

GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.**



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF GREATER WATERBURY**

At the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury, Child Safety is Job No. 1 Ensuring child safety is fundamental to our mission

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

We work every day to create a safe, inclusive and fun environment so kids can have every opportunity to be successful in life. We have no 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 Waterbury continually updates 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 continually enhance and implement layers of safety policies and guidelines to keep our kids safe including:

- Consistent Mandatory Safety Training
- Annual Mandatory Background Checks for all employees, volunteers and repeat visitors to the Club
- Strict guidelines dictating acceptable behaviors by staff, volunteers and visitors designed to protect children and youth

Safety Policies: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury 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, the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury 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 upon hire and annually for every staff and board member at The Boys & Girls Club of Greater

Waterbury. In addition, criminal background checks are required for any volunteer who has direct contact with children. All potential employees and volunteers are also run through the National Sex Offender Registry.

Required Immediate Reporting: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury 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 by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the State of Connecticut Department of Children & Families, Chubbworks, and other experts. We also engage 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 Waterbury has a dedicated, Board-led, safety committee to provide input and guidance on local policies and safety strategies. Priorities and initiatives include:

- Ensuring that all policies and procedures are strictly enforced
- Meeting regularly to review policies & the implementation
- Engaging the assistance of experts to ensure best practices

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
- Mental Health First Aid, a national program that teaches skills to recognize and respond to signs of mental illness and substance abuse
- Crisis Text Line, a confidential text message service for youth in times of crisis

Locally, the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury partners with:

- The State of Connecticut Department of Children & Families
- The State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
- The City of Waterbury Police and Fire Departments

Continued Commitment: In July, 2020, all local Boys & Girls Clubs voted to adopt additional safety measures to further improve safety within our Clubs. Many of these practices were already in place, however, Boys & Girls Clubs determined these practices should be mandatory for all Clubs. These measures include more stringent reference and background checks, enhanced Club Safety Committee requirements for all Club, greater communication of key safety resources and information available for staff and members, and more.

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.

America's 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 Waterbury. To [learn more](#) about our national safety policies and actions, please visit Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Child Safety page, [here](#).