



# **BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF LAGUNA BEACH**

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## **Volunteer Handbook**

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**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF LAGUNA BEACH

## **Welcome to Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach**

Serving families in Laguna Beach, Aliso Viejo, Lake Forest, and Mission Viejo

"You are the bows from which your children, as living arrows, are sent forth."  
-Kahlil Gibran

"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world.  
For, indeed, that's all who ever have."  
-Margaret Mead



On behalf of the staff of Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach (BGCLB), we welcome you and thank you for your interest in volunteering with our organization. Your volunteer service is highly valued. The experience, skills, and enthusiasm that you bring will add a refreshing dimension to this organization. Though the work will be challenging at times, rest assured that your efforts will bring enrichment to the lives of our members and empower them to become positive role models and leaders in their communities.

In turn, we hope our volunteer program can offer you the same life-altering experiences. We are confident that, for whatever reason you chose to volunteer, you will find fulfillment through your work at Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach.

The purpose of this manual is to outline BGCLB's expectations for volunteers and to provide you with some basic youth development information so that you can begin your volunteer commitment feeling confident and prepared. Should you have any questions about any of the topics covered in this manual, feel free to discuss them with Club staff or the Community Engagement Director, at any time.

Thank you, again, for your commitment to the young people we serve!

**- Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach Staff**



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF LAGUNA BEACH

## Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to inspire and enable all young people, especially those that need us most, to realize their full potential as healthy, caring, and responsible adults.

## Our Aspirations

We aspire to ensure that our youth become responsible, productive society members and future leaders. By instilling our core values and beliefs at every level in the organization, we strive to set standards of excellence across all dimensions of youth services as a premier youth development organization. Together, we will:

Deliver a **youth development experience** embodying our philosophy that young people reach their fullest potential when they are provided with the highest-quality staff, facilities, and programming, in an a relationship rich environment that promotes respect, innovation, education, and fun.

Build a **diverse organization** of exceptional, motivated professionals who are able to develop an attractive career in an environment that fosters learning and respect.

Develop a **board of outstanding individuals** who contribute a distinctive combination of experience, personal involvement, and financial commitment to the achievement of our aspirations, and who gain in return the personal enrichment that comes from making a difference.

Collaborate with **neighborhood communities**, families, and organizations to enhance our collective impact while attracting investment to our common goal of shaping the future through our impact on today's youth.



## Section A:

# Volunteer Program Policies & Procedures

### **I. Background Checks**

In order to ensure the safety and well being of our Club Members, all volunteers whose commitment will last more than one day must complete criminal background checks. Results will be kept strictly confidential. Individuals with any record of youth-related and/or sexual offenses are not permitted to volunteer with BGCLB.

Volunteers cannot use background checks from other agencies or employment, in lieu of the BGCLB process.

### **II. Record Keeping**

Please remember, it is mandatory to sign in and out every time that you volunteer. Please do so in the Volunteer Sign-in Binder with your own Volunteer Sign-in Sheet at the Club's front desk or check in area. This is very important for safety, accuracy, and fundraising purposes.

Please notify the Community Engagement Director if your address, phone number, or email changes. There may be times when we will need to reach you. It is important that we have up-to-date information.

### **III. Your Volunteer Commitment**

A successful volunteer experience depends, in part, upon you setting realistic expectations of how much time you can give. Be honest with yourself. It is better to start out with just an hour or two a week and then add to the commitment later. Consistency in honoring your commitment is very important; staff and Club Members will be counting on you to be there. If you cannot come in on a particular day, due to illness or some other reason, please contact the appropriate Club personnel.

Because relationship building is a core component of the work we do at BGCLB, we ask that long-term, non-project-based volunteers try to commit to at least three months of service. But we also understand that people's lives change. Therefore, you have the right to terminate your volunteer commitment at any time -- without any reason. BGCLB reserves the same right. If/when you find that you are unable to continue volunteering,

please make every effort to come in one last time to say goodbye to the staff and Club Member(s) with whom you worked.

