

At the Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club Safety is our Number 1 priority

Ensuring child safety is fundamental to the mission of the
Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club

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

We work every day to create a safe, fun environment so kids can have every opportunity to be successful in life. We have ZERO tolerance for inappropriate behavior of any kind, including child sexual abuse or misconduct, and we put resources behind that stance.

Culture of Safety: The Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club 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 implement layers of safety policies and guidelines to keep our kids safe including:

- Fire and Evacuation Drills
- Comprehensive Background Checks on all staff and volunteers
- Include Safety as a topic at all staff meetings to emphasize the culture of safety

Safety Policies: The Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club 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. Members and staff have access to a confidential 24-hour toll-free Child Safety Hotline, **866-607-SAFE (7233)**

Mandatory Background Checks: Mandatory criminal background checks are required every year for every staff and board member at the Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club. 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 and the New York State Criminal Database.

Required Immediate Reporting: The Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club 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 such as seminars, conferences, webinars and a semi-annual safety symposium. We also partner with the Lancaster Police Department

Safety Committee: The Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club has a dedicated safety committee to provide input and guidance on local policies and safety strategies. Priorities and initiatives include:

- Update our Club's Crisis Management Plan regularly.
- Keep up to date on current safety requirements of our National organization.

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 Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club partners with:

- Depew & Lancaster Police Departments resource officers
- Local Law Enforcement officers visit our buildings frequently to form a relationship with our members.

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 Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club. To **learn more** about our national safety policies and actions, please visit Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Child Safety page.