

GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.**



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF CHATTANOOGA

Child Protection Policy

Mission Statement

To inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

Letter from the President

Welcome to Boys & Girls Clubs of Chattanooga! We are honored that you have chosen to join us in the very important service we provide to our community. You have been selected for your position because of your skills, talents, training, experience and commitment to the development of those children that we serve. We look forward to you applying your talents in helping us to provide excellent service to our members and to the communities that we serve.

Our goal is to help provide you with a meaningful and rewarding career. We are very interested in your progress and collectively, we will take great pride in your accomplishments and contributions. In turn, we expect you to perform your duties to the best of your abilities in accordance with Boys & Girls Clubs of Chattanooga standards as outlined in this handbook. As a result, your knowledge and understanding of our policies and procedures will only enhance your overall job satisfaction.

Please read your handbook and if you have any questions, feel free to discuss them with your supervisor or call Human Resources.

Again, we are pleased to have you with us and wish you great success at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chattanooga.

Jim Morgan
President

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This Employee Handbook ("Handbook") is expressly intended for the use of the employees of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chattanooga (hereinafter referred to as the "Club" or "BGCCHA"). This Handbook sets forth basic policies and procedures for employee conduct and also contains important summary information regarding employee benefits.

Unless otherwise specified, the policies outlined in this Handbook apply to all employees – introductory, regular full-time, regular part-time and temporary/seasonal. The policies outlined in the Handbook govern employees unless there are more strict Federal, State and/or Local statutes.

In all cases of interpretation of this Handbook, management decisions are final. The Club may modify any part of this Handbook at its sole discretion, without prior notice. This Handbook supersedes and replaces all previously existing Club employee handbooks or personnel policy manuals.

ALL CLUB EMPLOYEES ARE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OUTLINED IN THIS HANDBOOK. ANY VIOLATION OF THESE OR ANY OTHER CLUB POLICY, PRACTICE OR PROCEDURE WILL SUBJECT AN EMPLOYEE TO DISCIPLINE, UP TO AND INCLUDING SEPARATION. EMPLOYMENT WITH THE CLUB IS AT-WILL. THE CLUB MAY DISCHARGE AN EMPLOYEE AT ANY TIME, FOR ANY REASON WHATSOEVER, WITH OR WITHOUT CAUSE, AND WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE. NOTHING WITHIN THIS HANDBOOK OR WITHIN THE CLUB'S POLICIES, PRACTICES, OR PROCEDURES IS INTENDED TO CREATE A CONTRACT FOR EMPLOYMENT, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, OR A GUARANTEE OF CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT FOR A SPECIFIC DURATION.

Employees should refer questions regarding the Club's benefit plans to the Executive Vice President or refer to the Club's plan documents or summary plan descriptions. Employees should contact their Unit Director with questions concerning the contents of this Handbook.

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Child Protection Policy

1. Goal

It shall be the goal Boys & Girls Clubs of Chattanooga to provide a safe environment for the physical and emotional well-being of all children participating in activities, including participants in any daily or temporary childcare programs. The organization's goal is to inform workers and enforce policies to ensure that all children are safe and well protected while attending scheduled activities.

Future revision to this policy may be made with the authorization of the Chief Executive Officer.

2. Definition of "children"

The term "child" or "children" shall include all person under the age of eighteen (18) years.

Selection and Screening Process

3. Pre-employment procedures for paid and volunteer workers

It is the goal of Boys & Girls Clubs of Chattanooga to adequately screen the applications of persons desiring to work with children participating in all programs, including participants in any daily or temporary childcare programs.

4. Classification of workers

In order to screen workers appropriately for their responsibilities, the staff person responsible for each division will categorize workers into two categories: primary and secondary. These items refer to the relative levels of responsibility and risk, not to the ages of the children being served.

Primary volunteer workers: Includes all paid staff members plus those volunteers in roles with greater responsibility or risk are classified as primary workers and should meet the primary screening standards. Must be eighteen (18) years of age.

Secondary volunteer workers: Persons who occasionally interact with children and/or do so in less risky circumstances, i.e. Volunteers who see children only in a group setting, on premises, or who interact with children in the presence of an approved primary worker are classified as secondary workers. This category may also include parent of participants who help supervise activities. All volunteer workers under the age of eighteen (18) will be considered secondary workers.

5. Minimum age

A child who is a non-member is permitted to visit the club one time. Their name is entered in a visitor's book and tracking system and they are issued a pass entitling them to use the club and its facilities for that one day only. The staff should follow up with the visitor to inquire their interest in becoming a member.

6. Volunteer applications

Volunteer applicants must complete and sign an Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children.

Applications will be submitted to the administration office. The person in charge of the division in which the volunteer will work will be responsible for the interview process and

reference checks. If an applicant needs additional confidentiality they may choose to submit their application to the person in charge of their division or directly to the head of the organization.

The organization keeps all confidential information received in the applicant selection process. Such information will be stored with access afforded only to appropriate staff on a need-to-know basis.

