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**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB  
OF WESTERN LANE COUNTY**

**CHILD SAFETY**

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY**

<b>CATEGORY:</b> Child Safety	<b>APPROVED:</b> December 18, 2024
<b>APPROVING AUTHORITY:</b> BGCWLC Board of Directors	<b>LAST UPDATE:</b> November 13, 2024
<b>CONTACT:</b> BGCWLC CEO	<b>NEXT REVIEW:</b> November 7, 2025

## **Child Abuse Prevention Policy**

The priority of the Boys & Girls Club of Western Lane County (Club) is the physical and emotional safety of its members, staff, volunteers, and board members. The Club maintains a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse.

The Club implements policies and procedures for members, staff, volunteers, or board members to report any suspicion or allegation of abuse.

### **Definitions**

**One-to-One:** The Club prohibits isolated one-to-one interactions between Club members and staff, volunteers, or board members. This includes prohibiting one-on-one contact at any time at the Club, in vehicles, or by phone, text, social media or any other means. Exceptions to this could include, but may not be limited to:

- If a Club member is a child or sibling of a staff member, volunteer, or board member.
- When the emotional or physical safety of a Club member is at risk and a private, one-to-one interaction is deemed necessary.
- If there are no additional staff available.

**Child abuse** is when an adult or another child, whether through action or by failing to act, causes serious emotional or physical harm to a child. Sexual abuse or misconduct may include but is not limited to:

- Any sexual activity, involvement, or attempt of sexual contact with a minor.
- Unwanted and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, brushing, massaging someone's neck or shoulders and/or pulling against another's body or clothes.
- Inappropriate activities, advances, comments, bullying, gestures, electronic communications, or messages(e.g., by email, text, or social media).

**Grooming** is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking. Grooming behaviors may include but are not limited to:

- Targeting specific youth for special attention, activities, or gifts.
- Isolating youth from family members and friends physically or emotionally.
- Gradually crossing physical boundaries, full-frontal hugs that last too long, lap sitting or other "accidental" touches.

### **Physical Interactions**

All staff, volunteers, and board members of the Club are required to maintain appropriate physical contact with minors. Appropriate and inappropriate interactions include but are not limited to the following:

<b>Appropriate</b>	<b>Inappropriate</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Side hugs</li><li>• Handshakes</li><li>• High-fives and hand slapping</li><li>• Holding hands (with young children to escort to a location)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full frontal hugs or kisses</li><li>• Showing affection in isolated area</li><li>• Lap sitting</li><li>• Wrestling</li><li>• Piggyback/Shoulder rides</li><li>• Tickling</li></ul>

## **Verbal Interactions**

All staff, volunteers, and board members of the Club are required to engage in appropriate verbal interactions with minors. Appropriate and inappropriate interactions include but are not limited to the following:

<b>Appropriate</b>	<b>Inappropriate</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive reinforcement</li><li>• Age-appropriate jokes</li><li>• Encouragement</li><li>• Praise</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name calling</li><li>• Inappropriate jokes</li><li>• Discussing sexual content</li><li>• Discussing personal issues</li><li>• Telling secrets</li><li>• Profanity or derogatory remarks</li><li>• Harsh language</li></ul>

## **Suspicion & Mandated Reporting**

Any Club staff, volunteer, or board member who becomes aware of or has suspicion of child abuse or neglect must immediately notify the Site Director, CEO, or Board President. The CEO is responsible for reporting the incident immediately to the appropriate authorities according to statewide mandated reporting laws, as well as to Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) within 24 hours via the critical incident system. Only the CEO, Board President, or Vice President are authorized to speak with members of the media. Prior to speaking with the media, Board Officers will contact BGCA and Redwoods Group to develop messaging and guidelines.

If Club staff, volunteers, or board members believe that immediate harm could occur they are advised to reach out to emergency personnel and then notify the CEO.

- When speaking with emergency personnel state examples of why you have the concerns you do, being very specific with each example that you have witnessed
  - Movements (unsteady, fidgety, dizzy)
  - Eyes (dilated, constricted or watery eyes or involuntary eye movements)
  - Emotions (argumentative, agitated, irritable, drowsy)
  - Speech (slurred, slow, distracted mid-thought, inability to verbalize thoughts)
  - Odors (smell of alcohol, body odor or urine)

Any Club staff who is alleged to have abused or neglected a child will be suspended with pay pending the outcome of an investigation. If the allegation is substantiated, the staff member will be terminated.

Any Club member who is alleged to have abused a peer will be suspended. Depending on the severity of the incident, the participant may have an action plan put in place prior to returning to the Club or be terminated from all Club programs.

## **Abuse & Safety Resources**

The Club prominently displays BGCA-approved collateral that shares ethics hotline, crisis text line and safety helpline information with members, staff, volunteers, board members, and families. We also share safety policies with parents and guardians upon receiving a youth membership application or if requested.

## **Required Training**

All staff, volunteers, and board members will complete one of the following required safety trainings initially and annually thereafter:

- Foundations: Preventing Abuse in Youth – Serving Organizations
- Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

Annually:

All Club policies relevant to position held.