#### **IV. Your Role as a Volunteer**

Club personnel, as trained professionals, have the ultimate authority regarding Club policies and procedures. They officially represent BGCLB, and are held legally accountable for matters affecting the safety and welfare of Club Members. If you feel that a staff member is acting inappropriately or a policy or procedure is inappropriate or ineffective, feel free to speak to the Branch Director. However, it is always important that all volunteers respect staff decisions regarding member discipline and other Club procedures.

Volunteers are never responsible for contacting parents, schools, medical professionals, or others on behalf of BGCLB, unless specifically directed by appropriate Club personnel. If you suspect that an interaction is necessary between BGCLB and a parent, doctor, educator, etc., you should notify the appropriate Club personnel of your concerns, prior to any action taken.

As a volunteer, you are expected to maintain appropriate boundaries with Club Members. Relationships that develop beyond a volunteer capacity within the Clubs are not appropriate. Such relationships can include, but are not limited to sexual relationships, providing housing or transportation, providing or accepting money and/or gifts, one-on-one mentoring of youth that isn't regulated by BGCLB, and other acts that foster dependent relationships.

**PROTECT YOURSELF AND OUR CLUB MEMBERS!** A Club Member or his/her parents may misinterpret behavior that you perceive as harmless. Every kid needs a hug every now and then. But always be aware of what may or may not be considered appropriate with regards to physical contact with a youth. **Never work alone in a room with a child**, unless approval has been given and use of a room can be seen from adjacent areas in the Club, e.g. through a window or open door.

Volunteers are never allowed to provide transportation to Club Members in their own vehicles or in Club vehicles, unless they have submitted the proper paperwork and have been approved through the BGCLB administrative office, as in Branch Director or Area Director.

#### **V. Club Closings and Changes in Hours of Operations**

Please make yourself aware of flyers or posted announcements regarding any events that might excuse you from your commitment on a given day. Club personnel make their best efforts to notify or remind volunteers of any impending dates of Club closures or changes in operating hours. But your attention to this detail will ensure that you don't arrive at the Club to find the doors locked!

BGCLB offices and Clubs are closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day,

Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day before and after Thanksgiving, and the week of Christmas. **All Clubs close to members for a week prior to the beginning of the school year (late August) and the week following the end of the school year (late June), in order to prepare for changes in the Clubs' programming and activities.** Clubs may close or alter their operating hours at other times for staff in-services, field trips and other occasions.

## **VI. Discrimination and Harassment**

BGCLB is committed to diversity in its volunteer program. We do not discriminate in volunteer opportunities on the basis of veteran status, marital status, physical or mental disability, race, age, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, medical condition, political activity, or ancestry. Harassment by or directed toward volunteers, Club staff or Club Members will not be tolerated. Use of slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes and/or teasing should immediately be reported to the Branch Director or the Community Engagement Director.

## **VII. Mutual Respect and Disclosure**

BGCLB emphasizes a policy of mutual respect between volunteers, staff, and members. Self-respect and respect for others are absolutely necessary when serving young people. If at any time you feel as though there is a lack of respect in the Club environment, please take advantage of the support of program staff to provide support and mediation to resolve issues.

## **VIII. Club Rules**

Each site has a specific set of rules regarding conduct and attire (e.g. no gum chewing, no swearing, etc.). Please take the time to familiarize yourself with these rules. Volunteers, staff and Club Members, alike, are expected to follow these rules at all times.

## **IX. Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol Policy**

Smoking is prohibited inside all Clubs and within two blocks of all Clubs, unless in Laguna Beach which is a non-smoking community, as well as at BGCLB events. Volunteers should never engage in any activity with Club Members or take part in Club activities while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances. Furthermore, volunteers are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution or possession of illegal substances on Club time or on Club premises. BGCLB reserves the right to take all appropriate and lawful actions to enforce this substance abuse policy when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a volunteer has violated this policy.

## **X. Personal Safety and Injury**

Please be aware of personal safety while volunteering at BGCLB. Use reasonable judgment when lifting heavy objects, operating machinery or participating in any activity that may involve physical injury. In the event of an injury, please report it to the appropriate Club personnel.

BGCLB is not responsible for personal items that are lost or stolen. Please do not bring valuables to the Clubs.

