



Art Sphere Inc.
Transforming Lives Through Art

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES SINCE 1998

Volunteer Manual



Volunteer Handbook



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Dear Volunteer,

Welcome aboard and thank you for joining the Art Sphere Inc. team on our journey to excellence!

We consider you to be a vital part of our program's efforts to improve educational systems. Enjoy each day that you spend with children and other volunteers as you help leave a legacy of creativity and hope. Thank you for being an important part of the education of our youth. We look forward to working with you and wish you success in all your endeavors.

Please spend some time reading and familiarizing yourself with the information in this handbook, which will assist you in this important role. The policies, suggestions and procedures in this handbook serve as a foundation of best practices to be applied in all our project and program locations.

Sincerely,

Kristin Groenveld

Executive Director

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About This Handbook

Welcome to the Art Sphere Inc.!

This handbook was prepared to give you some essential information about the policies and expectations of a volunteer with the Art Sphere Inc. (ASI). The handbook has been organized by topic to help you easily find the information you need. In addition, please don't hesitate to reach out to your site supervisor or the Executive Director if you have any questions about the content of this handbook.

ASI reserves the right to modify the policies in this handbook without prior notice. The policies described in this handbook replace all prior policies, handbooks, or policy guidance provided.

Thank you for giving your time and talents to help others. We hope that you find volunteering with ASI a positive and rewarding experience.

For any questions or concerns about any of the policies or information set forth in this handbook, please contact the executive director at (215) 350-1968.

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History of the Art Sphere Inc.

Founded in 1998, the Art Sphere Inc. (ASI) is a Philadelphia-based non-profit, established to teach art to inner-city low-income youth.

Mission statement

Our mission is to engage the creative in communities, empower neighborhoods to explore the positives in peoples' lives, and heal the mind, body and spirit through art.

ASI's Operating Philosophy

ASI works towards promoting a safe space and healing environment for all people. We strive to become a part of a culture that resists the urge to group individuals based on individual traits.

ASI acknowledges the fact that anyone has the ability to make a significant contribution to our mission, regardless of race/ethnicity, age, sex, orientation, religious affiliation, physical, mental and/or emotional challenges.

As allies, we know that we are imperfect and forever evolving. We are working hard to create a safer, more sensitive environment for all individuals.

ASI strives to create a label free culture. We reject the notion of pushing individuals into rigid boxes and/or categories.

Core Values

ASI believes a good quality of life is more than what we physically have, it is also understanding who we are and living a life where we can express ourselves freely.

- We seek to help the artist in all of us think beyond what is possible in our own lives and communities.
- We reject the notion of pushing individuals into rigid categories and we strive to create a "boxless" culture that resists the urge to "group people based on individual traits" We believe that anyone has the ability to make a significant contribution to our mission, regardless of race/ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, physical, mental and/or emotional challenges.
- Our wish is to provide the tools that promote positive self-healing, encouragement and acceptance.

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Ethics

ASI is committed to the highest ethical standards and integrity in our relationships with our communities, donors, volunteers, partners, and other stakeholders.

We will:

- Act honestly and truthfully in all our transactions and dealings
- Treat all of our communities, donors, volunteers, partners, and other stakeholders fairly
- Treat every individual with dignity and respect
- Treat our volunteers and contractors with respect, fairness and good faith and provide conditions that safeguard their rights and welfare
- Be an honorable member of the community and comply with both the spirit and the letter of the law
- Act responsibly toward the communities in which we work and for the benefit of the communities that we serve
- Be responsible, transparent, and accountable for all of our actions
- Seek to avoid conflicts of interest
- Appropriately handle actual or apparent conflicts of interest in our relationships should they occur

Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer at ASI is anyone, including volunteer teachers, who provides their time and talent through work on any of our projects. We thank you, and all volunteers, for the personal investment you make in our organization and its mission. We strive to provide support, supervision, and recognition to our volunteers. As a volunteer you have the right to:

- Be assigned appropriate tasks according to ability, skill, interests, availability, and training
- Receive training and supervision for the tasks accepted
- Receive a job description for your assignment when appropriate
- Be treated as a fellow team member who contributes to ASI's mission and operating philosophy through your volunteer work

ASI also welcomes and encourages the involvement of youth within our organization. Individuals whom are under the age of 18 must have their parent or legal guardian cosign the ASI Teaching Manual Agreement letter.

