

# GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.**



## **BGCA Required Safety Training Video Policy Summary**

**Authorization Date: November 14, 2023**

### **Policy Statement**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kalamazoo (BGC) is committed to the physical and emotional safety of its members, staff, and volunteers. BGC maintains a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse. This policy is a summary of the required BGCA safety training videos and is adapted from “Keeping Your Boys & Girls Club Safe” and “Preventing Sexual Activity Between Adolescents,” by Boys & Girls Clubs of America: Spillett Leadership University Training.

### **Who Abuses Children in a Boys & Girls Club?**

A child might be abused in a Boys & Girls Club by:

- Another child
- A member or guest
- An employee or volunteer

### **When & Where Does Abuse Happen?**

There are six potentially dangerous situations at a Boys & Girls Club where most abuse happens:

1. Field trips or events
2. During unstructured times
3. In isolated or infrequently used locations
4. When age groups are mixed
5. When programs are short staffed
6. In activities involving water

### **Factors that Contribute to Misconduct or Abuse**

- Lack of Adult Supervision: members out of sight, staff distracted on their phone or talking with another staff member.
- High-Risk Activities: transitions, when members are crowded together, mixed age groups, and free time.
- High-Risk Locations: Secluded areas, stairwells, bathrooms, buses.
- Lack of Response by Adults: staff ignoring or downplaying the seriousness of the misconduct.

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## **Know Who May Be at Increased Risk**

- Increased Risk to Initiate Misconduct
  - Displaying sexualized Behavior
  - Making sexual comments or gestures
  - Making remarks about their own or another person's body
  - Threatening, bullying, teasing, or assaulting other members
  - Frequently breaking the rules or defying authority
  - Talking with mostly younger adolescents
- Increase Risk for Abuse
  - Are smaller or weaker
  - Have a physical, intellectual, or developmental disability
  - Are shy or isolated
  - Who are favored or teased – even in a friendly way – by staff
  - Display sexualized behavior

## **Best Practices**

- Monitor High-Risk Areas:
  - Bathrooms:
    - Never permit members to use the bathroom without asking permission first. That way you know exactly who is where and what you must do to adequately supervise them.
    - When possible, only allow one member to use the bathroom at a time.
    - If multiple members need to use the bathroom limit the number of members who enter the bathroom to the same number of stalls or urinals – prop the door open and stand nearby listening for any misconduct.
  - Secluded Areas:
    - Designate isolated areas as off-limits except with direct, constant supervision.
    - Walk through isolated areas to make sure only authorized individuals use them.
    - Lock up unused rooms and closets.
    - Keep window blinds raised and remove anything that blocks windows or doors.
    - Use signs to designate areas that are off-limits to kids.

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- Minimize Unstructured Time
  - Plan activities ahead of time so as soon as members arrive you have things for them to do.
  - Limit the area when members use – the smaller the area the easier it is for you to know what everyone is doing.
  - Keep kids involved in activities within your line of sight.
- Activities with Mixed Age Groups:
  - Keep kids separated by age.
  - When possible, group kids no more than two years apart in age.
  - Avoid letting older children supervise younger children.
  - Supervise children closely who make sexually explicit remarks or gestures.
  - Notify your supervisor about children who display sexualized behavior.
- Programs that are Short-Staffed:
  - Make sure you are always within the 1:20 adult to child ratio.
  - Call someone in to cover or merge groups of children to increase the number of adults present.

Pay attention when you are supervising children and avoid socializing with or being distracted by your coworkers.