## **XI. Emergency Procedures**

In the event of a medical emergency, volunteers should immediately alert the Club staff. The staff member will dial 911 to call emergency services.

Volunteers are never permitted to transport sick or injured members within the Club or to another location unless the threat of further injury or danger exists (e.g. fire).

In the event of an emergency, volunteers are to make their best and reasonable efforts to ensure Club Member safety takes priority in the event. Volunteers should make themselves aware of the location of emergency-related items, such as fire extinguishers and first-aid kits.

Volunteers should take universal precautions when possible. In the event there is a presence of blood or other bodily fluids, use of latex gloves is recommended.

## **XII. Dress and Grooming**

- **Name Tags:** Security is very important, and volunteers are identified not only by what they wear but with their name badge. The badge must be worn every day at eye level on the right or left side front shoulder of your body.
- **Pants, Skirts, Dresses and Skirted Attire:** Dresses and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which you can sit comfortably in public. Short, tight skirts that ride halfway up the thigh are inappropriate for volunteering. Mini-skirts, sun dresses, beach dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate for the Club (unless working in an Administration Assistant volunteer position).
- **Shirts:** Please wear Club T-Shirt to be easily distinguished as a volunteer from the Club Members, Club Staff, and anyone who comes to the Club. Golf-type shirts (pops), and turtlenecks are acceptable attire for work...preferably with our Club Approved Logo (size, color, etc.) Inappropriate attire for work includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans, halter tops and tops with bare shoulders.
- **Jewelry, Makeup, Perfume, and Cologne:** Should be in good taste. Earrings can be worn, however due to safety, hoops or dangled styles, spike backs, and plugs are not allowed.
- **Shoes and Footwear:** Conservative athletic or walking shoes, loafer, sneakers, boots, flats, dress heels, and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable for work. Thongs, Flip-flops, slippers, UGG boots, and any shoe with an open toe or back are not acceptable

at the Club. Closed toe and closed heel shoes are required to be worn when working with children.

- Hats and Head Covering: Baseball Caps with Club logos (i.e. RBI, Sponsors, ETC.) are allowed to be worn with the lid of the cap facing forward. Bandanas & scarves are also not allowed. Head Covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition are allowed.

Conclusion: If clothing fails to meet these standards, as determined by the Community Engagement Director, the volunteer will be asked not to wear the inappropriate item to work again. If the problem persists, the volunteer may be sent home to change clothes and will receive a verbal warning for the first offense. Progressive disciplinary action will be applied if dress code violations continue.

### **XIII. Phone Usage**

Our office telephones are reserved strictly for the business of the organization. Volunteers should inform their friends and relatives that they are to restrict personal calls except in the case of an emergency. Likewise, volunteers are asked to make calls of a personal nature only when absolutely necessary.

It is the policy of the Club not to disclose any personal telephone numbers or addresses of paid staff, volunteer staff or members.

Personal cell phone use is prohibited. Taking pictures of staff or members is prohibited.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF LAGUNA BEACH

## Section B

# Volunteering With Kids: A “Youth Development” Approach

*As a new Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach volunteer, you may have little or no experience working with children or youth. Don't worry! Our Clubs are staffed by trained professionals who will be there to give you guidance and support; however, a little bit of advance knowledge never hurts. Kids can be baffling at times. The following section is meant to give you the information that will help you walk through the doors of a Club for the first time, feeling confident and prepared to handle those occasional baffling moments. Of course, if you ever have any doubts about a situation, please don't hesitate to speak to a staff member.*

## **I. Stages of Youth Development for School-Age Children**

Research by child development theorists such as Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson has shown that all children go through specific stages of cognitive and emotional development. A brief explanation of these stages may help you understand what drives the actions and thoughts of a child or youth. However, keep in mind that many external forces influence a child's development. Therefore, some developmental characteristics may not be observed at the same age or at the same stage of development in different children.

### **Early Childhood (Ages 5 to 8)**

For younger youth in this age group, the Club may be the first time the child is away from their parent for an extended period during the day. Some have had limited schooling and can feel anxious or scared in the Club environment. This may result in complaints of “I don't feel well,” or “I want my mommy/daddy.” It is helpful to make the experience normal for them by taking a moment to say “this is a new experience, isn't it?” or “the Club feels a little bit big, doesn't it?” or “sometimes when I feel nervous or scared, my tummy hurts too.” By making that connection for the child, and naming what is happening, they often begin feeling better immediately.