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Background Checks

For some specific site requirements, volunteers are asked to complete Act 34 Background Check Information and Act 151 (Child Abuse) Background Check Information, which are detailed on our website. Currently, this is not a general requirement for mural painting, office work, one time or occasional volunteers, or volunteers under the age of 18.

Arrest or Criminal Conviction

A volunteer is required to report an arrest or criminal conviction to ASI. The report should be made within five days of when the arrest or conviction occurred or prior to any additional volunteering, whichever comes first. The report should be made in writing to the executive director and include the exact charge or conviction, the location or court and the date of the arrest or conviction. Failure to report arrests or convictions as required may be considered misconduct and your volunteer work suspended or terminated.

Dress Code

Although there is no official dress code for volunteers, please use discretion and good taste. You must appear clean, neat, and appropriately dressed. Remember, volunteers set an example for the students.

Attendance

The positions that volunteers fill are critical to ASI's success. Please be considerate by arriving early to have adequate time and prepare. If you will be unable to attend your scheduled volunteer date or time, please inform ASI as soon as possible.

Corrective Action & Dismissal

In order to protect the rights and safety of volunteers, contractors, ASI staff, students and others, it is necessary you adhere to certain rules and regulations to conduct yourself in a professional manner. ASI reserves the right to apply the necessary corrective action upon the violation of any rules and regulations. These include an oral warning, a written reprimand, suspension, and dismissal. Dismissal may take place without prior warning in the case of a major violation.

Major violations which demand immediate corrective action are: theft; assault and/or battery; gambling; insubordination (which includes refusing to submit to instructions or

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verbal abuse directed at one's site supervisor); smoking; destruction of property; intoxication; immorality; sexual harassment; weapons on school property; discourteous or unethical conduct; willful disregard for safety and/or security regulations; making negative statements that reflect on the ASI staff members, teachers or students; horseplay, or loud or boisterous conduct; breach of confidentiality; misrepresentation; gross negligence or carelessness that might result in property damage or injury; and conviction of a serious crime.

There are numerous other actions or situations which may result in similar corrective action including the termination of your volunteer service. Any conduct that is not aligned with the mission of ASI or policies stated in this manual may result dismissal.

Grievances

As a volunteer, you have the right to receive fair and equitable treatment and be provided a means of appeal and review of problems related to your volunteer position. You are encouraged to resolve disputes informally at first. If a volunteer has a grievance, the following process should be followed:

- If urgent action is needed, notify the site supervisor or site host immediately.
- Attempt to discuss your grievance with your site supervisor or ASI admin to work out the problem, within 48 hours.
- If you are unsatisfied, submit your complaint in writing to your site supervisor or the ASI admin within 4 calendar days.
- A response should be made within a reasonable amount of business days.
- If you are not satisfied within 5 days of how your written complaint was handled, you may appeal by submitting your written complaint to the executive director. If the complaint is with the executive director, then submit it to the president of the board.
- The executive director or president should respond within 5 business days.
- If you are still unsatisfied, you may ask that your written complaint be taken to the advisory board. Within 30 days, the advisory board will act on your grievance, affirming or denying your request, choosing to investigate further, or choosing to take the matter to the entire board. The advisory board's decision is final.

Confidentiality of Volunteer and Staff Records and Information

ASI has determined that we will not make any disclosures about our volunteers to outside employment agencies without the prior written authorization of the volunteer. Also, per an agreement that all volunteers enter upon signing our intake form release,

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ASI reserves the right to disclose feedback, quotes, photos, and video of our volunteers on social media.

