



Connecting Students & Volunteers
for Results that Count

Child Protection Policy

From Physical or Mental Abuse and Sexual Abuse, Misconduct, and Molestation

Heart Math Tutoring (“Heart”) does not permit actual or threatened acts of physical or mental abuse, sexual abuse, sexual molestation or sexual misconduct (“Abuse”) to occur in the workplace or at any activity sponsored by or related to Heart Math Tutoring.

In addition, Heart takes responsible steps to prevent and report known or suspected abuse occurring outside of activities sponsored by or related to Heart Math Tutoring. Abuse, as defined in this policy, includes child maltreatment, which is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as any act or series of acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and neglect. (For more information, refer to SC General Statute 63-7-310). Abuse, as defined in this policy, includes maltreatment by any adult.

In order to make this “zero – tolerance” policy clear to all employees, volunteers, and board members, Heart Math Tutoring has adopted the following mandatory procedures that all employees, volunteers, board members and victims must follow to prevent and report Abuse.

1. The Volunteer Recruitment, Training, and Screening process shall include the following:
 - a. Volunteer Application – Every volunteer working with students within the Charleston County School District (CCSD) system and/or within Heart programming is required to complete a written application that will set forth appropriate background information and expectations.
 - b. Training – During Heart’s 45-minute orientation session, and prior to working with students, the Heart Program Coordinator assigned to the prospective volunteer will deliver training covering Heart’s Tutor Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy. The Program Coordinator will ensure that all volunteers certify that they have reviewed and accept Heart’s policies by signing the Acknowledgement of Receipt of Heart’s Child Protection Policy (from Physical or Mental Abuse and Sexual Abuse, Misconduct and Molestation) and Tutor Code of Conduct. The Heart Program Coordinator will review this policy and complete this training individually with any volunteers who sign up after the commencement of the school year.
 - c. Background Check and Screening – All potential volunteers will be subject to a criminal background check conducted by CCSD or, if not volunteering within CCSD, conducted by contractors to Heart. The Heart Program Coordinator will meet and interview each prospective volunteer in a 45-minute small-group orientation session prior to the prospective volunteer working with students. During orientation, volunteers are made aware of the requirement to disclose the existence of any prior claims of inappropriate behavior with respect to youth. The background check and screening must be completed prior to interaction with youth, and the results could preclude participation in the program.
2. The Employee Recruitment, Training, and Screening process shall include the following:
 - a. Employment Application – Every prospective Heart employee working with students within the Charleston County School District (CCSD) system is required to complete a written application that will set forth appropriate background information and require disclosure of

- any prior claims or allegations of sexual abuse or other inappropriate conduct. Employees are also required to provide at least two individuals as references to the good character of the prospective employee. The Heart hiring manager is required to contact these references and confirm the good character of the prospective employee before employment begins.
- b. Training – All Heart employees will review and sign Heart’s Child Protection Policy, along with other organization policies, within the first three days of employment. All Heart employees working with students are required to complete a child abuse prevention and reporting training, annually. Training includes topics such as identifying and reporting suspected child abuse, safe practices in schools, Heart’s child protection policy, general awareness and monitoring of volunteer behavior (name tags, distance to/from tutoring locations, supervision).
 - c. Background Check and Screening – All potential employees will be subject to a criminal background check conducted by contractors to Heart, and the background check will include appropriate inquiries regarding any previous record of sexual abuse or other unlawful activity by the potential volunteer. Potential Heart employees will be asked screening questions regarding the existence of any prior claims of inappropriate behavior with respect to youth.
3. Additional Preventative Measures
- a. To the extent reasonably possible, no one adult (employee or volunteer) from Heart will be alone in a room with one student. (Spousal units are considered to be one person, for this context.)
 - b. Heart will obtain written confirmation that volunteers have completed the CCSD or Heart sponsored background check prior to volunteers working with students and at least one other time during the school year.
4. Record Retention of Policies
- a. Heart Math Tutoring will retain a copy of all signed Acknowledgements of Receipt of Physical and Mental Abuse and Sexual Abuse, Sexual Misconduct and Molestation Policy in accordance with the document retention policy of Heart Math Tutoring.
5. Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse
- a. Any adult (volunteer or staff) who becomes aware of incidents of violent or sexual offense or misdemeanor child abuse or suspected abuse is responsible for reporting the incident in accordance with applicable laws. As of 11/2019, suspicions or disclosures should be reported to the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) 24-hour, toll-free hotline at 1-888- CARE4US or 1-888-227-3487 and to Charleston Police Department (911 or CPD Crime Stoppers Tip Line 843-554-1111). Heart staff will be available to assist in making this report.
 - b. Any volunteer who becomes aware of incident of abuse or suspected abuse is required to report this to Heart’s Program Coordinator, who will also notify Heart’s Program Manager. The Program Manager will report it to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) who will report it to the Executive Director. If the incident occurred in a CCSD school, Heart Program Manager is responsible for reporting it to the appropriate school staff, including school principal. A Heart Math Tutoring internal incident report will be filed with the COO and kept on record.
 - c. The Heart Program Coordinator and Program Manager will become aware of and adhere to any policies also in place by each individual school or school district.

- d. In the event that a suspected incidence of abuse is reported alleging Abuse by a Heart volunteer or employee, the Heart volunteer or employee in question will be temporarily suspended from duties while an investigation takes place.
- e. In the event that a suspected incidence of abuse is reported, the volunteer and/or staff member making the report shall not disclose any information related to the incident to anyone other than individuals mentioned above, to include Heart staff, appropriate school staff, DSS, and law enforcement (if applicable).

6. Retaliation Prohibited

- a. Heart Math Tutoring prohibits retaliation against anyone, including an employee, volunteer, board member, student or individual, who in good faith reports Abuse. Retaliation against a participant in the investigation is also prohibited.
- b. Anyone who retaliates against someone who has made a good faith allegation of prohibited conduct or intentionally provides false information to that effect will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.