

Learning Club

Child Protection Policy

Purpose: It is the goal of Learning Club of KCK ("Learning Club") to make all our activities and facilities safe for those we serve. It is our responsibility as adults to do all we can to protect children.

According to Kansas law:

- *Physical abuse* means infliction of physical harm or the causation of a child's deterioration, and may include, but shall not be limited to, maltreatment or exploiting a child to the extent the child's health is endangered.
- *Emotional abuse* is injury to the psychological capacity or emotional stability of the child and is within the definition of child abuse.
- *Sexual abuse* is any contact or interaction with a child in which the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator, the child, or another person. Sexual abuse shall include, but is not limited to, allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to be:
 - Photographed, filmed or depicted in obscene or pornographic material;
 - Subjected to aggravated human trafficking if committed in whole or in part for the purpose of the sexual gratification of the offender or another.
 - Note: Contact solely between children shall meet the criteria only if the contact also involves force, intimidation, difference in maturity, or coercion. This includes situations in which an adult uses a child as a part of any type of sexual act.
- *Emotional neglect* is when the child suffers from an adult failing to give chances for feeling loved, wanted, secure, and worthy.
- *Physical neglect* is when an adult does not provide basic needs or supervision.

We must be prepared in both knowledge and practice to prevent all types of child abuse and neglect. This policy applies to all Learning Club staff and volunteers in any context associated with Learning Club.

We commit to:

1. Screening all staff and volunteers.

- a. Staff: All employment offers for staff over the age of 18 are conditional on the applicant passing a background check, including child abuse and sex offender registries and criminal history. Before their first day of working with children, all staff are required to complete and pass a background check.
 - Background checks will be repeated every three years for any staff who is actively working with children.
 - Any background checks that are not immediately cleared will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Executive Director.
 - High school interns who become active staff after August 1st of the year in which they graduate high school will be subject to background checks in the same manner as staff.
- b. Volunteer Tutors: All volunteer tutors over the age of 18 are required to pass a background check, including child abuse and sex offender registries and criminal history, before tutoring a student or students.

- Background checks will be repeated every three years on any volunteer who is still actively working with children.
 - Any background checks that are not immediately cleared will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Executive Director.
 - Those visiting with the intention of tutoring must be paired with another trained adult throughout their visit and must pass a background check before tutoring on a regular basis.
 - High school interns who become active volunteer tutors after August 1st of the year in which they graduate high school will be subject to background checks in the same manner as volunteer tutors.
- c. Volunteer Mentors: Volunteer mentors who attend programs regularly but do not tutor students directly are required to pass a background check, including child abuse and sex offender registries and criminal history, before working in this role.
- Background checks will be repeated every three years on any volunteer mentor who is actively working with children.
 - Any background checks that are not immediately cleared will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Executive Director.
 - Those visiting with the intention of mentoring must be paired with another trained adult throughout their visit and must pass a background check before mentoring on a regular basis.
 - High school interns who become active volunteers after August 1st of the year in which they graduate high school will be subject to background checks in the same manner as volunteers.
- d. Visitors, Presenters, and Other Volunteers: Any visitors, presenters, and other types of volunteers besides Tutors or Mentors are not required to complete a background check before visiting a site with the stipulation that they must be closely supervised by a staff member or trained volunteer while visiting the site.
- While on-site, Visitors will be required to wear a VISITOR name tag to indicate to staff that they need to be closely monitored.
 - Visitors will also complete a Learning Club Visitor Agreement, including an overview of child safety rules, upon arrival at any Learning Club site.
 - Those visiting with the intention of serving as a Tutor or Mentor must be paired with another adult throughout their visit and must pass a background check before tutoring a student or students.
- e. Interns and Staff or Volunteers Under the Age of 18: All interns and staff or volunteer tutors under the age of 18 shall provide at least one **professional or academic (not personal) reference** but will not undergo a background check until after August 1st of the year in which they graduate high school, at which time they will be subject to a background check in the same manner as staff and volunteers. They must complete the "Code of Ethical Conduct for High School Students Volunteering or Working with Younger Children" and always be supervised by trained staff.
- High school interns who become active staff or volunteer tutors after August 1st of the year in which they graduate high school will be subject to background checks in the same manner as staff and volunteers.

2. Training all staff and volunteers.

- a. All Learning Club staff, volunteer tutors, volunteer mentors, and interns are required to read and acknowledge by signature the **Learning Club Child Protection Policy** before working with children and once every academic year thereafter. Any

person signing the Child Protection Policy for the first time will be trained by a staff member who explains and reviews each policy. Additional training is required for specific groups and is detailed below.

