

GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.**



At the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell, Child Safety is Job No. 1

Ensuring child safety is fundamental to the mission of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell

The Safety and Wellbeing of Young People is Our Number One Priority

We work every day to create a safe, fun environment so kids can have every opportunity to be successful in life. We have ZERO tolerance for inappropriate behavior of any kind, including child sexual abuse or misconduct, and we put resources behind that stance.

Culture of Safety: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell continually updates its robust safety policies, programs and training for our staff and volunteers that are designed to promote child safety and protect young people from threats that are present in our society. We implement layers of safety policies and guidelines to keep our kids safe including:

- No guests are allowed in program areas unless they are accompanied by a staff or volunteer;
- Our professional staff and volunteers are all trained on safety practices and readily visible with color specific Club uniforms and badges;
- We have a full-time Licensed Clinical Social Worker and staff are trained on eCPR (emotional CPR) to impact emotional safety;
- We utilize School CNXT, a text based system to communicate with families in over 100 languages;
- Video surveillance cameras are recording in hallways and program spaces;
- The Lowell Police Department provides a Community Resource Officer at the Club whose role is to build relationships with our youth and families. They also have a substation located on our property.

Safety Policies: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell has comprehensive safety policies in place that protect youth – including, but not limited to, supervision, transportation, communication and prohibiting private one-on-one contact.

24-hour Toll-free Child Safety Hotline: We encourage all staff, members and families to report any incident or situation they feel is unsafe. Through our national partnership with [Praesidium](#), one of the nation's leading safety experts, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell members and staff have access to a confidential 24-hour toll-free Child Safety Hotline, [**866-607-SAFE \(7233\)**](tel:866-607-SAFE(7233)) or email [**SafeClub@Praesidiuminc.com**](mailto:SafeClub@Praesidiuminc.com).

Mandatory Background Checks: Mandatory criminal background checks are required every year for every staff and board member at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell. In addition, national criminal and sex offender background checks are required for any volunteer who has direct, repetitive contact with children. Background checks are conducted through Veriscreen Background Screening and the MA Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) system.

Required Immediate Reporting: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell staff and volunteers are all mandated reporters. We are required to report any critical incident/safety concern to local authorities immediately. We are also required to report any critical incident to Boys & Girls Clubs of America within 24 hours.

Mandatory Annual Safety Assessments: We complete a safety assessment each year to ensure we continually make improvements to safety at our Club.

Safety Trainings: Ongoing training and supervision of staff is critical. We participate in a wide variety of child safety training conducted such as workshops, policy review, webinars and distance learning. Nationally, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America engages leading third-party safety experts to provide guidance for our policies and approaches, including Praesidium, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, and the National Children's Advocacy Center.

Safety Committee: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell has a dedicated safety committee to provide input and guidance on local policies and safety strategies. Priorities and initiatives include:

- Annual Safety Review
- Policy & Procedure Review
- Initiate and approve safety-related facility improvements including upgrades to the fire alarm system, video surveillance system, internet security, alarm system, communication systems and exterior doors.

Mandatory Employee Reference: Any employee interested in moving to another Boys & Girls Club is required to have a reference from the previous Club, even if the Clubs are within the same community.

State and Local Laws: We comply with federal, state and local safety laws, including those impacting facilities and vehicles.

Safety Partnerships: Nationally, Boys & Girls Clubs of America works with leading experts in the areas of safety, security and technology to develop state-of-the-art solutions for Clubs. Partners include:

- National Child Safety Advisory Task Force, made up of leading experts and organizations
- Blue Ribbon Taskforce, comprised of local Club leaders charged with providing input on the safety direction and key safety initiatives
- Crisis Text Line, a confidential text message service for youth in times of crisis

Locally, the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell partners with experts to review our safety plans and procedures including:

- Lowell Police Department
- Lowell Fire Department
- City of Lowell Division of Development Services
- Fred C. Church Insurance

Nationally, Boys & Girls Clubs of America has advocated the passage of the [U.S. PROTECT Act](#), which improved background screening systems and access. The national organization has also partnered with the [FBI](#), the [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control](#) to contribute to the development of safety practices that benefit ALL youth-serving organizations.

Our young people deserve nothing less than our constant focus on their safety and our firm commitment to protect every child who is entrusted to our care at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell. To [learn more](#) about the Boys & Girls Club of America's *national* safety policies and actions, please visit Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Child Safety page, [here](#).

For questions or concerns regarding the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell's safety policies and actions, please contact Executive Director Joe Hungler at 978-458-4526 x 10 or jhungler@lbqc.org.