

## GREAT FUTURES START HERE.



# POL020-1 Field Trip and Water Safety Policy

Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast (BGC MCC) is committed to providing a safe environment for all youth and staff. This policy describes procedures that are in place to help assure safe activities when members, staff, and volunteer chaperones go on field trips. Additional detail is provided in this policy specific to water safety field trips.

### FIELD TRIPS - GENERAL RULES

#### Permission slips:

- Members must have a parent/guardian signed BGC MCC permission slip.
- No one will be allowed to participate without a permission slip.
- POL 006 for prescription medications must be followed for all field trips.
- All medical conditions must be documented, and medications must be available if needed.

#### Safety:

- At least one staff member who is trained in CPR and First Aid certification shall be present during the entire field trip.
- At least one safety backpack will be available at all times during the field trip.
- Contents shall include:
  - First aid kit with ice packs
  - List of participants, including staff/volunteer chaperones
  - Flashlight
  - Bottle of potable water
  - Sun screen
  - Emergency contact information
    - Parent/Guardian Name and Phone Number
    - Secondary Emergency Contact and Phone Number
    - Member Allergies / Pertinent Medical information
  - Emergency evacuation place and procedure
  - Field trip itinerary

#### Transportation:

- If transportation is via a vehicle, POL 002- Transportation must be followed.
- If transportation is via walking, a safe route shall be established prior to leaving the Club facility.
- Staff/chaperones/volunteers shall maintain visual contact with their assigned members at all times.

#### Staff/Volunteer Chaperone to Youth Ratios:

- A minimum of 1:10 adult to youth ratios will be maintained at all outings
- The Club Director and Area Director will determine if more staff / volunteer chaperones are required for the safety of the youth. For example, for swimming outings. Recommendations are given in detail in the Field Trip and Water safety SOP's.
- Where possible, the groups will be assigned by age group.

### Staff/Chaperones:

- No personal electronic devices are to be used while supervising youth on a field trip. The only exceptions are for emergencies or to coordinate with other staff who are on the field trip.
- Staff/Volunteer chaperones are assigned to a group of participants per the determined staff/volunteer chaperones-to-youth ratio.
- Volunteer chaperones are not ultimately responsible for a youth group, but will assist the staff. Staff/volunteer chaperones shall be included in achieving adult to youth ratios.
- No one under the age of 18 will be responsible for supervising members without an adult supervisor or volunteer chaperone per POL 014- Minors as Employees and Volunteer Policy.
- Adherence to POL 003, One-on-one contact, will be strictly enforced.
- Head counts will be taken at the beginning and end of the field trip. Other check-in time frames will be determined by the Club Director, but no less than every 30 min.
- At arrival at the destination, a “lost child” area is identified. All participants shall be made aware of this area. Any member or adult who becomes separated from their assigned group shall come to this designated area.
- Staff/volunteer chaperones must be available at all times, be aware of all safety concerns, and respond to members’ needs and questions.
- Staff/volunteer chaperones must supervise their group and assist in making sure all youth behave appropriately to assure a safe environment.
- Bathroom procedures (POL 001 Restroom Policy) must be followed when possible. If not possible, staff/volunteer chaperones will monitor restroom usage at all times when youth are using a restroom.
- Food, if brought on the field trip, will be stored properly.
- A comprehensive field trip plan will be available at the club site office. Information includes, at a minimum: route, destination, departure and return times, list of participants, copies of permission slips, and contact information for all staff and adult chaperones.
  - If the Club will not have a staff member available onsite, the Area Director or designee will have the field trip plan and will be readily available via phone.
- Staff and volunteer chaperones shall not transport members in their personal vehicle (POL 002 -Transportation.)
- In cases where the club site is closed upon returning from a field trip, at least 2 staff must wait until each member is picked up by an authorized parent/guardian. Members are never to be left alone nor shall the 1:1 policy be violated.