If the organization learns of false, misleading or amended information on an application that could cause potential danger to children or liability to the organization, that person will be terminated

7. References

The person in charge of the division in which the person will work must check and document at least three (3) references for each primary worker applicant and must conduct a reasonable inquiry into the character of secondary worker applicants. References may be checked by phone, mail or in person.

Whenever possible, the three references should include:

- A person who has known the applicant for an extended period;
- A former supervisor, and
- A member of the applicant's immediate family.

Information gained in these checks should be noted directly on the application.

8. Confidential interviews

All applicants desiring to work with children must be interviewed for suitability for the work they desire to do. The leader of the program in which the applicant will work conducts interviews. A team of interviewers may be used. The organizations policy concerning prevention and response to child abuse and neglect must be discussed during the interview.

9. Criminal background check

A criminal background check and child abuse registry check shall be required for all children's worker positions, both employee and volunteer workers. No one who has been convicted of a crime involving misconduct with children will be allowed to work with children. Completing the Application for Volunteer Workers Who Will Work with Children authorizes the organization to conduct these checks. Background checks will be kept confidential in a locked file with access afforded only to appropriate staff on a need-to-know basis.

The designated representative will conduct criminal background checks notifying the appropriate person if a negative report is received.

10. Vehicle safety

Person who drive Boys & Girls Clubs of Chattanooga owned or privately-owned vehicles for conducting business or transporting children on a regular basis must maintain a current valid state driver's license, provide proof of insurance in such amounts as may be required by the organization and comply with all other transportation policies.

11. First aid training

It will be the goal of the organization that most paid employees who work with children will maintain current certification in basic first aid and basic CPR (or the equivalent) as required by applicable licensing requirements or other local regulations. The organization will pay the cost of this training. Employees will be paid for attending training. Volunteer workers are encouraged, but not required to get training if they frequently accompany children on activities such as recreational activities, camps, retreats, mission trips or any other activity with an element of risk.

12. Identification of workers

All employees or volunteers who are engaged to work with children must be photographed with copies of those photographs kept in their personnel file.

13. Acknowledgment of organization policies

All Applicants must acknowledge in writing that they understand the organization's policies pertaining to the protection of children and that they agree to abide by them. This requirement will be met by having applicants sign the Acknowledgement of Receipt form.

Supervisory Requirements

It is the policy of the organization to provide adequate supervisory control of person working with children participating in all programs, including daily or temporary childcare programs. The following regulations shall be applicable to all primary and secondary workers having contact with children participating in all programs:

14. Safety of children

It is the responsibility of all person having contact with children participating in programs to promote the emotional and physical safety of the participants giving regard to all factors and circumstances known to them. If in their opinion, an unsafe condition exists; such persons shall immediately take appropriate precautions under the circumstances to protect all children. Nothing contained in any other policy, procedure or instruction shall be construed to relieve persons having contact with children from this responsibility.

15. Preschool identification system

To reduce the possibility of kidnapping, the organization will in place an identification system so that the adults who drop off a small child are the same adults who pick the child up. The person in charge shall maintain the system to identify person authorized to pick up and take responsibility for preschool children leaving an activity. The identification system will not be necessary for children above the grade of kindergarten unless a parent specifically requests it in writing.

16. Two-adult rule

It shall be the goal Boys & Girls Clubs of Chattanooga that a minimum of two workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during an activity regardless of the number of participants, location or activity. At least one of these must be a primary worker. These two adults cannot be related to one another.

Some youth education classes may have only one adult in attendance as the teacher while the class is in session. In these instances, doors to the classrooms will be either removed or will remain open. Windows may be installed between these classrooms for full visibility. At no time should an adult ever be in a room or an enclosed area alone with a child.

17. Observation of children

Activities for children should be scheduled in area visible from adjoining areas. Such visibility will be maintained by leaving curtains and blinds open and, wherever possible, by leaving the door to the room open. Reasonable exceptions to this rule may be made by the leader in charge where seclusion is necessary for rest provided two unrelated workers are present in the room at all times.

At no time will an adult meet alone with a child in any room where the door is closed or in an area where they cannot be seen. A clear glass window will be installed in the door of all rooms typically occupied by children and into the door of all offices.

18. Ratio of workers to children

It is required that a reasonable ratio of adults to children is maintained at all times involving the supervision of children. The staff member responsible for the division shall be primarily responsible for setting and maintain a reasonable ratio of workers to children giving due regard to all factors present, including the number and age of the participants, the nature of the activities and the location where the activities are taking place.

19. Worker Training

Each new worker will be given a copy of Boys and Girls Clubs of Chattanooga Child Protection Policy. They must sign a statement indicating they have received and read both before they can begin working with children.

20. Awareness of organization policy

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Chattanooga CEO shall periodically review the definition of child abuse and neglect as defined by law and the organization's policy concerning these crimes. These reviews can be conducted either with the worker individually or in groups, at least once a year and following each change in or addition to such policies. Each worker shall acknowledge receipt of a written copy of the policy prior to the time they commence working with children and after each change to such policy. Each worker shall acknowledge participating in the periodic review of the organization's policies and procedures. The signed acknowledgments shall be retained in the personnel file of the worker.