Kids in this stage need and seek approval from adults. They enjoy group play. However, by the end of this stage, they begin to prefer same-gender activities. Though they are beginning to experience empathy for other people, they can be very egocentric –especially in the early years. They often cannot view the world from a perspective other than their own, which can lead to conflicts with their peers. They may not be aware that they have hurt someone's feelings or understand why whatever they may have said or did was wrong.

Kids in early childhood are naturally curious and very eager to learn, but they have short attention spans. When it comes to activities, they are more interested in the process, rather than the outcome. They often make up their own rules to games. They have a difficult time differentiating between fantasy and reality. Their thinking is very concrete. They learn better when their senses are engaged through demonstration, rather than verbal instruction alone. They are sensitive to criticism and failure. If a child does act up, avoid asking this age group “why” s/he did something. In this stage of development, the child honestly does not know.

When working with kids in this age group, remember that they have limited abilities, when it comes to attention span and reasoning. Be prepared to move on to something else, when a child gets restless. Let them follow their curiosity and to be creative in their play. Let them work on projects that they can complete successfully –but emphasize the process rather than the end result. Demonstrate whatever you are trying to teach, rather than just talking about it. Finally, small group activities will give them a chance to practice their social skills, while providing an opportunity for one-on-one attention. But don’t emphasize competition and failure. Instead, promote cooperation and provide positive feedback.

Youth in this age group respond well to a brief introduction to the activity and behaviors you expect before starting. This increases their ability to be successful and creates more enjoyment for all involved!

### **Middle Childhood (Ages 7 to 11)**

Kids in this age group seem to have endless energy. At this point in their lives, girls are maturing faster than boys. They still enjoy group activities. But they prefer same-gender peer relationships. They are impressed by older role models and are learning their behavior from those role models, as well as their parents.

Kids in middle childhood have ever-changing interests. Their thinking is becoming increasingly logical and they are beginning to use more generalizations. But they still need specific examples in order to grasp more complex ideas. Children in this age group have a wide range of individual academic abilities and reasoning skills. They are easily motivated by praise and recognition. But their confidence is easily eroded, when they are negatively compared to other youth. They often need one-on-one guidance to perform at their best capacity.

As a volunteer, you will do well to provide active, hands-on learning experiences for youth in this age group. When appropriate, use cooperative learning groups of the same gender. If possible enlist an older youth to help you work with them. Make sure that the tasks that you give a child are appropriate for his/her abilities. And compare results of a child’s work to that same child’s previous work –not to the results of other children. Lastly, remember that kids in the older range of this age group may look physically mature –but may still be emotionally immature at times. Just be patient and remember that they are still learning social skills. Provide constructive feedback on behavior and emphasize decision-making and problem solving.

Males in this age group become more physical and have a difficult time sitting still. If working on academics, it is helpful to have objects the youth can hold, touch and manipulate, that relate to the learning.

Girls in middle childhood begin to isolate one another and bully through words and isolation. When working with the girls, beware of name-calling (no matter how subtle) and plans of ending a friendship (“I won’t be your friend anymore”). While we know it passes, these threats feel very real for the child being ostracized and it is helpful for them to feel supported.

### **Teens (Ages 12 to 18)**

Teenagers go through rapid physical changes, especially in their early teens. Their sexuality is emerging. This is an awkward time for youth. They are often uncomfortable with their changing bodies. As well, hormonal changes can cause mood swings. This awkwardness tends to fade as they reach their later teen years. But body image often continues to be an important issue for them. Teens are often troubled by thoughts of inferiority and self-doubt –especially in their early teens. As a result of these changes, teens require more food and more sleep than in previous stages. Teens will often complain of feeling tired.

As they get older, teens become less dependent upon their parents for emotional support/acceptance and are increasingly concerned about their status among their peers. They want to be part of a group. But they also want to be recognized as unique individuals. They often seek adult leadership roles. They become more interested in co-educational activities and dating becomes an important part of their social life.

