

BGC Leduc

Policy Name: BGC Leduc Child Guidance Policy

Policy Statement:

BGC Leduc staff members are responsible for providing a safe, fun and respectful environment for all children who attend the BGC 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. BGC 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 BGC Leduc programs. It will:

- Ensure that each member of BGC Leduc feels valued, safe and respected.
- Ensure that all disciplinary actions taken are reasonable to the circumstance.
- Encourage all members of BGC 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 BGC 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

BGC 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 wellbeing 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

BGC 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 in the following ways

- If unacceptable behavior is displayed, staff members will give the child a warning, explain to the child why the behavior is inappropriate and ask the child to try the activity again in the appropriate manner.
- If a child continues to have difficulty and has already been given a verbal warning by the program staff, the child will be asked to sit in the Program Coordinators office. The program coordinator will begin the process of investigating the situation and solving any problems that may be presented.
- When that child's parent or Guardian arrives at the Club, the Program Coordinator will have a conversation regarding the behavior that day. The program Coordinator and parent or guardian will discuss the club's rules and the expectations moving forward.
- If the child repeatedly displays inappropriate behavior or repeatedly breaks any rules of the Club, the parent or guardians will be contacted, and a consequence will be put in place.

Unacceptable behaviors are dealt with based on a situational basis and the severity of each scenario. Staff discretion also plays a role in how unacceptable behaviors are addressed. In most instances, a warning will be issued first. Continued noncompliance will result in parent or guardian contact.

Dependent on the severity of the behavior, the child's parent or guardian may be contacted by the Program Coordinator and asked to pick their child up from BGC Leduc. If the program Coordinator requests that a child must be picked up due to inappropriate behavior, that parent or guardian *pick up MUST occur within 30 minutes of receiving notice.*

The following unacceptable behaviors merit immediate dismissal from programming that day.

- Any incidences of bullying (verbal, or physical).
- Any behavior which endangers the wellbeing of any member, staff, or themselves.
- Swearing and disrespectful language will not be tolerated.
- Intentional damage to Boys and Girls Club property.
- Substance or alcohol abuse on the Boys and Girls Club of Leduc premises.
- Theft of any member or staff member's property inside or outside of the club.

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 Program Coordinator 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 BGC 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 Program Coordinator and Executive Director.

4. Permissible Methods of Guidance

BGC 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 behavior policy **in a fair and consistent manner to all children**
- The child will be told that their 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

BGC 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

BGC 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.