mutual information sharing is important to ensure efficient internal communication. Employee feedback helps managers decide if their communication has been received and understood. Employees have important operational information that can help to make the organization more successful in achieving its goals.



## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### *Director of Development*

The Director of Development has the overall responsibility of media relations. He/She acts as the main contact for the media within the organization and ensures that relevant staff members are briefed on press inquiries. He/She issues written statements on behalf of Youth Haven in response to press requests for comment.

### *Marketing and Development Coordinator*

The Marketing and Development Coordinator, in conjunction with the Director of Development, is responsible for promoting Youth Haven in the media to maintain public awareness and confidence and understanding of the organization's mission. He/She is responsible for updating the social media platforms including the website as well as coordinating with the graphic designer to ensure the brand is being conveyed to the public effectively. He/She will write and issue press releases on behalf of Youth Haven with approval of the Director of Development.

### *Community Outreach Coordinator*

The Community Outreach Coordinator is responsible for donor relations, the volunteer program as well as building new and existing relationships with community partners. He/She is the first point of contact for volunteers and community partners. He/she will maintain open communication lines with organizations and donors, providing prompt answers to requests conveying concise, clear and timely information.

### *Staff, Board Members and Volunteers*

All staff and board members of Youth Haven are responsible for informing the Director of Development of any issues which might create both negative and positive interest from the media. They are to inform the Director of Development if approached by the media for comment or a comment is made during a public meeting. Public comments could be taken as the views of Youth Haven and attract media attention. If a staff, volunteer or board member makes a comment to the media without the approval from the Director of Development he/she could be held liable for a possible outcomes of the statement made.

Staff, volunteers and board members are to adhere to editorial deadlines provided by the Director of Development or Marketing Coordinator whenever possible, and ensure that contact with the media follows the appropriate procedure.



## GRAPHIC STANDARDS

These graphic standards outline how to use all identifying elements pertaining to the organization. These include but are not limited to the logo, fonts, letterhead and marketing and advertising materials. It is critical to follow these rules and use only authorized document templates in order to convey the organization as a brand, and to do it consistently. This guide includes proprietary and confidential information. Any question about these standards should be directed to the Development Team.

- The logo is not only a symbol, but also a piece of artwork that should not be reproduced nor should it ever be altered in any way.
- The Youth Haven logo is the primary identification of our organization and as such, it should appear on all communications. \*Templates are available for documents with the correct logo usage. Use these templates when communicating internally or externally with the community.
- If you are using the logo on a non-template document, **you must have permission from the Development Team.** Be sure to size the logo proportionally to fit your materials. Never stretch or compress the logo in any way as this distorts the artwork and is no longer a true representation of the organization. See the Marketing and Development Coordinator if you need assistance with proper resizing.
- The Youth Haven logo should be used in its color format of blue on a white background. When a color format is not practical, the black or white versions may be used. The proper blue color to use is R: 0 G: 53 B: 95 or C: 100 M: 83 Y: 36 K: 27.
- Fonts, or typefaces, are also a key visual component of a brand. Youth Haven's official font is Georgia. When working on a computer without this font, use Times New Roman.

\*See Appendix 3



## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Sharing news, events or promoting employee and client work through the official Youth Haven social media accounts is an excellent way to engage the community and build the Youth Haven brand. Employees are encouraged to repost and **share information with their family and friends that is available to the public from the official Youth Haven social media accounts**. The best way to share news is to link to the original source.

When sharing information that is **not a matter of public record**, please follow the below guidelines and understand that you are responsible for what you post:

### Maintain Confidentiality

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Youth Haven. Use ethical judgment and follow the organization's policies.

### Maintain Privacy

Do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their permission. The individual must be 18 years or older and sign a release form.

### Be Aware of Liability

\*You are responsible for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. You are also responsible for complying with the existing rules of social media web sites and will be held responsible if you breach any of the organization's policies.

### Maintain Transparency

The line between professional and personal business is sometimes blurred; be thoughtful about the content and potential audiences.

### Correct Mistakes

Admit mistakes. Be upfront and quick with your correction, as well as inform the Director of Development of the mistake that was made so the development team can quickly and efficiently resolve the issue.