Teens are much better able to think of concepts in abstract terms. They are able to use deductive reasoning and to consider hypothetical situations. Teens are also increasingly able to see the world through someone else’s eyes. They are beginning to realize that other people’s thoughts may not be the same as their own and that neither view may reflect the true reality of a situation. They are beginning to develop a sense of community and concern for the well being of others.

Obviously, working with teens has its own unique set of challenges. Early adolescents may be more dramatic and their feelings may seem more extreme. Be careful not to embarrass or criticize. Whenever possible, address problematic behavior privately. Topics regarding sexuality and puberty may arise. These are sensitive matters to teens and adults alike. Be willing to offer honest information without judgment or trivialization. But don’t feel like you must go outside of your comfort level. If, at any time, you feel uncomfortable providing information, do not hesitate to refer the issue or question to a BGCLB staff member. Teens will maintain respect for you if you are honest, even if not answering their original question. You may wish to respond by stating, “I prefer not to discuss/answer that.”

Allow teens to plan activities and set their own goals, as much as possible. But always include some type of outcome evaluation. Allow them to explore their own personal philosophies about life through learning experiences related to self-discovery and

interpersonal growth. Offer opportunities for them to practice their problem-solving skills. But provide supervision with little interference.

Try to recognize those competencies in which they excel and give them plenty of opportunities to achieve. Help them improve their sense of self-worth by placing an emphasis on personal development, rather than peer competition. Lastly, give teens responsibility and set expectations for follow-through. Allow them to explore their identities, values, and beliefs. And, if applicable, encourage community service projects that offer an opportunity to be of service to others.

## **II. Effective Supervision & Discipline Techniques**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Laguna Beach sets high standards of behavior for our members. Misbehaviors always result in some kind of action. We don't expect you to be "babysitters" for our Club Members. But, as a volunteer, you can help to REMIND kids of how to follow a rule, as well as serve as a role model. A key thing to remember is that if you want young people to treat you with respect, you must treat them the same way. Try to say "please" and "thank you" when correcting a child's behavior. Moreover, remember to follow the rules yourself (e.g. don't chew gum in the Club.) If all else fails, get a staff member and he or she will take charge of the situation.

### **What Makes A Child Misbehave?**

All children misbehave at some time or another. But there always seems to be one or two kids who are constantly getting into trouble. It helps to understand that most kids act up for a reason. One common reason that a child misbehaves is because he/she wants attention. As a volunteer, be aware if you are ignoring the less popular kids or the ones with whom you have the most difficult time, they may be the ones who need your attention the most.

Children may have difficulties following rules or directions if they are hungry or tired. Clubs do provide snacks and participate in the summer lunch program to augment other sources, but they are not designed to meet all the food needs of our youth.

A child may also act out if he or she is uncomfortable with a given situation. The child may not feel welcome or may not fully understand what is expected in a given situation. Try to create a warm and non-intimidating environment. And make certain that each child fully understands what is expected of him or her. Similarly, a child may be afraid of failing at a given task and may act out in an attempt to get out of performing the task. Making certain that the task that is presented is appropriate for the abilities of all the kids who are present will help –as will words of encouragement and praise. Finally the child may not be interested in the activity that is going on or may feel it is too easy or too difficult. Finding an alternative task for the child may remedy the situation.

What is the best way determine the cause of a child's misbehavior? Just ask the child! If you can determine the reason, you can solve the problem. The best way is to privately talk to the child and determine what he or she is thinking and feeling. It is not your responsibility to meet all the needs of the child, but please partner with our Club staff. You may become aware of basic needs of the child that staff is not yet aware of.

## **Youth-Centered Discipline**

Unfortunately, discipline is sometimes a necessary part of volunteering with youth. Some methods work better than others. Youth-centered discipline is a proven way of teaching self-control, rather than just a vehicle for punishment; however, it does not teach consequences to behavior. Some consequences are natural and not imposed by an adult, such as when a child trips over another child while running in the games room. But letting natural consequences serve as a learning tool is not always appropriate. Sometimes adults need to help kids understand that certain behaviors cause problems for others and will result in specific consequences –e.g. making a child pick up puzzle pieces that he/she has spread all over the floor and then abandoned.