Use of Supplies & Equipment

ASI supplies and equipment, including art and office supplies, iPads, and tablet PCs are for business use only. Equipment and supplies purchased by or donated to ASI belong to ASI, and not to any individuals.

First Aid and Safety

ASI will attempt to ensure a safe work environment and to comply with federal, state, and local safety regulations. In turn, you are expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all of your work activities. You are asked to report any unsafe conditions to your supervisor immediately. Any accident, which results in injury, regardless of how insignificant, must be reported promptly to your site supervisor.

For safety reasons, ASI Volunteers are not to touch or clean up any bodily fluids, including but not limited to blood, urine, and feces. These must be properly disposed of and direct contact without plastic gloves, equipment, and proper training could transmit health hazards such as hepatitis or AIDs. Notify school or center personnel immediately and move students away from danger.

Volunteer Medication Administration

For safety reasons ASI Volunteers are asked to leave all unnecessary medications and vitamins at home to prevent the possibility of youth acquiring them and to refrain from self-administration of any medication in front of students. Self-administration of asthma medication is the only exception where volunteer's discretionary use of asthma medication prescribed for him/her may require immediate attention.

Discrimination

ASI prohibits discrimination against and harassment of any volunteer, participant, student, and employee or any applicant for employment because of race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, veteran status (special disabled veterans, disabled veterans and Vietnam-era veterans), or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law.

All personnel who are responsible for engaging volunteers, hiring and promoting

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employees, and for the development and implementation of ASI programs or activities are charged to support this effort and to respond promptly and appropriately to any concerns that are brought to their attention.

Harassment

ASI is committed to providing an environment free of harassment and all forms of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, handicap, or any other statutorily protected class. Academic success is maximized in an environment that is conducive to the learning process. All participants, including students, parents, and volunteers are entitled to express concern or dissatisfaction regarding harassment or discrimination. The purpose of this procedure is to resolve such complaints.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any one of the following conditions is present:

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly made either a term or a condition of an individual's participation in an educational program or activity.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of educational decisions affecting such an individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's educational opportunity or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Examples of conduct that can contribute to sexual harassment include unwelcome touching, unwelcome requests for dates or other social/sexual activities; vulgar and/or abusive comments; sexual jokes, comments, and stories; and comments about other's bodies or sexual lives. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or academic or other professional discussion of these issues. It refers to conduct that is not welcome and is intimidating, offensive, or inhibiting to performance and effectiveness.

Our volunteers have the right to feel safe. If for any reason you do not feel safe notify the site administrator immediately, remove yourself to safety and contact ASI's Executive Director at (215) 350-1968.

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Acceptable Use of Electronic Media

As a volunteer, you agree to cooperate with the following policies designed to ensure the organizational and individual member's safety of ASI:

- Utilizing qualifying "technology protection measure," which includes but is not limited to firewalls and filters, which are installed and in continuous operation.
- Not disclosing personal information of any ASI participants online.
- Taking care to ensure the security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of electronic communication; and to completely prevent access to visual depictions that are (i) obscene, (ii) child pornography, or (iii) "harmful to minor" as that term is defined in section 1721 (c) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000.
- Submission to any procedures meant to provide for practical, legal, and ethical monitoring of the on-line activity of participants.
- Allow disabling of the chosen "technology protection measure" by an authorized person, during use by an adult, only for the purpose of bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Acceptable Use of Electronic Media for ASI Personnel and Volunteers

The guideline for technology users is to share the resources in an effective, efficient, ethical and lawful manner.

