CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY & PROCEDURES

Originally issued:	1/17/2022
Effective Date:	09/24/2026
Scheduled review date:	12/21/2026
Primary contact:	CEO

POLICY

The priority of Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaves and Lincoln Counties is the physical andemotional safety of its members, staff, and volunteers. Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaves and Lincoln Counties maintains a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaves and Lincoln Counties 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 Chaves and Lincoln Counties 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 isa 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 person, including every employee, volunteer, board member, contractor, and other adult participant, who knows or has a reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected must immediately make a report directly to the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), local law enforcement, or the appropriate tribal law-enforcement or social-services agency when applicable. The reporting person must not investigate the allegation, delay the report for supervisory approval, or rely on Club leadership or another person to make the report. After making the external report, the reporting person must immediately notify the Program Director and the CEO or designee unless doing so would create a safety concern or compromise the report or investigation. Club leadership will ensure that all additional reports required by ECECD, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, or another authority are completed within the required timeframes, including submission through the BGCA critical-incident system within 24 hours when required. Retaliation against a person who makes a good-faith report or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

REQUIRED TRAINING

Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaves and Lincoln Counties conducts and reports through a BGCA-approved process 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:

- BGCA-approved child abuse prevention
- BGCA-approved mandated reporting
- BGCA-approved grooming prevention

Annually:

- All the policies, including all safety policies, for Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaves and Lincoln Counties.

PHYSICAL INTERACTIONS

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

Appropriate

- Side hugs
- Handshakes
- High-fives and hand slapping

Inappropriate

- 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 Chaves and Lincoln Counties is required to maintain appropriate verbal interactions with minors. Appropriate and inappropriate interactions include but are not limited to the following:

Appropriate

- Positive reinforcement
- Child-appropriate jokes (no adult content)
- Encouragement
- Praise

Inappropriate

- 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

SOCIAL MEDIA & OFF DUTY CONDUCT

Refer to the Social Media & Off-Duty Conduct Policy for detailed guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable behaviors.

ABUSE AND SAFETY RESOURCES

Boys & Girls Clubs of Chaves and Lincoln Counties prominently display 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.