When possible, youth-centered discipline also allows youth to be actively involved with determining rules and consequences. If employing this method, you should be certain that the rules are age-appropriate and that the youth involved fully understand what is expected. At the same time, limit the number of explicit rules. It is possible to overwhelm kids with so many rules that they forget them. Finally, you may find that some rules don't work and/or others may no longer be needed as time passes. Revisions can be made at any time, but the youth should be included in this process as well.

Remember the importance of consistency when using consequences to teach kids. If rules and consequences are only enforced some of the time or only with certain kids, then children will be less likely to take consequences into consideration. If, however, the kids learn that every time they act up they will have consequences, then the problems are less likely to surface. Too many warnings are ineffective. In order to be effective, you should always say what you mean and be willing to carry out any consequences that have been set. But if you realize that you are wrong, you should admit it.

It is also very important to remember that kids learn from positive consequences as well as negative ones. Too often, "bad" behavior is much easier for us to notice than "good" behavior. But kids are not only learning what not to do, but also what they should do. Acknowledging good behavior can go a long way in motivating kids. Remember to let a youth know that you have noticed when the young person made the right decisions and acted appropriately.

Finally, never ridicule or belittle a child. You are not to hit a Club Member for any reason. And you should only raise your voice when it is absolutely necessary. Treating youth with courtesy and respect is paramount to their development. When a child misbehaves, you should attack the action –not the child.

## **Kids, Conflict, & Aggression**

Conflict is a natural part of life. It occurs when people have incompatible wants and needs or different interests. Kids are limited in how they deal with conflict. Therefore, they typically react to conflict in 3 ways: fight, flight, or tattling. When a child is angry or frustrated, he or she may resort to verbal or physical aggression. Such aggression can happen as the result of genuine conflict or play-fighting/teasing that has gotten out of hand. Younger kids, who

lack the ability to express what they are feeling, are more likely to resort to physical aggression, while older kids will be more likely to use verbal aggression to express themselves.

As a volunteer, you can serve as a valuable role model by showing our Club Members the proper way to handle conflict is through non-aggressive actions. Obviously, on those rare occasions that a physical fight occurs, you should get a staff member immediately and let him or her take control of the situation. But on other occasions, you may have the opportunity to use a conflict as a learning experience. When the opportunity presents itself, you can teach them the following strategies for handling conflict. And they may come in handy for you at a more personal level, when trying to resolve a conflict that you may be having with a specific child.

- Negotiation is when the conflicting parties sit down, discuss the differing points of view and come to an agreement as to which viewpoint is the best.
- Compromise is used when the parties both agree to sacrifice something in order to end the conflict.
- Taking turns is a good strategy to employ when kids are fighting over a game or some other piece of equipment. Just make sure that the time is divided evenly and that all kids get an equal turn.
- Active listening occurs when each participant shows that he/she understands what the other party is trying to communicate.
- Threat-free explanation allows each person to express his/her opinion without attacking the other person. Emotions are kept under control.
- Apologizing goes a long way, when used in combination with another strategy. It does not always have to be an admission of wrong-doing. Instead, it can serve as an expression of concern about the other person involved. (Ex: "I'm sorry you were hurt as a result of ...")
- Soliciting intervention occurs when you ask someone who isn't involved in the conflict to help find a solution.
- Postponing the discussion is often a good strategy for letting emotions settle down before addressing the conflict.
- Distraction is a good way to deal with insignificant conflicts among younger kids with short attention spans. You simply turn their attention to some other interesting activity.
- Humor is often a good way to diffuse an emotional situation, before attempting to find resolution.
- Chance. Make the final decision by flipping a coin or drawing straws.

These strategies are all simple in nature. Perhaps the most difficult part is knowing when to employ each strategy in any given moment. And, of course, you may find that you can't come up with a solution on your own. No worries. Never hesitate to take a problem to a staff member.

## But What Do I Do When...?"

Kids aren't the only people who can benefit from concrete examples! So below are some common scenarios and solutions to keep in mind.

