



1 April 2024

**Dear Volunteer or Staff Member,** \_\_\_\_\_

Welcome to BYC!

At BYC, we take our responsibility to care for children very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for all BYC volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protect the children in our programs, you, and the mission of BYC. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

**Sincerely,**

BYC Board of Directors



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL (Child Services)

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## Overview of the BYC Safety System

Because we care for children and desire to protect them, BYC requires all volunteers and staff members to complete **3 SAFETY STEPS** *before volunteer work begins.*

### **STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment Prevention Training**

BYC's policies and procedures require that volunteers and staff members avoid abusive behavior of any kind. Volunteers and staff members (including but not limited to, Commissioners, Coaches, Board of Directors, and any individual who has direct contact with children registered in any of our programs) are required to report any policy violations to the Sport Commissioner(s) and the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors.

Volunteers and staff members should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in 'grooming' a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse. The program objectives are intended to clearly communicate to an *inappropriate applicant* the barriers to access to children at BYC. In addition, the training describes measures in place to equip other volunteers or staff members to recognize abuser characteristics and behaviors, as well as reporting requirements.

To equip BYC volunteers and staff members with information necessary to protect a child from sexual abuse or maltreatment, BYC requires all volunteers and staff members to complete the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training provided online through our Sports Engine applications.

Sexual Abuse Awareness Training is required for all volunteers and staff members and must be renewed every 3 years. SportsEngine will track trainees and identify renewal dates.

### **STEP TWO: Criminal Background Check**

BYC requires that all volunteers and staff members undergo a criminal background check. The background checks are as follows and can be accessed through our webpage: [Background Check \(brandywineyouthclub.com\)](http://brandywineyouthclub.com).

BYC requires **ALL VOLUNTEERS & COACHES (head coaches and assistant coaches) to be in compliance with PA Act 153.**

1. **National background check** once every 2 years. This clearance is done FREE of charge for any BYC volunteer.
2. **PA Criminal Reference Check – SP4-164 (required every 36 months)**. Result will be emailed back to the volunteer and can be printed out or saved. *Volunteers will be responsible for any fees associated with obtaining this clearance.*

Applicants can go to the Pennsylvania Access To Criminal History website and apply for their criminal record check online with the Pennsylvania State Police.

3. **PA Child Abuse History Clearance – CY113 (required every 36 months)**. Result will be emailed back to the volunteer and can be printed out or saved. *Volunteers will be responsible for any fees associated with obtaining this clearance.*
4. **FBI Criminal Background Check (required if the volunteer has not lived in PA for 10 continuous years, required every 36 months)**. Result will be emailed back to the volunteer and can be printed out or saved. Volunteers will be required to pay the fee for this clearance. Applicants may register online.
5. **Concussion prevention education (live seminar or on-line learning module completed annually)**. Result will be emailed back to the volunteer and can be printed out or saved.

### **STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures**

Volunteers and staff members are required to review the policies contained in this manual and click to sign that indicates you have read and understood the material and agree to comply with policy requirements.

## Child Safety Policy

### **ABUSE TOLERANCE**

BYC has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in all programs and activities. It is the responsibility of every volunteer and staff member at BYC to act in the best interest of each child in every program.

If volunteers or staff members observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to immediately report the observations to an immediate supervisor and the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS**

BYC is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the BYC Board of Directors and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to a supervisor and the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors.

Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to ‘groom’ a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report ‘grooming’ behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor and the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors.

### **ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES**

BYC staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all BYC policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal or disciplinary action. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors as well as entire BYC Board of Directors.

## **Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

### **REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY**

To maintain a safe environment for our children, BYC staff members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to abuse of a child should be directed to an immediate supervisor, or the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF PROHIBITED OR HARMFUL ACT**

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from all child interaction and BYC activities. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or child protective agency.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children or vulnerable populations at BYC. If the person is a contractor, staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of the contract or employment with BYC.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of employment of a staff member or employee. Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children or vulnerable populations at BYC.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

BYC's POSITION POLICY TO REPORT **ALL** SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE, REGARDLESS OF STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS.

### **RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE**

The BYC Board of Directors will take appropriate action on behalf of the Program when a report of abuse occurs.

### **WHEN A CHILD HAS BEEN VICTIMIZED**

If a staff member or volunteer has knowledge or a suspicion that a child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the information will be reported to supervisory staff and the appropriate authorities as outlined above.

In addition to notifying the appropriate authorities (if required), BYC will provide the child or the child's parent/caregiver/guardian with information to allow the child (or parent, on the child's behalf) to obtain assistance and intervention, as well as available counseling options.

## **BATHROOM SUPERVISION AND ASSISTANCE GUIDELINE**

### **School-age children**

Staff members and volunteers should never take or enter a restroom with a lone child.

