



Code of Conduct

(Approved by the AYCO/ACE Board of Directors November 2022.)

Every individual in the AYCO/ACE community - including individual members of all ages, staff, and volunteers - has the responsibility to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct and must accept appropriate responsibility for one's own behavior and report any unlawful or other inappropriate conduct of others.

Promotion of a Safe, Positive and Healthy Environment for All

Members have an ongoing obligation and commitment to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all circus participants. Consistent with this obligation, members must:

- Maintain a safe learning environment and proactively address potentially harmful behavior or unsafe situations and practices.
- Promote a culture of trust and empowerment, with a focus on student and staff health and well-being.
- Respect the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all participants.
- Comply with mandatory reporting requirements established by federal and/or state law.
- Be sensitive to any imbalance of power (including but not limited to, employer/employee, coach/student, and imbalances based on race, gender, sexual orientation, age, etc.).
- Resolve conflicts in a manner that does not cause further harm.

Commitment to Integrity

Members have a responsibility to uphold the integrity of circus arts education and to act honestly, openly, fairly, and competently.

- Members must not harass students, employees, peers, other Members, other schools, studios, or members of the public, through in person or online activities such as trolling, stalking, using hate speech, threatening, intimidating, reporting of false grievances, manipulating, or otherwise harassing in any form or manner.
- Members must not intentionally or negligently cause harm—verbally, physically, or otherwise—to students, employees, peers, other Members, or members of the public through any action, including but not limited to actions prescribed by local, state,

provincial, national, and federal laws and regulations. Sexual harm and racist harm are included in this definition.

- Members must maintain respect and refrain from intimidating or improperly influencing any individual.
- Members must avoid engaging in business practices directed toward another Member that are known to be or are determined by a court or similar adjudicatory body to be unethical, illegal or a breach of contract.
- Members must avoid making false or misleading claims; or, falsify, or omit any information, record or document or other evidence.
- Members must accurately represent professional qualifications, education, experience, eligibility, criminal record and other misconduct, and/or affiliations.

Participation and Inclusion

Members have the right to participate in any AYCO/ACE activity or event and may participate to the best of their abilities.

- Members must promote inclusion and an environment free of discrimination.
- Members may not:
 - Restrict the ability to participate in events or activities because of the person's association with a particular organization or individual or because of that person's race, sex, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, mental or physical disability, or body type.
 - Discriminate in the allocation of resources or opportunities on the basis of race, sex, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, mental or physical disability, or body type.
- Members must promote positive participation and avoid behavior that is likely to interfere with the orderly conduct of the activity or others' participation in, or enjoyment of, an activity or event.

Please view our full [Grievance Procedure](#).

To report misconduct by a current or prospective AYCO/ACE individual member, please email report@americanyouthcircus.org. Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in suspension or termination of membership. Membership may be suspended during investigation of the report. If the report indicates current or potential abuse of vulnerable people (children, the elderly, or the physically and/or intellectually disabled) or violent crime, AYCO/ACE will report to applicable state and/or federal law enforcement or government agencies.