- ASI recognizes that electronic media, including the Internet, provides access to a wide variety of instructional resources in an effort to enhance educational opportunities.
- Volunteers are permitted and encouraged to take photos/videos of ASI's programs and to share media on ASI approved social media outlets. See the ASI website for pertinent applications/sites.
- Volunteers are prohibited from contacting participants or their parents using email, social media, or other means. Volunteers may only post images and share their experiences on personal, non-ASI related, sources if a signed parent permission form and the ASI executive director permit it. If a student or adult wants to contact you, they may send messages to ASI's general information (info@artsphere.org), which will be forwarded to you.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Below are some general guidelines you need to take into consideration to provide a good volunteer experience for yourself as well as our students:

- Ask questions when you are not sure about something. Don't take responsibility

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you have not been authorized to assume.

- Respond to all participants with respect and consideration and treat them equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, economic level of the family, or disability.
- Refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents, and staff.
- You are not to transport children in your own vehicles or allow student participants old enough to drive to transport younger children in the program.
- Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during volunteer hours is prohibited. Smoking or use of tobacco in the presence of students during volunteer hours is prohibited.
- Possession or use of any type of weapon or explosive device is prohibited.
- Using ASI computers or devices to access pornographic sites, send e-mails with sexual overtones or otherwise inappropriate messages, or develop online relationships is prohibited.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes and sharing intimate details of one's personal life in the presence of students, fellow volunteers, or staff is prohibited.
- You will portray a positive role model for students by maintaining an attitude of loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
- You should not give excessive gifts (e.g. TV, videogames, jewelry) to students.
- You are to report to your site supervisor any other employee or volunteer who violates any of the policies listed in this Code of Conduct.
- You are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by your site supervisor.
- You will act in a caring, honest, respectful, and responsible manner consistent with the mission of ASI.

Volunteer Teacher Information

General Information and Tips – Volunteer Teaching at ASI

Volunteer teachers are given 10-week volunteer assignments. This time period provides opportunities to get to know students and build relationships with staff and parents. Some of our rules are stricter than other sites' policies. While being respectful refer to our manual whenever you are asked to do something we prohibit and refer any questions of concerns from staff or parents to info@artsphere.org or our office number 215-413-3955. Your responsibility is to follow ASI policies, supplemented by but superior to site policy.

Volunteer teachers will be assigned to bring art lessons to a classroom with at least one

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site teacher present who is responsible for classroom discipline. Often ASI works to pair volunteer teachers to work together as a team at sites. If a site teacher attempts to leave the ASI volunteer as sole supervision of students, they need to be reminded that ASI volunteers are required to be supervised by site staff at all times.

Volunteer Teacher Attendance

Volunteer Teacher absences are sometimes unpredictable. To help ASI manage these, we ask that you text or call 215-350-1968 for last minute emergencies as well as text or call the site teacher and co-teacher at your earliest convenience. If you fail to show, others must take on the project you were expected to accomplish.

To maintain continuity in ASI art programming, we ask whenever it is possible to predict your schedule so that a substitute volunteer teacher can be found. Volunteer teachers are encouraged to make themselves available to the needs of site teachers and be flexible to work with various grades and subjects. Volunteer teachers are expected to work on the days that you state you are available. Volunteer teachers who provide their cell phone number on the ASI volunteer intake form may be contacted by site and ASI Staff in such circumstances.

Parking at School Sites

It is recommended that Volunteer Teachers check with the school secretary or recreation center director regarding the location of their car on campus because some schools have assigned parking places. Recreation Centers have street parking, and some streets have time limits that may require a car to be moved periodically. Recreation Centers often have loading zones for 10-minute drop off of materials. In some cases, street parking has no time limits – be aware and read signs.

Reporting to a School or Recreation Center

Please arrive at the assigned school or Recreation Center a minimum of twenty minutes before the beginning of the class to better prepare for emergencies.

Volunteer teachers are assigned to assist a site teacher and will also be assisted by additional volunteers as required by our policy with our Learning Partner Sites.

1. Bring your Volunteer Teacher lesson plan folder.
2. Meet the administrator and teachers responsible for discipline and curriculum.
3. Go to the assigned room and begin preparations for the students. If possible, have a short activity planned for the students to keep them on task while you are setting up materials or if students have time at end of class.