If a staff member or volunteer must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, he or she should seek out the child's parent or another volunteer to accompany him/her. If a parent or other volunteer is not available to accompany, he/she should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child requires assistance, the worker should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing their activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.

Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another staff member or volunteer.

### **Special needs**

Staff members or volunteers shall never offer restroom assistance to an individual with special needs unless directed and supervised with a parent or guardian present.

## **MEDICATION**

No medication may ever be given to a child by a staff member or volunteer under any circumstances.

## **GIFT GIVING**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from providing special gifts to any individual child. Special occasions or special accomplishments should receive group acknowledgement and can easily be rewarded with group recognition (i.e., mention during announcements; have the entire group sing Happy Birthday, etc.) Any requests for variance from this policy must be addressed to the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors.

## **INTOXICANTS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in the facility, during a Program activity, or while working with children at BYC. Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from providing alcohol or illegal drugs to children.

## **TOBACCO & VAPING**

BYC is a tobacco and vape-free facility. BYC requires staff members and volunteers to refrain from the use or possession of tobacco products including smokeless and vape products in the facility, and while in the presence of children or their parents. BYC staff members and volunteers are prohibited from providing such products to children.

## **NUDITY**

Staff members and volunteers at BYC should never be nude in the presence of children in their care.

## **ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN**

BYC recognizes that meeting program objectives may occasionally require that staff members and volunteers interact with children on an individual basis. Workers should observe the following guidelines when interacting with children:

### **Individual Meetings**

Staff members and volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual child at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed. There will be no one-to-one meetings between a staff member or a volunteer and a child behind closed doors. If a circumstance arises where a private one-to-one meeting does occur, the staff member or volunteers will notify the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors immediately before or after the meeting.

### **Transportation**

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be able to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers participate in the transportation of children:

- 1) Children should never be transported without parental/legal guardian permission.
- 2) Children should be transported directly to their destination. No unauthorized stops should be made.
- 3) Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- 4) No cell phones may be used by the driver while providing transportation for children.
- 5) No drivers under age 25 may provide transportation for children.
- 6) Children should not use a vehicle belonging to a staff member or volunteer.

## **PARENTAL/LEGAL GUARDIAN CONTACT**

Parents or legal guardians who leave their children in the care of BYC staff members and volunteers for services and activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in BYC activities.

## **PARENTAL/LEGAL GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT**

Parents or legal guardians are encouraged to be a part of or present for all services and programs in which their children are involved at BYC. A parent or legal guardian accompanied by a child to any BYC program or activity is responsible for their child's safety.

## **VOLUNTEER PARENTS/LEGAL GUARDIANS**

A parent or legal guardian who desires to participate in such a way as to have ongoing contact with children in the BYC program other than his/her own will be considered a Volunteer. All Volunteers will be required to complete the three steps listed above on page 4.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

BYC is committed to protecting the children in our care. BYC has implemented a physical contact policy that will promote a positive, nurturing environment while protecting children. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of BYC staff members or volunteers must always foster trust – personal conduct must be above reproach. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in BYC programs:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and children are important for a child's development and are generally suitable in the BYC program setting.
2. Physical affection should be appropriate to the child's age. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection should be immediately reported to the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors.
3. Physical contact and affection should only be given when in the presence of other children or BYC staff and volunteers. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misinterpreted as such when more than two individuals are present, and the touch is open to observation.
4. Do not force any physical contact, touch or affection upon a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.

## **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

At the end of the program day or activity, BYC volunteers and/or staff members are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated in writing by parents or legal guardians.

If a staff member or volunteer is uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, he/she should immediately locate or contact the Sports' Commissioner(s) before releasing the child.

## **SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS**

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children. Staff members and volunteers are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any child in the program. This provision includes the use of cellular phones, text messages, e-mail, instant messaging and online chat rooms.

## **POSSESSION OF SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS**

BYC staff members and volunteers are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, etc.) on BYC property or in the presence of children.

## **INTERNET/ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

No computer at or related to BYC is to be used by staff members, volunteers, children or volunteers to engage in computer chat room discussions or visit pornographic or sexually inappropriate websites. Violation of this policy will lead to discipline from the BYC Board of Directors. Any questions about inappropriate use of computers or the suitability of a particular website should be discussed with the Parent/Player Representative Member of the Board of Directors.

## **VERBAL INTERACTIONS**

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. BYC staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission to provide nurturing care to children. Staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.

**Policies and Procedures**  
**Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of BYC’s Safety Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at BYC.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by BYC.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in my position description. While, ideally, I will serve in this position for the full term specified in the position description, I understand that I am serving as a volunteer and that I may choose to end this service at any time.

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this policy statement in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between BYC and me. If I apply to be a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for the hours I work.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed, as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of these policies and procedures manual.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Volunteer’s name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member or Volunteer’s signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_