- *"Jane said I could..."*

Ask the adult to whom the child is referring, to make sure. Alternatively, tell the child that he/she can't do it until you hear from the adult yourself.

- *Child is acting out, is hostile, or treats you disrespectfully.*

Take the child aside and speak to him/her out of earshot of other youth. Make it clear that the behavior is unacceptable. If the child is angry, let him/her express the anger, in an appropriate way. If he/she is hostile towards you, express displeasure about the manner in which he/she is speaking. Finally, offer solutions to the problem. If the child remains a problem, get a staff member immediately.

- *The child just does not like me!*

As is the case with adults, some people just don't gravitate to other people. Don't take it personally. Their dislike for you is most likely more of an indication of their needs than the nature of your personality. And remember, kids sometimes must challenge authority, in order to grow as individuals. Unfortunately, from time to time, you may be that authority figure!

- *Child swears or uses inappropriate language.*

Evaluate the situation. How old is the child? For a teen, it might be appropriate just to address with a quick word, like "watch your language please," or "not in the Club please," or "remember, there are little kids here." For younger kids, it is appropriate to speak to them sternly, explain the disrespect involved in saying bad words. You may also take privileges away or give child a time out. If you don't feel comfortable with this, defer to staff.

- *Youth is bullying or picking on other kids.*

Talk to the youth. Tell a story about being picked on when you were a kid, to teach empathy. It is important to listen to this child because bullies often have no other way to express themselves. Ask them why they are doing this; spend a little extra time with this person if you can. Another option is to give this child a task, like sweeping the games room or helping sweep the kitchen. Offer to do it with them.

- *Youth is "bored."*

This is where volunteers are especially helpful. A "bored" kid is someone who usually needs a little one-on-one attention. This is a chance to really ask questions like "what school do you go to?" "How many brothers and sisters do you have?" Time will pass quickly for a child when he or she feels cared for.

- *The Tattletale: “He’s bugging me!” “She said the b-word!” (Etc., etc.)*

This is hard because we encourage kids to tell staff about their problems with each other before they get out of hand. But we also want them to learn how to resolve the little things themselves. Some kids DO get out of hand with “telling.” Always acknowledge what the kid has told you. Assess the situation. Is it something like an imminent fight that needs intervention? Or is it something smaller? If it’s a small thing, engage the child in a conversation that causes him/her to think about the situation critically. (e.g. “That’s terrible! Why did he do that? Can you tell me how that made you feel? Have you tried talking to him about it?”) This makes your job easier and lets the young person learn a bit about how to solve his or her own problems. Use your own judgment. But, as always, if you’re not sure, ask a staff member.

## Boundaries for Volunteers

Boundary violations are often a result of good intentions; however, they may foster situations that are not in the best interest of our members. While you may be very confident with some of these, you may not have considered all the possibilities with other situations. Our general guideline involves asking: **Does this action or inaction pose a risk to the youth, the organization or myself?** While not all of the tips below pose a risk to safety, they are best practices.

Some tips to remember:

1. **Do not loan/give money to youth** – There are often compelling reasons to want to break this boundary (“I’m hungry,” “I need to call my mom,” or “I need bus fare”), but the Clubs are equipped to handle true situations of need. Youth sometimes look for opportunities or are having limits imposed and are trying to bypass their agreements or responsibilities. If you do become aware of financial or basic needs, please notify Club staff.
2. **Avoid having youth in your lap** – This can be extremely challenging, but it places you at risk. Youth or observers may misinterpret your actions/intent. An option would be to say, “How about if you sit beside me instead?” A helpful rule to remember is the “ten-second rule of touch.” You should refrain from touching any Club Member for more than ten seconds.
3. **Refrain from bringing valuables to the Club** – Unfortunately, phones, iPods, purses and wallets are not safe in the Club. While most of our members act responsibly, it is best not to place a child in a position where their developing ability to make sound moral judgments is tested.
4. **Be cautious about questions that start with “have you ever used…” or “if I tell you something you have to promise not to tell…”** - We don’t always know the context of the statements coming from youth and if you find yourself receiving information from Club members that would possibly jeopardize their safety, we encourage you to ask open ended questions. If you feel comfortable engaging is

such a discussion you can ask questions such as, “Is there something you want to tell me about that?” or “How do you feel about that?” We also encourage volunteers not to make any promises that you cannot keep. If the information a Club member discloses is harmful to them or someone else, then you are required to inform staff.

