

 <b>VERMONT</b> <b>DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</b> Family Services Division Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center		<h1>217</h1>
Chapter:	Personnel and Training	
Subject:	Ethical Standards for Woodside Counselors	Page 1 of 5
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Supersedes	Woodside Policy and Procedure 217	Dated: 3/2008

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## Definitions

**Woodside Counselor:** For the purpose of this policy, Woodside Counselors means all Woodside employees, permanent and temporary, as well as interns and volunteers.

## Policy

All new Woodside employees, permanent and temporary, as well as interns and volunteers will be asked to read and understand the following document, “Ethical Standards for Woodside Employees”. The employee will be asked to sign a copy of the document certifying that it has been read and understood and confirming that the employee agrees to follow those standards. A copy of the signed document will be kept in the employee’s personnel file.

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## Principle 1: Respect for People's Rights and Dignity/Non-discrimination

The Woodside Counselor:

- respects the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people;
- is aware of and respects cultural, individual, and role differences; and,
- does not discriminate against clients or professionals based these differences.

## Principle 2: Responsibility

The Woodside Counselor:

- upholds objectivity and integrity when delivering services to residents;
- recognizes the need for continuing education; and,
- is open to new procedures and changes in expectations and values over time.

## Principle 3: Competence, Conduct and Compartment

The Woodside Counselor:

- recognizes that personal issues may interfere with professional effectiveness;
- obtains help at an early stage, to prevent significantly impaired performance;
- if necessary, obtains professional assistance with determining whether s/he should limit, suspend, or terminate his/her work-related duties;
- considers and responds to feedback from peers which suggests that personal problems may be having an adverse effect on his/her work.

## Principle 4: Effective Communication

The Woodside Counselor uses the principles of effective communication with residents and professionals including:

- two-way communication
- clear and direct messages
- active listening
- effective responding

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## Principle 5: Coping with Stress

The Woodside Counselor is aware of:

- his/her own responses to abuse and neglect of children and to the emotional and behavioral actions of adolescents;
- the potential for these responses to contribute to work-related stress.

The Woodside Counselor employs well-defined support systems to mitigate these stresses.

## Principle 6: Legal and Moral Standards

The Woodside Counselor:

- upholds legal and accepted societal norms which pertain to professional conduct;
- is alert to and guards against personal, financial, social, organizational, or political factors that might lead to misuse of his/her influence.

The Woodside Counselor does not exploit persons over whom s/he has supervisory, evaluative, or other authority such as clients, students, supervisees, and employees. He or she:

- does not coerce personal or sexual favors;
- does not engage in any type of sexual activities or intimacies with clients or former clients. Furthermore, the Woodside Counselor does not accept as clients any persons with whom s/he has engaged in sexual intimacies;
- does not engage in sexual or other harassment;
- does not engage in or condone practices that are illegal, inhumane or demeaning; and
- when aware of unethical conduct or of unprofessional modes of practice, report such violations to the appropriate authority.

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## Principle 7: Client Welfare and Relationships

The Woodside Counselor recognizes that his/her primary responsibility is to residents. He or she:

- respects and protects the welfare of the client by creating and preserving a climate of trust and safety;
- encourages the development of a positive and productive learning and personal change environment;
- works with residents to increase capacity to solve personal problems, develop mutually respectful and caring relationships, develop a positive sense of self, and to be optimistic about the future;
- does not enter into a professional relationship with members of one's own family, intimate friends or close associates, or others whose welfare might be jeopardized by such a dual relationship.

## Principle 8: Confidentiality

The Woodside Counselor respects the confidentiality of information regarding clients regardless of the source of the information and does not disclose confidential information. He or she:

- informs residents of the legal limits of confidentiality such as in the case of mandated reports of sexual and physical abuse;
- discusses confidential information only in appropriate settings and only for professional purposes;
- reveals information received in confidence only when there is clear and imminent danger to the client or to other persons, and then only to appropriate professional workers or public authorities;
- discloses confidential information only with the appropriate and prior consent of the resident's Family Services Worker.

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### Principle 9: Professional Relationships/Collaboration

The Woodside Counselor treats colleagues with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith. He or she:

- uses a team approach to service delivery to assure coordinated services to residents;
- presents both praise and concerns to colleagues respectfully and with a willingness to remain open to the colleague's responses;
- facilitates open communication so that professionals feel free to express themselves;
- does not file or encourage a filing of ethics complaints or other complaints against colleagues that are frivolous.

### Principle 10: Family Relationships/Collaboration

The Woodside Counselor treats families with respect, courtesy, and fairness and works to strengthen families and foster positive change. He or she:

- understands that the development of trust is an integral part of the collaborative relationship;
- promotes a relationship in which family members and professionals work together to ensure best services for the child and family;
- recognizes and respects the knowledge, skills, and experience that families bring.

### Principle 11: Conflict of Interest

The Woodside Counselor shall safeguard the best interests of the client by abstaining from interactions which result in personal gain. He or she:

- shall not use his/her personal relationship with the client to promote personal gain or profit;
- shall not accept a private fee or any other gift or gratuity for professional work with a resident during the resident's stay at Woodside.

I have read the above document, understand the contents, and agree to abide by it. I understand that a copy of this will be kept in my Woodside personnel file.

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Name

Date