### Members Expected Behavior:

- Members must be supervised at all times. Members shall not wander off alone.
- All participants must adhere to all the safety rules, including any specific site rules. These site specific rules shall be communicated at the beginning of the trip.
- Youth must stay with assigned staff/volunteer chaperones the entire field trip time.
- All participants must check in at the designated times with their buddy.
  - Buddy System:
    - A buddy system shall be established for all participants.
    - All participants will have a buddy assigned to them, within their group, before being allowed to swim.
    - Each member will be told the importance of staying with their buddy and are responsible for knowing where their buddy is at all times.
    - Three buddies can be assigned if the numbers of participants require it (uneven number of participants).
    - Buddies must check in with their supervisors/chaperones every 15-30 minutes. This check- in verifies that they are together and safe.

## FIELD TRIPS - WATER SAFETY RULES

All information above for the **Field Trip - general rules** also apply to water safety. Additional procedures specific to water safety are delineated below.

### Permission slips:

- Parents must note on the permission slip whether or not their child can swim. If this section is not filled out in the permission slip, the child will be assigned to the non-swimmer group. No exceptions shall be allowed.

### Safety Training:

- It is required that at least one staff member who participates in a water field trip has completed the Red Cross “Becoming an Ambassador for Water Safety” and “Water Safety for Parents and Caregivers” on-line courses, or the equivalent. The successful completion of these courses shall be documented in the staff members personnel records.

### Water Safety Training and swimming assessment for youth participants:

- Participating youth must complete the Red Cross water safety Longfellow’s WHALE Tales Resources training videos or the equivalent.
- This must be completed yearly for all youth participants.
- All participating youth that have been cleared for swimming via the permission slip must complete the water competency ability test annually at each swimming location before being assigned in a swimming group. Details on this testing is in the Water Safety SOP.
- Failure to pass this competency test will result in the youth being grouped with the non swimmer group. No exceptions shall be allowed.
- For safety, a staff member shall be in the water at the time of testing the youth for swimming competency.

### Staff to youth ratios:

- Water activities have a potentially higher risk of injury. The minimum ratio is 1:10 with more adults if the situation calls for it. Per the information above in the general rules, the Club Director will determine what adult to youth ratios are required for a safer environment.

### Staff/Chaperone:

- All adults are advised that a lifeguard does not substitute for responsible monitoring of all youth. Working with the Lifeguards adds extra safety layers of protection, but staff and volunteer chaperones must be vigilant at all times.
- All youth must be visually monitored by staff/volunteer chaperones in or out of the water at all times. Staff/ volunteer chaperones should function as a second set of eyes for lifeguards. Chatting or engaging with other adults is not allowed.
- Where possible, especially in bodies of water other than a pool, staff shall physically encircle the BGCMCC member groups: in the water, on shore, shallow water, at the barrier ropes, non-swimmer area, etc.
- Staff/volunteer chaperones will enforce all rules of water safety and encourage appropriate safe behavior. This shall include actively redirecting unsafe behavior.

### Members Expected Behavior:

**Rules shall be reviewed with all members prior to entering the water for each day they are swimming.**

- No running

- No diving except where posted for safe diving.
- No pushing people into the pool or water.
- No swimming without adult supervision.
- Breath holding “competitions” are not allowed.
- Shall not jump into the water to assist a youth in trouble.
- Shall Inform an adult immediately of any unsafe situation.
- No playing or swimming near the pool drains because hair, and/or loose clothing can be caught in suction.
- Shall stay within the designated swimming area.
- Bring and apply their own sunscreen.
- Inform members of the safe swimming areas and how they are identified


Staff safety tips:

- Participants shall bring their own sunblock and apply it at their own discretion
- Never rely on water wings, floaties, inner tubes, noodles or other flotation assistance items in exchange for swimming skills.
- Stay in the assigned groups.
- Keep members away from pool drains.

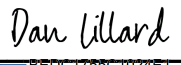
**Reviewed and Approved: Initial implementation of policy**

**Date:** 1/31/2023

**BY:**

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Board Chair (Board Approval)