



JAMES L. McKEOWN
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF WOBURN

Child Abuse Prevention Policy

The priority of James L. McKeown Boys & Girls Club of Woburn (“Club”) is the physical and emotional safety of its members, staff and volunteers. The Club maintains a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse.

The Club 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-One Contact Prohibition: The Club prohibits isolated one-on-one interaction between Club members 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 family member 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 and volunteer of James L. McKeown Boys & Girls Club is a mandated reporter. If a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of or has suspicion of child abuse or neglect they must immediately report to their supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable, the suspicion should be reported to the Executive Director. The incident will be immediately reported to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families by phone. A 51A report must then be filed within 48 hours of the phone call.

DCF Regional Office in Burlington, MA: (617) 520-8700

Child-At-Risk Hotline (24 hours): (800) 792-5200

REQUIRED TRAINING

The Club conducts the following training for all staff members and volunteers with direct repetitive contact with young people (at the intervals noted for each).

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 James L. McKeown Boys & Girls Club of Woburn

PHYSICAL INTERACTIONS

Every staff member and volunteer of the Club 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	Frontal hugs or kisses
Handshakes	Showing affection in isolated area
High-fives and hand slapping	Lap sitting
Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations)	Wrestling or piggyback/shoulder rides
	Tickling
	Allowing youth to cling to an adult's leg

VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Every staff member and volunteer of the Club 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

ABUSE AND SAFETY RESOURCES

The Club prominently displays BGCA-approved collateral that shares ethics hotline, crisis textline 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.