

Volunteer Behaviour Policy

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The way volunteers behave in their matches will contribute to the safety and development of the young person as well as their own sustainability in the role. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Christchurch aims to model healthy, positive and appropriate interactions between adults and young people at all times. Volunteers should also be mindful they represent Big Brothers Big Sisters and, as such must act in accordance with the aims, objectives and values of the organisation.

A volunteer agreement will be signed by the volunteer at the start of their mentoring and every subsequent year. The agreement will require the adherence to the Code of Conduct. Some actions and approaches can threaten the longevity and effectiveness of their mentoring. Match supervisors should take particular notice of the following behaviours of mentors and alert the volunteer to the dangers these actions pose:

- Rescuing behaviours – where volunteers get too involved in the life of the young person and their family, often in response to significant needs of the young person. Mentoring sessions should be no more than 4 hours a week unless permission is gained from the supervisor.
- Volunteers contravening any Big Brothers Big Sisters policy.
- Inconsistent contact with the young person – Weekly contact is recommended for the first year and reducing thereafter to a minimum of once a month. Where contact is less often or inconsistent, the volunteer must have supervisor permission or close the match.
- Inconsistent contact with the supervisor – Match Supervisors will contact volunteers as per the Match Supervision Policy. If volunteers do not respond for 3 months, the supervisor will close the match, giving the volunteer at least 1 weeks' notice of their intention to close.
- Mentoring in the volunteers' home leaves the volunteer vulnerable to allegation, especially when the volunteer is home alone with the young person. Volunteers will be encouraged to always prefer more public settings for their mentoring to protect themselves.

If volunteers do not respond to their supervisor's concerns, the supervisor may suspend or close the match.

Volunteers who are observed displaying the following behaviours will be immediately suspended from mentoring, pending an investigation into the incident.

- Unwelcome physical contact, such as inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, punching, and physical assault or sexual contact of any kind.
- Unwelcome physical, verbal, visual, or behavioural mannerisms or conduct that denigrates, shows hostility, or aversion toward any individual especially the young person's family.
- Demeaning or exploitive behaviour of either a sexual or nonsexual nature, including threats of such behaviour.
- Display of demeaning, suggestive, or pornographic material.
- Sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect.
- Use of alcohol before or during match activities.
- Driving when disqualified or under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.

Mentoring Activities

A set of risk management analyses will be made available to volunteers for both regular activities and one off activities that carry more risk. Volunteers must consider the dangers involved in activities and where there is any doubt they should contact their supervisor. This is particularly when undertaking activities that are generally perceived as dangerous such as

- Use of firearms.

- Outdoor adventure pursuits including rock climbing, kayaking, tramping, boating.

Transporting a child in a non-commercial aircraft. **Community Based Mentoring**

Where a match starts in the community based programme, no mentoring sessions are to take place in either the mentor or child's home for the first 3 months. When a match transitions from school based to community based, it will be at the supervisor's discretion as to whether to enforce this as part of the transition process.

Overnight stays

Overnight stays are not promoted as an everyday part of mentoring practise. However, overnight visits are permitted under the following conditions:

- No overnight stays will be permitted within the first 12 months of any match. After 12 months, a community based or school plus match may request permission for an overnight stay from their match supervisor.
- Assessment of the match and specific ground rules will be discussed with the match supervisor regarding overnight stays.
- Overnight stays are prohibited for all solely school based matches.
- Written parental permission is required for overnight stays.
- The maximum number of consecutive nights allowed for overnight stays is 3.

Any noncompliance with service delivery requirements or unacceptable behaviour as specified but not limited to the above, will result in a warning and/or disciplinary action including suspension and/or termination from participation in the mentoring programme. The Programme Manager will lead this process.