

Staying Safe from Bullying

- **Verbal bullying** is saying or writing mean things, including teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, and threatening to cause harm.
- **Social bullying** involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes leaving someone out on purpose, telling other kids not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors, and embarrassing someone in public.
- **Physical bullying** is hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes hitting/kicking/pinching, spitting, tripping/pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, and making mean or rude hand gestures.
- **Cyberbullying** is bullying using electronic technology. It includes mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Help your child understand what bullying is and make sure they know what to do about it. First and most important, help them understand that they should not bully others.

- Talk to your child about how to stand up to kids who bully. Give tips like using humor and saying "Stop" directly and confidently.
- Talk about what to do if those actions don't work, like walking away or getting help from an adult.
- Talk about strategies for staying safe, like staying near adults or groups of other kids.
- Talk regularly with your children about their online activity. Monitor their social media accounts by friending/following them or having another trusted adult do so. Help your child understand that anything posted online can be accessed by anyone.

Safe Travel

Until they are at least 10 years old, children have not developed the maturity required to cross the road safely without holding an adult's hand. Talk your child through the 'STOP! LOOK! LISTEN! THINK!' routine every time you cross the road:

- **STOP!** One step back from the curb.
- **LOOK!** For traffic to your left, right and left again.
- **LISTEN!** For the sounds of approaching traffic.
- **THINK!** Whether it is safe to cross.
- Always look and listen for traffic as you cross the road.

NEVER leave a child of any age in a vehicle without adult supervision. A small child may rapidly suffer dehydration, heat exhaustion and consequent organ failure. Older children could play games that may lead to tragedy.

Sports Safety

Among the most common and life-threatening sports injuries are concussions: a brain injury caused by a blow to the head or body. Concussions can be difficult to identify because they can happen even if a person remains conscious. Be aware of the symptoms so you know when to seek medical attention for your child. Common symptoms are:

- Headache, nausea or vomiting;
- Confusion, difficulty remembering or paying attention;
- Balance problems, dizziness, slow reaction time or blurry vision;
- Irritability or sensitivity to light noises; and
- Loss of consciousness.

It is always better to err on the side of caution when seeking out medical care for head injuries.

Bike & Skating Safety

- Children should always wear a helmet for all wheeled sports activities.
- Actively supervise your children until you're sure they are responsible enough to ride/skate on their own.
- Before age 10, limit riding to sidewalks, parks or bike paths.
- Teach your kids to be alert and watch for cars and trucks.
- Tell your kids to ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, not against it.

Water Safety

Children drown in silence. Drowning is one of the most common causes of death in children ages 1-14. Drowning often occurs silently when an unsupervised child is near water – and it takes only seconds to drown. Although most drowning incidents occur in residential swimming pools, children can drown in just one inch of water, such as in buckets, bath tubs, wading pools, diaper pails and toilets. In addition, hot tubs, spas and open waters, such as oceans, rivers and lakes, pose a drowning threat to older children. Never leave your child unsupervised near water at or in the home, or around any body of water.

Kitchen Safety

Accidents can happen very quickly. Limit the risk of scald and burns to children:

- Ensure pot handles are turned inwards.
- Keep your clothing away from heat and tie back long hair. Fabrics and loose clothing can catch fire easily.
- Store flammable materials away from heat.
- Ensure all hazardous substances and medications are stored out of the reach of children.

Your Child's SAFETY PRIORITY #1!

Boys & Girls Clubs believe your child's safety is our top priority. This brochure has tips about staying safe at home, in recreation programs like ours and others in the community, when you're traveling, and other important situations that you and your child will experience. Knowing the facts and talking about them with your child will help your child be safer. Please read these safety tips and consider how you can use them in your family. Most importantly, talk with your child about these safety tips and make sure your kids feel comfortable talking to you about anything that is on their mind.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS



Safety at the Boys & Girls Club and Other Youth Program Sites

The following tips apply to the Boys & Girls Club as well as Public & Private Schools, Instructional Centers (dance, martial arts, and gymnastics), Church Camps, etc.

