

Field Trip and Water Safety Policy



Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Ventura (BGCGV) is committed to providing a safe environment for all youth and staff. This policy describes procedures that are in place to help ensure safe activities when members, staff, and volunteer chaperones go on field trips. Additional details are provided in this policy, specific to water safety field trips.

FIELD TRIPS - GENERAL RULES

Permission slips:

- Members must have a parent/guardian signed BGCGV permission slip.
- All medical conditions must be documented, and medications must be available if needed.
- Driver/Staff must leave a copy of the field trip folder cover sheet at the Club
- Driver/Staff must take field trip folder with them and take attendance when leaving and returning.

On walking trips:

- If there are two staff, they shall place themselves in the front and in the back of the group.
- If there is one staff, he/she shall place him/herself at the back of the group after instructing the group to stop at each intersection and assign a line leader to help ensure this occurs.

On van trips:

- Staff shall go over ground rules and expectations for field trips before departing and upon arrival at their destination.
- If two or more staff are in attendance and the group is divided into separate locations, a time and location must be communicated for reunification before the group divides.
- All transportation policies must be followed.
- A safe route shall be established prior to leaving the Club facility and a copy left with the Branch Director.

Staff to Youth Ratios:

- A minimum of 1:10 adult to youth ratios will be maintained at all outings
- The Branch Director and Director of Operations will determine if more staff are required for the safety of youth (i.e. water trips). Policy requirements are listed in the club's Supervision Policy.
- Where appropriate, the groups will be assigned by age group.

Staff Expectations:

- No personal electronic devices are to be used while supervising youth on a field trip. The only exceptions are for emergencies, coordinating with other staff who are on the field trip, or to give your Branch Director an ETA of return if your trip is running late.
- Staff are assigned to a group of participants per the determined staff-to-youth ratio.
- Adherence to the Prohibition of One-on-One policy will be strictly enforced.
- Roll call will be taken at the beginning and end of the field trip. Staff will also take additional head counts at intervals no more than 10 minutes apart, or every time there is a change of location.
- Upon 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 must be available at all times, be aware of all safety concerns, and respond to members’ needs and questions.
- Staff must supervise their group, making sure all youth behave appropriately to maintain a safe environment for youth.
- The club’s Restroom Policy must be followed at all times.
- Food, if brought on the field trip, will be stored properly.
- Staff shall not transport members in their personal vehicle. Refer to club’s Transportation Policy.
- In cases where the club site is closed upon returning from a field trip, arrangements must be made so that there are always 2 staff present until all youth have been picked up by their parents or appointed guardian. The club’s Prohibition of One-on-One policy must never be violated.
- At least one safety backpack will always be available during the field trip. Contents shall include:

3 Rolls of Self-Stick Gauze
3 Instant Hot/Cold Compress
A variety of Band-Aids
1 Scissors
1 Tweezers
1 Flashlight
5 Sets Gloves
1 Respirator Mask
2 Triangular Bandages

1 Clipboard/Binder
2 Small Packs of Tissues
Ouch Reports
10 Sheets of Paper
2 Pens
1 Pencil
2 Trash Bags
A Variety of Zip Lock Bags
Safety Pins
Cloth First Aid Tape

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 for the entire field trip.

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 all staff who participate in water field trips have completed the Red Cross "Water Safety for Parents and Caregivers" on-line course. The successful certification of completion of this course shall be filed in the staff personnel file and on the annual staff training log that is kept by the Director of Operations.

Staff to youth ratios:

- Water activities have a potentially higher risk of injury. The minimum ratio is 1:6 for beach or lake trips (lifeguard must be present) and 1:9 for waterpark field trips (lifeguards must be present), with more adults if the situation calls for it. Per the information above in the general rules, the Director of Operations will determine what adult to youth ratios are required for a safer environment.

Staff Expectations:

- A lifeguard does not substitute for responsible monitoring of all youth. Working with the Lifeguards adds extra layers of protection, but staff must always remain vigilant.
- All youth must be visually monitored by staff, in or out of the water, at all times. Staff should function as a second set of eyes for lifeguards. Chatting or engaging with other adults is not allowed, unless it relates to that field trip.
- Staff will enforce all rules of water safety and encourage appropriate safe behavior. This shall include actively redirecting or stopping 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
- No playing "chicken" (climbing on another swimmers shoulders in pairs to push the other pair over)
- 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 with your assigned group
- Keep members away from pool drains

Please note that this is a living document and may be updated from time to time as needed.