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4. Collaborate with site teachers regarding the day schedule and share the lesson plan with them. Ask them for input and engage them in activities so they can assist in modeling good behavior and be invested in art program.
5. Become familiar with fire and disaster drill procedures to determine the route students will take to evacuate the building. If specific instructions cannot be found, check with a teacher close by or the assistant principal regarding the procedure to follow. (If there was an intruder, general procedure is to have students sit under desks or on the floor area farthest away from the entrance, close door and turn off the classroom light).
6. Ask who is responsible for walking students to restrooms and water fountains.
7. Leave the room neat and orderly.
8. Check with the site teacher to see what adaptations they might suggest (some students may need special assistance or receive special services).

At the end of the day, or within a couple days, please write a blog post at <http://www.artsphere.org/> detailing your experience about what worked and didn't work for the class with ideas for improving the program. A couple paragraphs and a photo are perfect. Send the link to your post to facebook@artsphere.org

Suggestions for Introducing Yourself

After students have come in and settled down:

"Hello _____ Recreation Center Afterschool students. My name is _____. I'm with a special art organization called Art Sphere. I'm here today because "I love art and I wanted to share with you how to make _____ using _____."

"Art Sphere gives students Four Class Rules which guide them in making "respectful" choices."

- **Rule number one:** "When anyone in the class is talking, we all are listening."
 - Students respect each other by listening.
- **Rule number two:** "Raise your hand to get my attention. Wait until I acknowledge you before speaking."
 - Students and teachers respect each other by listening and appropriately signaling when they need attention.
- **Rule number three:** "When we make art, it is precious and fragile like a newborn baby. Respect others and their artwork by not putting them down or touching their artwork without their permission. If you need to tell me what someone is doing, make sure you are telling me about YOURSELF only. The exception to this rule is: If there is a student that is posing a danger to himself, herself or anyone else, please tell me immediately."
- **Rule number four:** "We use art materials wisely, showing respect to the earth."

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These rules are guidelines and are not meant to exclude students from the program for breaking them.

Student Conduct

1. Each student will not interrupt learning and teaching.
2. Each student will not damage or attempt to damage or take or attempt to take the property of ASI.
3. Each student will not damage or attempt to damage or take or attempt to take the personal property of others.
4. Each student will not threaten, hit, kick, bite, bump, push, pull hair, pinch, hurt or use disrespectful language with other students, with our volunteers, with staff or any other person not employed by the school.
5. Each student will not possess or use weapons, whether assembled or disassembled (guns, including toy guns, knives, firecrackers, etc.) whether toy, operational or not operational if a person could reasonably perceive the object to be a weapon or if the object is a destructive device.
6. Each student will not possess, use, or distribute alcohol or drugs or any substance they represent to be alcohol or drugs.
7. Each student will not disobey direction or commands of volunteer teachers, staff, directors, principals, etc.
8. Each student will not expose or touch himself, herself or others inappropriately including private areas of the body.
9. Each student will not exhibit unsafe and/or inappropriate conduct at any time.
10. Severe or repeated violations of rules may result in students not being permitted to participate in ASI programs.

Discipline Practices that Promote Good Behavior

- Follow established classroom rules
- Be consistent
- Make expectations clear
- Follow the class routine as closely as possible
- Engage the students in learning and actively monitor student work by walking around the class
- Vary learning activities
- Be sensitive to student needs
- Listen to students
- Use humor appropriately
- Ignore minor incidents
- Remove temptations such as allowing students to change normal seating

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- Gain control calmly and quickly if order is threatened: change seating arrangement, discuss incident with a student privately, use non-verbal clues
- Keep consequences objective
- Refer discipline issues to site teachers

Additional Policy Considerations

Volunteer teachers are expected to comply with the Philadelphia School District, the Philadelphia Department of Recreation, and other Center policies in addition to ASI policies.

