

Boys and Girls Club of Leduc

Policy Name: Boys and Girls Club of Leduc Child Guidance Policy

Policy Statement:

The Boys and Girls Club of Leduc staff members are responsible for providing a safe, fun and respectful environment for all children who attend the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc programs. This will be accomplished by guiding children to engage in safe and respectful behaviors, which will enable all children to feel valued, secure and accepted. Boys and Girls Club of Leduc staff will themselves model this behavior in their interactions with both children and their families, as they display an attitude of respect for each person.

Procedure:

1. Introduction

The Child Guidance Policy provides a framework within which interactions are directed among the children who attend the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc programs. It will:

- ensure that each member of the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc feels valued, safe and respected.
- ensure that all disciplinary actions taken are reasonable to the circumstance.
- encourage all members of the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc to interact and work together in an environment that is happy, safe and secure, where the building of good relationships is based on mutual respect and consideration for others.
- help children grow and develop in a safe, happy and secure environment and become positive, responsible and independent members of the community.
- encourage the use of positive reinforcement for good behavior.
- provide opportunities to stimulate and support individual interests and growth in celebrating the uniqueness of all children.
- ensure that children are treated fairly by applying the Child Guidance Policy in a consistent manner
- ensure that children are aware of the rules and policies of the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc.
- encourage those values and attitudes, as well as knowledge and skills, that promote responsible behavior, self-discipline and respect for self, others and the community.

2. Preventative Guidance

The Boys and Girls Club of Leduc desires children to become intrinsically-controlled, considerate of others and responsible members of their community. Staff will encourage appropriate and respectful behavior among children through preventative guidance. This involves foresight and prevention of potential problems by:

- creating an appropriate environment and schedule to maintain the well being of all who attend.
- setting reasonable and basic limits to ensure safety and respect.
- modeling appropriate and respectful behaviors.
- offering choices that are age-appropriate.
- providing reasonable and age-appropriate explanations.
- repeating instructions, as needed, to ensure understanding.
- reinforcing positive and desired behaviors.

3. Behavioral Guidance

The Boys and Girls Club of Leduc will ensure that the children who attend the programs have a clear understanding of behavioral expectations, as well as the consequences that will occur should a choice be made to engage in inappropriate behavior.

a. Acceptable Behaviors

Acceptable behaviors are encouraged through the use of awareness and positive reinforcement.

- Acceptable and expected behaviors are reviewed on a regular basis.
- These acceptable behaviors are explained to children as needed.
- Behavior expectations revolve around basic issues of respect and safety for self, others and property.

b. Unacceptable Behaviors

Unacceptable behaviors are managed through the use of a three strikes approach.

- If unacceptable behavior is displayed, staff members explain to the child why the behavior is inappropriate, and the child is directed to another activity.
- A child continuing to have difficulty is issued a warning. A warning is issued when a child deliberately and repeatedly breaks one of the rules or displays inappropriate behavior.
- After receiving a warning or “verbal strike”, staff members then assist the child in rejoining the activities in a respectful and positive manner.
- If a child receives three warnings in one day, the child’s parent/guardian is called and they are requested to take the child home. The child will be removed from activity and seated at another location under the supervision of a staff member, until someone is available to come for them. *This pick-up MUST occur within 30 minutes of the parent receiving notice, or the late pick-up deposit cheque will be cashed.*
- All incidences that require a child be sent home will be documented by the staff witnessing the behaviors in an “incident report”. The completed report will be given to the Youth Program Manager for filing.
- Any staff member may issue a strike.
- Withdrawal of privileges may be applied i.e. exclusion from an activity or outing. These will be reasonable and appropriate to the situation and the age of the child. Parents will be informed of the withdrawal of privileges, if deemed necessary, according to the severity of the misbehavior and resulting consequence.
- The following are regarded as valid reasons for receiving a strike and, in severe instances, suspension or expulsion from the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc:
 - persistent and deliberate noncompliance with the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc rules
 - persistent disruptive behavior during activities and games
 - ignoring, or noncompliance with, instructions from a staff member
- A very serious situation may result in the normal disciplinary procedures being necessarily set aside. Under the direction of the Executive Director/Youth Program Manager a parent/guardian may be called to pick up their child immediately due to a single incident. These instances include (but are not limited to):
 - significant damage to the property of the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc, staff or children, either inside or outside the building
 - bullying (zero tolerance policy)
 - stealing from the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc, staff or children, either inside or outside the building
 - substance or alcohol abuse on the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc premises
 - physical or verbal abuse of another child or staff member
- If a child needs to be sent home three times within a membership year, an automatic one-week suspension of membership will occur. Prior to the child’s return to the Club on the 8th day, the parent/s of the child in question will be required to meet, in person, with the Youth Program Manager to discuss a strategy for the child’s safe and successful return to the Club.
- Should a child need be sent home again after suspension, membership will be immediately revoked for the remainder of the membership year and the child in question will not be eligible to attend the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc again until the following September.
- In extreme cases, where the safety and security of others is put in jeopardy, normal disciplinary procedures may be waived and membership immediately and permanently revoked. This will be decided at the discretion of the Youth Program Manager/Executive Director.

4. Permissible Methods of Guidance

The Boys and Girls Club of Leduc will engage in the following methods to guide behavior.

- Child guidance will be consistent, reasonable, fair, age-appropriate and developmentally-appropriate.
- Staff members will be familiar with and apply the three strikes approach **in a fair and consistent manner to all children.**

- The child will be told that his/her behavior is unacceptable, as well as why it is unacceptable.
- The child will then be given the opportunity to discuss the situation in a respectful way and will be encouraged to consider positive ways to modify their behavior.
- If there is a conflict between two children, a staff member will act as a mediator and lead them through resolving the conflict in a positive way.
- The staff will encourage children to use problem-solving skills and strategies to resolve conflict.
- Children's behavior must not be endangering to themselves or others. Non-abusive restraints are limited to situations where it is necessary to protect a child from hurting themselves or others. Staff members will assess the situation and make an appropriate decision. Intervening or not in a physical conflict depends on safety, and safety of staff and children is paramount. Parents will be immediately informed of self-harming behaviors, and will be required to speak directly with the Youth Program Manager or Executive Director about the incident.

5. Non-Permissible Methods of Guidance

The Boys and Girls Club of Leduc will not engage in the following methods to guide behavior.

- Consequences shall not cause verbal, physical or emotional degradation.
- Consequences shall not deny, or threaten to deny, a child of any basic necessity.
- Consequences shall not involve physical aggression or confinement.
- Consequences shall not involve withholding the opportunity to observe cultural or spiritual practices.

6. Right of Refusal

The Boys and Girls Club of Leduc is not able to provide programming for children who display chronically disruptive behaviour. This is defined as verbal or physical activity which may include, but is not limited to:

- behavior requiring constant one-on-one attention from staff members.
- behavior inflicting physical, mental or emotional harm on self, other children or staff.
- behavior showing blatant and persistent disregard for and disobedience of rules.

If a child is not able to adjust to the program parameters, despite all reasonable efforts to assist the child in this adjustment, or is unable to conduct themselves according to the expected behaviours, the child may not be able to return to the program at the discretion of the Executive Director.