

Child Abuse Prevention Policy

The priority of Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County is the physical and emotional safety of its members, staff, and volunteers. Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County maintains a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County implements policies and procedures for members, employees, volunteers, visitors or any victims of sexual abuse or misconduct to report any suspicion or allegation of abuse.

DEFINITIONS

One-on-Contact Prohibition: Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County prohibits isolated one-on-one interaction between Club participants and staff or volunteers, including 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 may only be made when delivering approved medical or counseling services by a licensed, trained therapist or similar professional according to professional guidelines. All staff and volunteers, including minor staff (under age 18), are strictly prohibited from meeting Club participants outside of any Club-sponsored activities. The only exception to this rule is if the Club participant is a child or sibling of a staff member or volunteer.

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 person who is a minor (under 18 years old).
- Sexual activity with another who is legally incompetent.
- Physical assault or sexual violence, such as rape, statutory rape, abuse, molestation, or any attempt to commit such acts.
- 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. This can include one-on-one interactions such as sleepovers, camping trips and day activities.
- Gradually crossing physical boundaries, full-frontal hugs that last too long, lap sitting or other "accidental" touches.

MANDATED REPORTING

Every staff member or volunteer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County who becomes aware of or has suspicion of child abuse or neglect must immediately report to Club leadership. Club leadership 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.

REQUIRED TRAINING

Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County conducts and reports through a BGCA-approved process the following training for all staff members and volunteers with direct repetitive contact with young people.

Before providing services to young people, and annually thereafter:

1. BGCA-approved child abuse prevention
2. BGCA-approved mandated reporting
3. BGCA-approved grooming prevention

Annually:

- All the policies, including all safety policies, for Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County.

PHYSICAL INTERACTIONS

Every staff member and volunteer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County is required to maintain appropriate physical contact with minors. Appropriate and inappropriate interactions include but are not limited to the following:

Appropriate	Inappropriate
Side hugs Handshakes High-fives and hand slapping Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations)	Full-frontal hugs or kisses Showing affection in isolated area Lap sitting Wrestling or piggyback/shoulder rides Tickling Allowing youth to cling to an adult's leg

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Every staff member and volunteer of Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County is required to maintain appropriate verbal interactions with minors. Appropriate and inappropriate interactions include but are not limited to the following:

Appropriate	Inappropriate
Positive reinforcement Child-appropriate jokes (no adult content) Encouragement Praise	Name calling Inappropriate jokes (adult-only content) Discussing sexual encounters or personal issues Secrets Profanity or derogatory remarks Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate youth

INTERACTIONS WITH MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents and staff.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
- Staff will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact and maturity.
- ***staff should not post any pictures or videos of Club members in a public way including any form of social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, etc.)***
- Staff are not to transport children in their own vehicles.
- Staff may not date program participants.

Member Health Check: Staff will conduct a health check of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way; any questionable marks or responses will be documented and may be reported to authorities, depending on circumstances.

Strategies to Help Prevent Child Abuse

1. Staff understands their legal obligation to report suspected abuse.
2. Policies, procedures and training are available relating to discipline, supervision, staff/participant interaction, and staff and volunteer Code of Conduct, etc.
3. Staff understands what practices may be considered abusive and the difference between what may be considered appropriate and inappropriate touch.
4. Staff communicate frequently with parents regarding day-to-day activities and encourage parents to report or question any behavior or event their child may share that appears out of the ordinary.
5. Parents know they can visit, unannounced, any program their child participates in.
6. Staff tries to identify stressed parents and offer support and referrals for help.
7. Staff protect themselves and the Boys & Girls Club of Newport County by agreeing not to be alone with Boys & Girls Club members or program participants outside the Boys & Girls Club programs or facilities (i.e.: baby sit, take children on trips, have them in their homes when others are not present, etc.)
8. All staff will keep themselves apprised of and abide by all regulations for licensure of School
9. Age Child Care Program as well as any state laws governing child abuse and neglect.

Note: These preventive strategies are designed to protect the children in Boys & Girls Club programs and to protect the Boys & Girls Club staff and volunteers from being wrongly accused of child abuse.

ABUSE AND SAFETY RESOURCES

Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County prominently displays BGCA-approved collateral that shares ethics hotline, crisis text line and safety helpline information with members, staff, volunteers, and families. We also share all safety policies with parents and guardians upon receiving a youth membership application.

If you have questions regarding any of the above policies, please speak with your supervisor to seek clarity. By signing below, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand the above policies. Your signature also indicates that you are responsible to adhere and follow the above policies. Misconduct hereafter will result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

Name of Staff or Volunteer (print): _____

Please circle one: STAFF VOLUNTEER

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Supervisor: _____ DATE: _____