1. No persons should visit a classroom without the approval of the principal or site director.
2. Accidents and injuries involving any student in a volunteer teacher's care must be reported to the nearest faculty member immediately.
3. All medication is to be administered by appropriate personnel in the center or school office. Never give medicine to students, other volunteers or staff, including aspirin, Tylenol, and other common over-the-counter drugs. (Asthma inhalers may be self administered at any time).
4. Students who appear to be ill should be sent to the center or school office.
5. Students may not be kept after program-scheduled hours without the principal's or site director's permission.
6. Notes and other communications should not be sent to parents without approval of the ASI Executive Director. Volunteer teachers are not permitted to call parents. Notify site teacher and ASI Executive Director regarding specific concerns.
7. Do not introduce controversial subjects or materials. Follow ASI's lesson plans or submit your own lesson plans to info@artsphere.org for preapproval.
8. Do not advertise products or services.
9. All program records and reports must be handled in a confidential manner. Be careful not to divulge any confidential information that has been received from contact with administrators, teachers, students or parents. Do not share information with neighbors, friends, other teachers, or students.
10. Verbal and physical acts of bigotry are prohibited, including racial, sexual, ethnic, or other types of slurs, insults, intimidation, harassment, or other conduct directed toward another person's race, national origin, religion, age, gender, or handicap.
11. All forms of sexual harassment are prohibited.
12. The use of cell phones and pagers is not allowed during instructional time.
13. ASI Volunteer teachers are not permitted to use a site teacher's computer.
14. The use of tobacco products is prohibited for ASI Volunteer teachers on the

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campus of all schools and recreation centers.

15. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs and alcohol on school premises or at any school or recreation center activity is prohibited.
16. Searches are not permitted. If you receive a tip or suspect a student is in possession of a weapon, drugs, or alcohol, notify the closest administrator as quickly as possible. Do not investigate on your own.
17. Students are to be supervised at all times by a member of site staff. If there is an emergency and they must leave the room, call for assistance from the office for another staff member. Under no situation are any ASI Volunteer teachers allowed to be with any one student alone.

Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting

The State requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school administrator report all cases of suspected child abuse of children under eighteen years of age. The law requires the reporting of injuries or neglect of minors provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and the law provides a penalty for violation of the law.

If you suspect child abuse, it must be reported immediately to the Department of Human Services (DHS) ChildLine by calling 1-800-932-0313 or by filing a report online at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis. Both reporting services are available 24/7.

All cases of suspected abuse of students under eighteen years of age must also be reported to the principal or site director, and ASI executive director immediately.

Confidentiality of Student Records and Information

It is the policy of ASI to protect the confidentiality or personally identifiable information in ASI's student records. The only exceptions to this policy are disclosures to persons legally entitled to such information or to persons specifically authorized to view such information.

ASI has designated the student's first name, address, telephone number, and date of birth as "Directory Information." "Directory Information" may be disclosed to legally entitled agencies upon request. Parents, guardians, or students (age 18 years or older) have the right to refuse to allow disclosure of such information.

Student First Aid and Safety

If a student requires medical attention please escort them to nearest site director, administrator, or nurse. Do not attempt to administer physical aid yourself.

Medications taken by students must be taken under the direct supervision of school or

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site staff and not ASI Volunteers. In many schools and centers, it will need to be logged in the student medication record. Administration of over-the-counter medication by ASI Volunteers is not permitted. This includes requests for aspirin, cough drops, etc.

Interrogations and Searches

The principal of each school or a Director of a site, or his/her authorized representative, possesses the authority to conduct reasonable interrogations of students in order to investigate properly and punish student misconduct. This authority includes the power to search a student, student lockers or book bags under specific circumstances in order to seize illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered. ASI Volunteers are prohibited to participate in searches or seizures of any kind.

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, ASI volunteers should report any suspicions or concerns to the principal or Recreation Center Director or, in their absence, their authorized representative