

Mississippi Department of Human Services
Division of Youth Services
Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

Students at our facilities and schools have the right to expect that information about them will be kept confidential by all volunteers. Additionally, the U.S. Congress has addressed the privacy-related concerns of educators and students by enacting the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (known commonly as "FERPA" or the "Buckley Amendment"). Among other provisions, FERPA allows the government to withdraw federal funds from any educational institution, including, the Mississippi Department of Human Services, which disseminates a student's education records without his or her parent's consent.

- Each student with whom you work has the right to expect that nothing that happens to or about him or her will be repeated to anyone other than authorized school department employees, as designated by the administrators at our schools. Even when discussing a student with those who are directly involved in a student's education, such as a teacher, principal, or guidance counselor, you may not share otherwise confidential information with them unless it is relevant to the student's educational growth, safety, or well being.

- You may not share information about a student even with others who are genuinely interested in the student's welfare, such as social workers, counselors, clergy, or nurses/ physicians (a grave medical emergency, in which confidential information may be necessary for a student's care, is the only exception) or security personnel. Thus, you must refer all such questions to the school employees so authorized and indicated to you, typically the principal or the student's teacher.

Parents, friends, or community members may in good faith ask you questions about a student's problems or progress. Again, you must refer all such questions to the authorized school employee. You may not share information about a student even with members of your own family or the student's family.

Before you speak, always remember that violating a student's confidentiality isn't just impolite, it's against the law.

Agreement

I, (print name) _____, as a volunteer for Mississippi Department of Human Services, agree to never disclose information about a student's records to anyone other than an authorized school department employee. I will refer all requests for such information from those not directly involved in the student's education to authorized school department employees.

Signature _____ Date _____