



Gwinnett United In Drug Education, Inc.

Social Media Policy

Introduction

Gwinnett United in Drug Education, Inc. (GUIDE) recognizes the importance of social media to interact with the community and shape public opinion about our organization, the services we provide and the entire prevention field. We not only identify it as a communication tool; it is also a means to increase our constituents, raise awareness of our cause, fundraise and build partnerships. Social media is vital to the future of our organization. As our organization and social media presence grow and develop, we will continue to gain local, state and national exposure. To that end, GUIDE has a responsibility to maintain professionalism and display integrity to the values of our organization through all social media efforts.

The purpose of this social media policy is to provide guidelines that support staff in thinking organizationally and to maintain safety and security for our organization, staff members, business partners and clients. This document should guide staff members' decision making when using any of the following social media tools, both personally and professionally: websites dedicated to GUIDE or any of its programs or initiatives, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, LinkedIn, newsletters or any other external publications, etc. This list is not exhaustive and may change as technological advances occur. Upon reviewing this document, should any questions remain regarding a decision related to social media, staff members should immediately seek clarification from the Communications Specialist or Executive Director.

GUIDE is committed to promoting community engagement, positive dialogue and healthy choices through social media.

Social Media Values

GUIDE's social media presence should align with our mission and values as an organization.

GUIDE's mission is to mobilize and equip the Gwinnett community with the information and strategies needed to promote positive youth development, improve community conditions and address other issues associated with substance use and abuse.

Upholding the following mission-related values is essential to the positive culture we strive to cultivate in our roles at GUIDE and through our social media presence.

SAFE AND HEALTHY CHOICES: We promote best practices in prevention and positive youth development, including the prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; health; safety; wellness; and other community issues.

COLLABORATION: We will work together in partnership with local, state and national organizations to provide the most high quality, relevant and up-to-date information and resources.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: We value and promote opportunities for meaningful engagement for the whole community, including youth.

LEADERSHIP: We demonstrate consistent leadership in our field and will reflect this in our social media practices.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE: We are mindful of and practice cultural and linguistic relevance to serve our diverse audience.

PROFESSIONALISM: We provide high quality content that is creative, fun and engaging.

To ensure integrity to our mission and values, staff members engaging with social media tools should ask themselves the following questions before each post:

1. Is this relevant to GUIDE's mission?
2. Is this compelling to our target audience?
3. Is this complete, well-written, grammatically correct and accurate?

Social Media Roles

All official social media channels of GUIDE are managed by the Communications Specialist. To maintain transparency and prevent loss of information in an unforeseen circumstance, all account login information is stored in a Google spreadsheet accessible to any staff member. However, it is solely the responsibility of the Communications Specialist to post content, oversee activity and respond to communications on our social media sites.

The Communications Specialist coordinates the social media strategy with the social media team, made up of GUIDE program directors and staff as determined by the Communications Specialist and Executive Director. The team is responsible for creating a majority of the content, but other staff may submit content via team members. At no time should social media be incorporated into programming without consulting the Communications Specialist.

It is never acceptable to post content unrelated to GUIDE's mission. Examples of appropriate social media subject areas are prevention, positive youth development, training, health and wellness, community partnerships, GUIDE initiatives and campaigns, leadership and inspiration, fundraising and organizational highlights. In addition, a good

rule for determining whether something is appropriate to post is if it does not add value to our organization or community, we should not post it.

The social media team works together to provide a system of checks and balances concerning quality of content. The Communications Specialist will review and post all content and has the authority to send back content for revisions or refuse to post anything that is determined to not align with GUIDE's mission and values.

Monitoring and Maintaining Dialogue

The Communications Specialist is responsible for monitoring external social media and tracking mentions, questions and other relevant content. Our goal is to spend a reasonable amount of time listening so that we are able to capture most mentions of our organization plus some discussion of our focus areas. "Listening" on social media is important to us for providing customer service and engaging with our audience. We listen in a few core ways to feel responsibly comfortable that we will see if we are mentioned.

The Communications Specialist is also responsible for monitoring our own channels, including tracking, moderating and responding to comments or questions with the support of the social media team as needed. Above all, GUIDE's goal is to be present and responsive. We will quickly acknowledge all (positive and negative) social media communications.

To build credibility and maintain openness and transparency, a majority of negative comments should not be deleted. A healthy dialogue with constructive criticism can be useful, as long as it is not disparaging to our organization, mission or supporters. In the event that a negative comment has been posted to one of GUIDE's channels, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

Complaint: Turn this into a customer service opportunity.

Misinformation: If our information is incorrect, be honest and admit fault. Provide the correct information and move on. If someone else is posting incorrect information to GUIDE's channels in a manner that is accusatory or misrepresents our mission, programs or services, respectfully provide the correct information.

Damaging to the Community: Remove the post.

Vulgarity or Purposely Inflammatory Language: Remove the post.

Trolling: Remove the post and block the individual. It is best not to respond or continue to allow objectionable comments that are fueled by response.

It is a priority that all interaction remains respectful, polite and congruent with the mission and values of GUIDE. Any time there is a question about how to respond to someone on our social media channels, or to report negative comments, staff members should immediately communicate this to the Communications Specialist or Executive Director.