When your child is participating at the Club in a program area, they are within eyesight of a staff member. This is not the case for closed activity areas. Kids can tell when a room is closed because the door is closed and the lights are off. Not every program area at the Club is open 100% of the day. For example, the arts and crafts room or gymnasium may close because we staff our facilities based on the number of children in the building. Closing some rooms helps keep kids together and well-supervised in the open rooms. Children must be taught to not enter rooms that are closed.

As in schools and most facilities running programs for youth, staff are not positioned in the restroom. Staff members at the Boys & Girls Club do regular checks of the restrooms throughout the day, but there is no adult supervision 100% of the time in the restroom.

Parents can help the Club make sure their children are always safe by reinforcing the following rules:

- Do not enter a closed activity area. Doors closed and lights off are key indicators of a closed area.
- Areas of the building that are not part of the program area should also be considered “closed” and off limits, like corners of the building, stairways, ramps, etc.
- Do not enter or linger in closed program areas.
- Do not linger or play in the restroom. Enter the restroom, do your business and leave.
- Never enter a closed program area or bathroom stall with another club member or adult. Closed areas are just that: CLOSED. Stalls are for one person at a time only.
- If a club member or adult asks you to enter a closed program area or bathroom stall, say NO and immediately tell a staff member.
- If you ever see club members in a closed program area or more than one child in a restroom stall, tell a staff member immediately.
- If you ever feel uncomfortable, tell a staff member immediately.



TALK TO YOUR CHILD. Make sure they know the rules and that they are comfortable telling you anything that is on their mind.

Online Safety

- Put your child’s online computer in a common area.
- Establish rules for Internet use.
- Supervise Internet use — especially chat.
- Talk about the Internet — “What’s new online?”
- Review screen names and buddy lists periodically with your child.
- No profiles for anyone under the age of 13. If the child is 13 or older, use appropriate profiles.
- No home pages for young children. Supervise content for older kids.
- No web cams unless all use is CLOSELY supervised.
- Supervise any picture swapping.
- Teach your kids about “Online Stranger Danger.” Tell your child not to exchange personal information like a phone number, address, or picture with people they meet online. No meeting in person — ever.
- Use a filtering program and/or parental controls available through your Internet service provider.
- **Most importantly**, tell your kids that you love them. If you don’t, there is no shortage of “bad people” on the Internet who are eager to exploit your child.

Signs your child might be at risk of online child exploitation:

- Your child receives mail, gifts and/or packages from someone you do not know.
- Your child receives phone calls from adults (mostly men) you do not know.
- You find pornography on your child’s computer.
- Your child spends a great deal of time online — especially at night or unsupervised.
- Your child becomes withdrawn or secretive about his/her online activities.

Keeping Your Child Safe from Sexual Abuse

It is never too early to talk to your child about his or her body. For young children, teach about safe touches and unsafe touches. Help your child understand that forced or tricked touching of private body parts is unsafe. Be sure your child knows it is OK to say NO to any unwanted touch, from anyone. Teach your child that it is important for them to tell you or another trusted adult if they are uncomfortable with any touch.

Children and young people can be sexually abused by others, whether they are the same age, younger or older. Some children experiment and engage in sexual play, which is usually age appropriate. It is important not to criminalize behavior that is a perfectly normal and healthy part of growing up. However, children can sexually abuse others and what may seem normal and harmless may in fact be abuse. Warning signs of peer sexual abuse include:

- An age difference of two years or more between the children.
- One child is significantly more dominant than the other.
- One child is significantly more vulnerable than the other. This may include a physical or mental disability, confidence, physical strength, etc.
- There has been use of threats, bribes, or coercion to secure compliance or to maintain secrecy.

If you are worried that a child may be sexually harming another, always seek advice.

We hope this brochure will help you and your family be more prepared to keep your child safe. The tips in this brochure do not guarantee your child’s safety. If you are ever concerned about your child’s safety, please seek expert advice.