5. **Do not feel that you must answer all questions that may come from our Club Members (“How old were you the first time you had sex?”)** – We do not encourage personal disclosure from volunteers and suggest responding by saying, “I don’t care to answer that question,” or, “I don’t feel comfortable with your question,” or, “That is very personal information.” You can refer youth to resources or to staff if you feel comfortable doing so, but we ask that you maintain your relationship boundaries.
6. **Club Members may ask you, “Can you give me a ride home?”** – The answer to this question is *a/ways* “no.” BGCLB has strict policies against volunteers transporting youth in personal vehicles. As stated previously, Clubs are equipped to handle situations of need so please advise staff if a Club Member has asked you for a ride and they will tend to them.

Lastly, please remember that Club staff are there for you. You may approach them if you would like advice on boundaries or if you need other support.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF LAGUNA BEACH

### **Volunteer Handbook Receipt and Acceptance**

I have received a copy of the Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach Volunteer Handbook and I understand that I am responsible for reading the policies and practices described within it. I agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained herein, I understand that the policies and benefits contained in this handbook may be added to, deleted or changed by the Club at any time. I understand that neither this handbook nor any other written or verbal communication by my management representative is intended to in any way create a contract of employment.

I understand that my volunteerism is “at-will”, which permits the company to terminate the relationship at any time for any reason with or without notice. Nothing in this handbook is intended to guarantee an assignment for a specific duration.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF LAGUNA BEACH

**Volunteer Waiver and Liability Release Form**

In consideration of my desire to serve as a volunteer at the Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach (Club), I hereby assume all responsibility for any and all risk of property damage or bodily injury that I may sustain. Further, I, for myself and my heir, executors, administrators and assigns, hereby release, waive and discharge the Club and its officers, directors, employees, agents and volunteers of and from any and all claims which I or my heirs, administrators and assigns ever may have against any of the above for, on account of, by reason of or arising in connection with any volunteer efforts in which I participate, and hereby waive all such claims, demands and causes of action.

Further, I expressly agree that this release, waiver and indemnity agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the State of California, and that if any portion thereof is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

I currently have no known mental or physical condition that would impair my capability for full participation as intended or expected of me.

Further, I have carefully read the foregoing release and indemnification and understand the contents thereof and sign this release as my own, free act.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ BGCLB Admin: \_\_\_\_\_



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF LAGUNA BEACH

**Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach Volunteer Photo Release**

In consideration of the permission granted to me by the Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach (Club) to participate and/or have my video, audio, photographic and other copyrighted materials used (hereinafter referred to, collectively, as “My Participation”) in the volunteer Program, I hereby release the Club, the State of California, the Board of Directors, their partner organizations, and their officers, employees and agents from all actions, damages, or claims which I or my assigns may have against them which may be incurred as a result of My Participation in the above-described Program.

Further, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Club, the Board of Directors, their partner organizations, and their officers, employees and agents from any liability, loss or expenses arising from any claim or litigation that My Participation in the Program including my statements or actions, or material furnished by me violated or infringed the rights of third parties.

I authorize the use of my name, voice, photograph, likeness, performance and/or biography by the Club, the Board of Directors, their partner organizations, and their officers, employees and agents in connection with any use of a product arising out of My Participation in the above-described Program. I authorize the Club to obtain and hold copyrights in such Program and products, and to edit my performance and materials in its sole discretion.

I understand that the Club, and their partner organizations, have no obligation to air the Program, and that I will receive no monetary compensation for the rights granted herein. I understand and affirm that this Authorization and Release shall be considered consent to such use by the Club under the provisions of California Statutes.

I, the undersigned, am at least 18 years of age. I have read this Performance Authorization, Release, and Waiver of Liability and understand all its terms. I execute it voluntarily and with full knowledge of its significance.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

Thank you for volunteering for the Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Beach!