- Visitors, presenters, and other volunteers are not required to read and sign the Child Protection Policy with the stipulation that they must be closely supervised by a staff member or trained volunteer while in the presence of children.
- b. Staff: All Learning Club staff who work directly with children are required to complete two hours of Child Abuse and Neglect or Child Protection training each academic year and submit proof of completion to Human Resources. Trainings not provided by the Learning Club must be approved in advance by Human Resources to fulfill this requirement. Documentation will be maintained in staff personnel files.
 - Staff who do not work directly with children may be required to complete this training at the discretion of the Executive Director or their designee.
- c. Volunteer Tutors: All Learning Club volunteer tutors are required to complete one hour of Child Abuse and Neglect or Child Protection training each academic year and submit proof of completion to the Learning Club Volunteer Coordinator. Trainings not provided by the Learning Club must be approved in advance by the Volunteer Coordinator to fulfill this requirement. Documentation will be maintained electronically for all volunteers.
- d. Volunteer Mentors: All Learning Club volunteer mentors are required to complete one hour of Child Abuse and Neglect or Child Protection training each academic year and submit proof of completion to the Learning Club Volunteer Coordinator. Trainings not provided by the Learning Club must be approved in advance by the Learning Club Volunteer Coordinator to fulfill this requirement. Documentation will be maintained electronically for all volunteers.
- e. Visitors, Presenters, and Other Volunteers: Any visitors, presenters, and other types of volunteers besides Tutors and Mentors are not required to complete Child Abuse and Neglect or Child Protection training before visiting a site with the stipulation that they must be closely supervised by a staff member or trained volunteer while visiting the site.
- f. Interns and Staff or Volunteers Under the Age of 18: All Learning Club interns will receive one training session each academic year regarding Child Abuse and Neglect or Child Protection provided during typical Learning Club session time.

3. Providing a safe environment for children.

- a. Learning Club is committed to and all staff members will enforce a **two-adult rule**: All staff and volunteers shall avoid situations where a child is alone with one adult who is not the child's parent or guardian.
- b. Areas where children or adults and children could easily be alone together unsupervised will be locked or restricted.
- c. A youth/minor will never teach or care for children alone without supervising adults available.
- d. Staff, volunteers, and interns may not use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or any medication that impairs their judgment while present at the Learning Club.
- e. Staff, volunteers, and interns may not use any discipline that humiliates or degrades children and/or youth.

- f. Staff, volunteers, and interns may not use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.
- g. At all Learning Club sites, staff, volunteers, and interns will wear clearly visible name tags to indicate they have been approved by Learning Club.
 - Visitors, Presenters, and Other Volunteers will wear red Visitor name tags to indicate they have not undergone Child Protection Policy training and checks.
- h. In any Learning Club virtual setting, the two-adult rule will be enforced by ensuring there are two adults present in any virtual meetings. All virtual meetings including children will be recorded and stored for one year.
- i. Prior consent will be obtained from a parent or guardian and approved by the Executive Director or Director of Operations if a child is to be transported to or from a Learning Club site. Documentation will be kept by the driver and by the Director of Operations for all active transportation consent.
- j. Transportation in the Learning Club Van will abide by the following guidelines:
 - Only staff who are insured drivers and approved by the Executive Director and Director of Operations will be permitted to drive the van.
 - While there are any minors present in the van and only one adult present, a dashcam will be used to monitor activity inside and outside the van at all times.
 - These recordings will be monitored and stored by a staff member who is not the Driver of the van. Recordings will be kept for eight calendar years.
- k. Guidelines for child-to-child and youth-to-youth contact will include:
 - An expectation of respectful behavior at all times.
 - Teasing, verbal abuse, and any form of bullying will not be tolerated.
 - There will be no wrestling or roughhousing.
 - Only one child or youth may use a bathroom stall at a time.
- l. There will be no physical discipline used. If student behavior is unsafe, the child's parent/guardian will be notified immediately by staff. If a parent/guardian is not available, staff will speak with them as soon as possible. In the meantime, staff will ensure the child's safety but remove them from activities to minimize disruption.
- m. A fully-stocked first-aid kit will be available at each Learning Club site.
- n. Only designated Learning Club staff will be permitted to take photos or videos of children or youth. At no time should volunteers or visitors take photos or videos of children or youth at any Learning Club site.
- o. Photos of children or youth taken at Learning Club will only be shared on social media through Learning Club official accounts. Photos of children or youth will not be shared on social media platforms by Learning Club staff without permission from a parent/guardian.
- p. Photos can be shared by Learning Club staff via email if and only if all students pictured have confirmed photo permission, the photos are shared with adults who are in compliance with this Child Protection Policy including background check and training, and a note is included in the email asking all recipients to refrain from posting, sharing, or printing the included photos.

4. Dealing appropriately with allegations of abuse.

- a. If a child discloses abuse or child abuse is suspected, the person to whom the child disclosed or who suspects abuse will immediately make a report to the Kansas Department for Children and Families Protection Report Center at 800-922-5330 or the local police department. The person will also report the matter to the

Executive Director or Director of Operations of the Learning Club in writing as soon as possible. Any and all mandated reporter protocols must be followed.

