CAL POLY
Strategic Business Services
ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

YOUTH PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/2025

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Introduction and Committee Overview

The Youth Protection Committee (YPC), established in 2024 under the direction of the President, was created in response to growing concerns about the risks associated with youth participating in campus-sponsored or affiliated programs. Recognizing the diverse and widespread nature of youth engagement across Cal Poly's departments, auxiliaries, and external partnerships, the YPC was charged with developing a coordinated and comprehensive approach to safeguarding youth.

The committee is composed of cross-functional stakeholders representing each academic college, the Associated Students Inc. (ASI) Children's Center, Risk Management, Human Resources, Athletics, Conference and Event Planning (CEP), Student Affairs, and other relevant administrative and programmatic areas. This collaborative structure ensures that the committee benefits from a wide range of perspectives and operational insights.

Throughout the academic year, the committee met eight times, with discussions focused on policy development, program registration, compliance monitoring, staff training, and institutional communication.

Year 1 Objectives

The committee set out to achieve several foundational objectives in its first year of operation. A primary goal was to develop and implement a robust Youth Protection Policy that aligns with CSU standards and integrates national best practices, including those from Praesidium, a recognized leader in abuse prevention. This policy aimed to define the university's expectations for program conduct, background checks, incident reporting, documentation, and program registration.

A key priority is the standardization and centralization of youth program processes across campus. This effort is a critical component of Praesidium's recommendations and is essential to ensuring consistency, accountability, and risk mitigation. By establishing a unified framework, Cal Poly can ensure that all youth programs follow the same safety, compliance, and operational standards, regardless of department or unit. Centralized oversight will also enhance visibility, coordination, and institutional responsibility, allowing for more effective monitoring, streamlined approvals, and a stronger culture of safety for all youth engaged with the university.

Another key objective was to establish a complete inventory of all youth-serving programs affiliated with Cal Poly, whether operated internally or through third-party vendors and partners. The goal was to assess the landscape of current programming, identify gaps in compliance, and provide program leads with the tools and information necessary to register and manage their programs effectively.

Finally, the committee sought to evaluate Cal Poly's institutional readiness for youth protection implementation. This included reviewing existing procedures, collaborating with HR and CEP, and assessing how well current operations met CSU guidelines and child safety standards.

Major Accomplishments

A. **Policy and Procedures**

The committee successfully developed a comprehensive Youth Protection Policy, which clearly defines the scope of youth-serving activities, outlines mandatory reporting responsibilities, and details registration requirements for all programs involving youth. Supporting documents such as program planning templates, participant conduct assessments, and behavioral response protocols were created and disseminated to departments across campus. Risk Management is working closely with Human Resources and legal counsel to draft new internal procedures addressing arrest disclosures, drug/alcohol testing for cause, and conviction review, ensuring these policies support the youth protection framework while remaining within HR's jurisdiction.

B. **Technology Integration and Registration**

Following initial difficulties with a previous vendor, the committee adopted Ideal-Logic as its centralized platform for program registration, Live Scan tracking, and incident reporting. The system is being configured to meet Cal Poly's specific needs and streamline compliance across departments. As of June 2025, 47 programs have registered with Risk Management. These included 15 third-party programs, 12 overnight programs, and a variety of camps and academic outreach initiatives.

C. **Training and Awareness**

To promote transparency and education, a public-facing Youth Protection website was launched. This site contains essential forms, policy summaries, registration links, and a parent/guardian-focused section explaining safety practices, reporting avenues, and participant expectations. A marketing campaign and outreach strategy is being prepared for full launch in Fall 2025.

D. **Conference and Event Planning Coordination**

The committee collaborated with CEP to ensure that all third-party and overnight youth programs are registered, assessed, and appropriately staffed. Revised contract language now holds external program partners to the same standards as internal departments, including insurance requirements and child safety assurances. CEP will continue to support logistical coordination for both third-party and internal programs, but the responsibility for vetting staff for internal programs remains with Program Coordinators.

E. **Health and Safety Enhancements**

An important emerging issue identified by the committee was the lack of a formal campus policy for medication management in youth programs. Policy that outlines procedures for handling essential medications, including EpiPens, is currently being drafted and under legal review.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

Despite significant achievements, the committee encountered several institutional challenges. A major obstacle was inconsistent awareness of the Youth Protection Program requirements among departments and Program Coordinators. Many staff are unfamiliar with the new registration process or the reasons for early compliance measures like Live Scans and background checks.

Tracking and documentation also varied across units. Some programs lacked clear registration processes or failed to maintain records aligned with legal or CSU expectations. In particular, third-party and auxiliary-run programs presented oversight challenges due to their independent structures and differing protocols.

Additionally, program staff frequently reported uncertainty regarding their roles in supervising youth, particularly regarding "care, custody, and control." Clarifying responsibilities and providing guidance for responding to incidents remains a critical area for continued improvement. Risk Management identified the need to simplify compliance communications and centralize accountability.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2025–2026

Looking ahead, the committee will focus on fully implementing the Youth Protection Policy across all units and departments. Campus-wide communications will be disseminated to enhance awareness and understanding of the program, its associated procedures, and relevant policies.

Ideal-Logic will be fully deployed as the standard platform for registering youth programs and tracking staff compliance. The committee also intends to conduct targeted risk audits of high-impact or overnight programs. These reviews will inform continuous improvement efforts and ensure readiness to respond to emergencies.

Another major goal is the formalization of incident debriefing and reporting procedures to senior leadership, including the President's Cabinet. This escalation process is being designed to meet Praesidium standards and ensure Cal Poly can respond promptly and effectively to any safety concerns.

Finally, the committee will work to expand stakeholder engagement, particularly in areas such as Athletics, Student Clubs, Research Programs, and auxiliary groups. Creating a shared culture of accountability and safety across all youth interactions is essential for building long-term trust with students, families, and external partners.