21. Children's pickup

Children who are six years old or older are permitted to leave the area of the activity at the conclusion of the scheduled activity without further supervision of the workers unless otherwise instructed by the parent or guardian. If their parent or guardian does not pick up a child younger than six on time, the child will be kept by their teachers in the children's area where safe supervision can be continued until the parent or guardian is located. A child of twelve years or younger shall not be taken from or allowed to leave the organizations property, either unattended or in a group without specific parental permission.

22. Release of claims

Prior to any activity away from the organization's grounds, a Release of Claims will be necessary to be signed by the child's parent or legal guardian. Without the form signed and in the possession of the organization, the child will not be allowed to participate in the away activity.

23. Reporting policy

It is the policy of the organization to report any incident of child abuse or neglect toward any child. This would include participants in temporary childcare programs.

- Do not treat any suspicion as frivolous.
- Notify your supervisor immediately. Commence the investigation right away.
- The staff member in charge should suspend the accused person from the performance of duties involving children until the official investigation has been completed.
- Cooperate fully with law enforcement officials.
- The unit leader or his agent will inform victim and victims' family of the steps that are being taken, and continue to keep them advised of the status of the investigation. If child abuse is confirmed, ask the victim and victims' family what action they would like to take in the matter and fully cooperate to address their requests within the bounds of a legal and prudent response. (Legal counsel should assist in this determination.)
- In an instance where child abuse is confirmed, the organization will immediately dismiss the worker from their position. Termination will be considered appropriate in the circumstances.
- In instances where evidence is inconclusive, the organization should take action with the advice of legal counsel in consultation with law enforcement officials depending on the strength of evidence available and after consideration of the victim and the victim's family's requests.
- The unit leader, in consultation with legal counsel, will determine the amount of information he believes is appropriate to relate to the organizations membership. Usually commenting in detail on an ongoing investigation is not wise.

24. Reporting Obligation

By Tennessee law, anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being physically abused, sexually abused, neglected or is dependent is required to report this information. If you suspect abuse, you should call your local Child Abuse Hot line and leadership should also be informed immediately of any suspected child abuse.

25. Reports required

Any worker who has cause to believe that a child's physical or emotional health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report that belief according to the following procedure:

- The worker shall report such belief to the unit leader, a member of the staff and/or leadership.
- The unit leader or staff member will immediately report to one of the following: The local Child Abuse Hotline or any local law enforcement agency.
- The unit leader or his agent will notify the parents of the child (unless the parent is the person responsible for the abuse or neglect.)
- The unit leader, or his agent, in consultation with the chairperson of the Personnel Committee will notify the appropriate legal counsel.
- The unit leader or his agent, will notify the organization's insurance agent that an abuse report has been filed with the appropriate local or state agency.

26. Incident report

The person making a report should identify:

- The name and address of the child.
- The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child.
- Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

27. Confidentiality

All reports of child abuse or neglect shall be held in absolute confidence. No person shall communicate any information concerning the alleged event to any person except as necessary to cooperate with any official investigation. Any breach of this confidentiality by an employee shall be cause for immediate dismissal. The CEO, in consultation with the official conducting the investigation may authorize limited additional disclosure if necessary to protect other children from harm in the near future, particularly where the person responsible for the abuse cannot be identified but in no case shall the identity of the victim or the accused person be disclosed except as required by law.

28. Investigation of alleged abuse or neglect

No person shall attempt to conduct a detailed investigation either through examination or interrogation of the child, the accused person or a witness. It is acceptable to obtain a reasonable amount of information to have cause to believe a child has been abused or neglected. Interviews shall be conducted only by authorized officials of the agency to whom the suspected crime has been reported or, when appropriate, by legal counsel or persons representing the organization in an official capacity. All employees and volunteers shall cooperate with the official investigation as requested.

29. Suspension of duties

A person accused of child abuse or neglect will be suspended from all duties involving children. This would include all childcare, teaching, transportation or sponsorship duties. The Personnel Committee is not authorized to conduct an investigation of the incident but is allowed to monitor any such investigation and receive confidential information concerning the

incident as may be necessary to determine issues concerning continuation of employment and compensation. The person accused should be suspended on “paid leave” until the investigation is completed. This removal from duty should occur in such a way that an innocent person is not immediately deemed guilty. There are false claims made each year. If the allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, the employee can be returned to their prior position.

30. Preservation or records

Copies of all documents relating to an event of abuse or neglect, including a list of all person known to be present or in the vicinity shall be transferred to the unit leader or his agent. They will review them to determine if the documents are complete in accordance with the organization’s policy. If any documents are missing, they shall make a written notation and transfer the documents to the business administrator who shall retain them until advised that all criminal and civil investigations and actions have been completed.

31. Care and Counseling

The staff shall encourage and assist the child and the parents in securing appropriate counseling, care and support. In the event the abuse or neglect involves a member or employee of the organization, the staff shall encourage and assist the individual in securing appropriate care and support, including third-party counseling, being mindful of the potential for a conflict of interest.

32. Liaison with the community

The CEO, or his appointed agent, will serve as the organization’s sole access to the media. The organization should emphasize to the public its position on child abuse, its concern for the victim and the extensive steps being taken to address the safety of all children.