\*See Appendix 4





### **Social Media Guidelines when Posting as an Individual**

Employees are encouraged to share news and events, which are a matter of public record, with their family and friends from the Youth Haven social media pages. Linking straight to the information source is an effective way to help promote the organization. When you might be perceived online as an expert of Youth Haven, you need to make sure it is clear to the audience that you are not representing the position of Youth Haven.

### **Social Media Guidelines when Posting on Behalf of Youth Haven**

#### Be Accurate

Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible.

#### Be Transparent

What you say directly reflects on the organization. Discuss with your supervisor the circumstances in which you are empowered to respond directly to users and when you may need approval.

#### Be Timely

The administrator will regularly monitor postings and content of Youth Haven's social media pages. There are standard times for postings and updates. The minimum frequency of postings is once or twice a week. Do not post excessively. \*See Appendix 5

### **PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING MEDIA INQUIRIES**

If you receive an inquiry from the media you must avoid making a comment even if you are being pressed by the media unless you are told to do so by the Director of Development or the Executive Director.

If a journalist or other media person contacts anyone but the Director of Development or Executive Director, give them his/her phone number and state that the Director of Development is the only one permitted to speak with the media.

You are not to say anything to journalists which may be taken to represent Youth Haven unless you are authorized to do so by the Director of Development or Executive Director.



### **PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Staff, volunteers and board members presenting for any public meetings on behalf of Youth Haven are to use only the material given to them by the Marketing and Development Coordinator. The individual should inform the Marketing and Development Coordinator of topics which may need press statements or press releases; or any topics of potential media interest as soon as possible.

If you have attended a public meeting where the media was present and you were approached for comment or made a comment during the media that could attract media interest later or appear in the media, inform the Director of Development immediately. This is to ensure the Department Team can prepare a response or respond to any follow up inquiries.

### **PRESS RELEASES**

All press releases should be composed in conjunction with the Director of Development.

All press releases should be emailed directly to media contacts in the proper format by the Marketing and Development Coordinator.

Responses made to the press must be honest and transparent.

### **CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY**

Board members, volunteers and staff have a duty to protect confidentiality of clients. Unauthorized disclosure of personal information about any client is regarded as an extremely serious matter and could result in disciplinary action.

Youth Haven will not release information to the media about individuals unless they are 18 or older and have signed a release form.



**APPENDIX 1 - Process for sending out press releases**

- Gather information on the topic
- Using the template create a draft, review for errors and send to Director of Development to review or to add a quote if necessary.
- Make any changes that are needed
- Have Director of Development sign off
- Circulate the press release to media contacts, on the website and social media
- Circulate internally to staff through email

Media Contact: Shelly Long  
Marketing and Development Coordinator  
Direct: 239-687-5155  
Email: shelly.long@youthhavenswfl.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Title

Naples, Fla. (May 27, 2015). TEXT

For more information contact Shelly Long at shelly.long@youthhavenswfl.org or (239) 687-5155.

**About Youth Haven**

Youth Haven, a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency, is Collier County's only residential emergency shelter for boys and girls ages 6-17 who have been removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. Youth Haven also provides home-based parenting education, mental health and substance abuse prevention classes, and counseling. In 2014 Youth Haven opened a new shelter and drop in center for homeless and runaway teens. Youth Haven provides services to more than 3,000 children and family members annually, is a COA nationally accredited organization, a member agency of the United Way of Collier County, and has been in continuous operation since 1972. For more information, visit [www.youthhavenswfl.org](http://www.youthhavenswfl.org), like our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/YouthHavenShelter](http://www.facebook.com/YouthHavenShelter) and follow us on Twitter, @YouthHavenCS.

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**APPENDIX 2 - *Process for Press Inquiry***

If a press inquiry comes directly to a staff, volunteer or board member they are to give the journalist the Director of Development's phone number and tell the journalist that he/she is the only one authorized to speak with the media. The Director of Development will follow up in a timely manner.

If a press inquiry comes directly to the office, the call is to be directed to the Director of Development or the Marketing and Development Coordinator.

**APPENDIX 3 - *Templates***

The approved templates can be found on the F Drive under Marketing Templates

**APPENDIX 4 - *Employee Handbook***

Human Resources can provide a copy of the Employee Handbook

**APPENDIX 5 - *Editorial Calendar***

See the Editorial Calendar for more information on how to update the social media pages. This can be found on the F Drive under Marketing > Calendars