

# Disability Inclusion Policy & Guidance



## Disability Inclusion

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Haverhill welcomes all children and is committed to act in a non-discriminatory manner and to make reasonable accommodations to provide equal opportunity and service to individuals with disabilities and other complex needs.

### a. Inclusive Environment

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Haverhill staff members will work with families to understand special needs of children seeking accommodation, and to identify modifications necessary to support the disability. Staff will work to integrate individual accommodations as safely and feasibly achievable.

### b. Staff Training and Development

Training and support is provided to ensure that staff members are competent to be aware of and to meet the developmental needs of Club members for which an accommodation is being provided. Club staff will work with parents to understand specific or individualized needs, and to identify additional support and resources as necessary and/or appropriate.

### c. Confidentiality

Confidentiality applies to all verbal and written information about potential, enrolling and previously enrolled children and their families. All staff and volunteers are trained on the need for confidentiality. Written records are stored in a secure location with limited access. No information subject to confidentiality is released without first receiving the written permission of the parent/guardian. This excludes the responsibility of mandated reports of suspected child abuse and neglect as outlined by applicable state law.

## Guidance

Note that the term “reasonable accommodations” in the Americans with Disabilities Act indicates that reasonable steps must be taken to provide services and should be accomplished by performing an individualized assessment of the child’s needs and the Club’s ability to effectively meet the demonstrated accommodation.

Factors to be considered include:

- Needs of person with disability
- Accommodation requested
- Supervision requirements
- Resources available to Club/program
- Impact on Club policies

Practical Considerations

- Approach conversations about accommodations with a spirit of cooperative problem solving. Communication with caregivers is critical to assessing whether the Club can effectively meet an individual’s needs. Use the information gathered to determine what additional support could be put in place for youth.
- Update membership forms to allow families to disclose any special needs or accommodations the youth may need
- Inform all families that they are welcome by including an inclusion statement in membership materials, such as: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Haverhill strives to meet the needs of all participants. Please contact our Club Director to discuss accommodations or support.
- Establish a member code of conduct and share with all families prior to joining.