Privacy and Permissions

GUIDE staff have a responsibility to respect the privacy of the organization, staff members, business partners and clients.

For all official GUIDE social media channels, permission **MUST** be obtained to create social media posts that contain the following:

- Photos or videos with clearly identifiable individuals we work with;
- Photos or videos with clearly identifiable supporters or constituents;
- Photos or videos with clearly identifiable youth under 18 years old;
- The full names of individuals we work with (especially youth under 18);
- Information about the services we've provided to individuals we work with (especially youth under 18); and
- Any part of someone's name associated with a photo or video.

*Written permission must be obtained for youth under 18. Verbal permission is acceptable for those over 18. (For example, announcing during a training that photos or videos taken may be used on GUIDE's website, social media sites and in other media.)

Permission is not needed when we post photos or videos on official GUIDE accounts where individuals are not identifiable.

At no time should GUIDE staff "tag" anyone but themselves in a photo through personal social media profiles. Organizations may be "tagged" by the official GUIDE social media accounts when posting the content.

It's important to our social media efforts and telling GUIDE's story that we share our general location as a means of representing our diverse clientele and statewide reach. This is best done in general descriptions and not through geographic location services. To ensure the safety of our staff and participants, location services that involve "checking in" or disclosing the exact geographic location of events should not be used. For example, posting a photo with a caption that we are having a great training in Macon is OK, but adding that to GUIDE's Photo Map on Instagram or "checking in" on Foursquare is not OK. There will be times that disclosing location is important to the program or event (such as saying we are at Oxford College for GTI), but as a general rule, this should not occur for a

majority of posts. For questions on a case-by-case basis, staff members should immediately seek clarification from the Communications Specialist or Executive Director.

Personal vs. Professional Use of Social Media

With everyday technological advances, it is increasingly difficult to separate social media from everything else in our daily routines. Especially considering the friendly culture of our organization and the work we do, GUIDE is sensitive to understanding the ways in which our personal and professional lives intersect. At the same time, we must make it a priority to protect our organization and staff members.

It is an expectation that staff members make every attempt to keep their personal social media presence separate from work. On occasion, we may request that staff post organizational announcements on their personal accounts, but as a general rule, work-related content should be shared through official GUIDE accounts only unless permission has been obtained to do otherwise. Staff should not disclose work-related matters on their personal social media sites involving other staff, clients, business partners or internal events or changes without first obtaining permission. A good starting point is to remember to be respectful of our staff and don't "give away our secrets" online.

Social media posts related to personal information or announcing major life events may be created and used on official GUIDE social media accounts with permission. GUIDE staff members may post personal opinions on GUIDE social media sites when prompted, though we ask staff to be GUIDE-like and remain positive, consider our values and be mindful of our audience when sharing. Official organizational responses should come from the Communications Specialist via official GUIDE accounts only.

We strongly encourage staff members to maintain values and ethics congruent to those of our organization when on personal social media sites. While what staff members post on social media is personal, it is not private. Social media channels are public spaces. Please keep in mind that to a certain extent, everything we post on the internet is public, and what we do and say reflects on GUIDE because of our ties to the community.

GUIDE strongly recommends that staff members take considerable thought before friending, following or connecting with individuals with whom GUIDE shares a professional relationship. Though staff are allowed to share a social media connection with anyone over the age of 18 that they choose, we encourage staff to consider the extent to which they truly want business partners and individuals involved in our programs to be able to view personal information. Connecting with youth under 18 years old who are involved with GUIDE in any manner (GTI staff, YAB member, intern, etc.) on social media sites is strictly prohibited. GUIDE staff should ensure privacy settings on all

social media sites disallow these youth from viewing personal content, and official employee email addresses (ending with @guideinc.org) should never be used for personal social media accounts.

Copyright and Attribution

When creating posts for our social media channels, consider copyright rules and giving attribution when necessary. We value high quality content, and we access millions of other ideas to provide the most informative and up-to-date resources for our audience. Give credit where it is due. Use links, mentions and tags to send our audience to the source. Not only does this help us cite our work, it allows people access to even more information on the subject area. GUIDE does not post photos that belong to someone else unless we are providing a direct link to the website where they were obtained in the post or we have explicit permission to do so. Any time we are influenced by or are curating content from another individual or organization, we must cite our sources. It is always OK to link something, but it is considered good courtesy – and the law – to include an attribution to the original source.

Due to the nature of our work and our goal to spread awareness of our cause, we want others to share what they learn from us. Our policy for allowing other people to use our content is that they can repost anything from us, as long as they credit us for the content with a link back to our site. Our content may not be modified without permission or be used to sell anything. This protects us from our material being used in a way other than how we intended and disallows others to profit from our hard work.

Enforcement

All GUIDE employees, volunteers and interns should adhere to the guidelines provided in this social media policy. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action determined by the Executive Director. Disciplinary action will be dependent on the nature of the infraction, up to and including termination of employment.

Resource:

<http://www.idealware.org/reports/nonprofit-social-media-policy-workbook>