- b. In cases of suspected abuse and neglect, confidentiality is important to maintain the safety of the child(ren) involved. Only those to whom the concern was disclosed by the child, the staff member to whom it was reported, Learning Club's Executive Director and/or Director of Operations should be aware of the details of the suspected abuse and neglect. Other Learning Club volunteers and staff members should not be notified of the situation unless there could be a safety issue during Learning Club session. In all cases, details should be kept as confidential as possible. At no time should any student or intern information be shared outside of Learning Club.
- c. A confirmation of the report and any additional documentation must be given to the Executive Director for record-keeping.
- d. When the victim and alleged offender are both in the Learning Club community, we will follow these additional steps:
 - Immediately attend to the complainant's and their family's safety and needs through Learning Club leadership and an outside agency (e.g., appropriate state abuse reporting agency), keeping the victim's needs at the center of any process.
 - Immediately suspend the accused offender from all responsibilities involving contact with children until the conclusion of the investigation.
 - Within 48 hours, the Executive Director, or in their absence, the Director of Operations, in consultation with counsel if necessary, shall determine whether it is necessary to notify all parents whose children may have encountered the alleged offender to advise that allegations have been made and reported.
 - Keep victims and alleged offenders separated during the investigation.
- e. Any known or credibly accused child abuse offender will not be allowed access to children or youth.

5. Maintaining strict guidelines for social media and electronic communication.

- a. Failure to adhere to the following social media and electronic communications guidelines may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer status.
- b. Staff and volunteers should not contact students on social media of any kind, nor respond to social media requests from students, outside of platforms permitted in writing by the Executive Director.
- c. Staff and volunteers of the Learning Club will exercise discretion when using social networks or other online communities for professional and personal communication. Staff and volunteers will not post or send material containing content that is discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, or intimidating to any person.
- d. Electronic Communication Policy for Staff and Volunteers:
 - Direct, phone-to-phone text messaging between staff or volunteers and Learning Club youth is strictly prohibited. Communication (including texting) with Learning Club youth should occur only with Learning Club staff and only through platforms approved by the Executive Director or their designee.

- Staff and volunteers should not share any personal contact information with students or ask them for theirs, outside of platforms permitted in writing by the Executive Director.
 - Volunteers should never communicate with Learning Club students outside of the Learning Club session, except when approved by the Executive Director or their designee.
 - There are no exceptions to this policy prohibiting direct communication with a minor and violation may result in disciplinary action.
- e. While communicating using the designated channels, staff must:
- Be transparent in all electronic interactions.
 - Exercise sound judgment when communicating and establishing relationships with youth, including not putting yourself into a position which could be viewed as compromising or which could have the appearance of impropriety.
 - Remember to follow the Child Protection Policy in every interaction.
 - Refrain from using emojis, emoticons, gifs, and other images. Clear, concise, and professional communication is expected at all times to help prevent misinterpretation.
 - Retain all messaging communication.

6. Enforcing other rules as needed to ensure child safety at Learning Club.

- a. Staff and volunteers may not accept gifts valued over \$10 from children and/or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the Executive Director or Director of Operations.
- b. Staff and volunteers may not give gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the Executive Director or Director of Operations. A book and/or card may be given to a child for a birthday or special occasion with the consent of the Site Director.
- c. At sessions with interns and/or students, staff and volunteers should only use phones for educational purposes. Staff and volunteers should not share personal information with students while using a personal phone.

The Learning Club Board of Directors shall appoint two persons to oversee compliance with these policies, including posting this and other child protection policies on the Learning Club website. This policy will be reviewed at least every two years and updated pursuant to the recommendation of staff and leadership.

ADOPTED NOVEMBER 14, 2022
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 LEARNING CLUB OF KCK

Learning Club of KCK

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a Learning Club staff member or volunteer, I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Child Protection Policy as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth of the Learning Club.

As a Learning Club staff member or volunteer, I hereby agree to:

1. Abide by the Learning Club Child Protection Policy at all times including participating in training and submitting to a background check as needed to ensure the safety of children.
2. Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at Learning Club activities.
3. Report suspected abuse or neglect to the Executive Director and proper local authorities. I understand that our Learning Club Child Protection Policy requires me to report suspected abuse or neglect to civil authorities.
4. Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse or neglect of children and/or youth.
5. Refrain from touching any child or youth in a disciplinary, sexual, or inappropriate manner.
6. Only engage in safe touch such as a side hug if initiated by the child and appropriate.
7. Refrain from sharing any personal contact information with students or asking them for theirs, including social media.
8. Refrain from taking photos, audio, or video recordings of any Learning Club students, except with written approval of the Executive Director or their designee.
9. Refrain from providing transportation to Learning Club students, except with authorization of the Executive Director or their designee.
10. Only use my personal smart phone for work or educational purposes while at tutoring sessions.

I have read the Learning Club of KCK Child Protection Policy and agree to comply with all policies. I understand that as a volunteer or staff working with children and/or youth I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history or a reference check. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Child Protection Policy or failure to take action mandated by this Child Protection Policy may result in my removal as a volunteer or staff.

Date

Signature of Volunteer/Staff Member

Printed Name of Volunteer/Staff Member