



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF TOPEKA**



# Topeka Needs Club Kids who feel supported.

## February 2026

### Message from Leadership

February is all about connection. At Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka, feeling supported means knowing you belong, having caring adults and peers who show up for you, and feeling safe to be yourself while you learn and grow. Every day, our Clubs create spaces where youth are seen, heard, and encouraged.



**“Today, I stand here proud of my voice, proud of my choices, and proud of the path I’m creating for myself. I speak up. I try new things. I choose positivity even when it’s difficult. Looking ahead, I hope to continue developing as a leader in high school, take on new responsibilities, and uplift others.**

**The Teen Center didn’t change me. It brought out the version of me I was always meant to be.”**

Tierra W. - 2026 Topeka Youth of the Year

**February 1<sup>st</sup>** | School Day Out Enrollment Opens for March

**February 9<sup>th</sup>** | School Day Out - USD 501

**February 12<sup>th</sup>** | School Day Out - USD 450

**February 12<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7pm @ Adams** | Family Literacy Night

**February 13<sup>th</sup>** | School Day Out - USD 450

**February 16<sup>th</sup>** | School Day Out - USD 450

**February 19<sup>th</sup>** | School Day Out - USD 345 & 437

**February 20<sup>th</sup>** | No Club Services for USD 345 & 437  
- Staff Development

**February 25<sup>th</sup>** | Early Release - USD 437

**February 26<sup>th</sup>** | School Day Out - USD 501

**February 27<sup>th</sup>** | No Club Services for USD 501 & No After School Services for USD 450 - Staff Development

**USD 345** - Seaman

**USD 437** - Auburn Washburn

**USD 450** - Shawnee Heights

**USD 501** - Topeka Public Schools

### Leadership Opportunities This Month

School Day Out Enrollment closes **5 business days** prior to service. You must enroll in each day of service. Requests for withdrawal are **required** to prevent account charges on services and can be done in the Parent Portal.

### Supporting Families, Supporting Youth

Support does not stop at the Club doors. **On February 12, BGCT will host a Family Literacy Night at our Adams Club from 5:30-7:00 pm.**

This evening will center on literacy, life skills, and meaningful connection. Youth will participate in engaging reading activities and receive free books, while families are invited to join conversations and experiences that support learning at home. Dinner will be provided, creating space for families to gather, connect, and feel welcomed.



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### Where Support Begins: Youth Voice in Action **UNHEARD 2026**

This March, BGCT will host the 3rd annual UNHEARD Conference on March 12 & 13, bringing together middle school youth, families, educators, employers, and community partners for two days centered on youth voice, connection, and support.

This year's conference theme, **Ready for What's Next**, reflects our belief that youth thrive when they feel supported by the adults, systems, and communities around them.

During these sessions, youth are sharing their perspectives on life & workforce readiness, belonging, and the importance of having trusted spaces to talk honestly about challenges they face.

## UNHEARD CONFERENCE



### TOPEKA CENTER FOR ADVANCED LEARNING & CAREERS

500 SW Tuffy Kellogg Dr, Topeka, KS 66606

**REGISTER AT** [www.bgctopeka.org](http://www.bgctopeka.org)

**3.12.26 &  
3.13.26**



## Building Belonging Through Movement

Members worked together to build shapes using only their bodies. The activity required youth to move intentionally, share space, and rely on one another, practicing patience, cooperation, and mutual respect.

The experience highlighted that support does not always show up through high energy. In this case, it showed up through focus, teamwork, and awareness of others. Activities like this help reinforce a Club environment where members feel respected, included, and supported.



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### Club Kids in Action **Evelyn**

When we talk about what it means to support others, Evelyn, a member at West Indianola, is exactly the kind of youth we hope to see at our Clubs.

Evelyn consistently goes out of her way to make others feel welcome and included. She is often the first to greet new members, showing them around and helping them feel comfortable in a new space. Her kindness helps create a strong sense of belonging throughout the Club.

Evelyn shares her goal of becoming Club staff when she turns 16. She is a shining example of how Topeka needs Club kids who feel supported and support others every day.

### How the Club Builds Relationships **Mr. Leo**

Support often shows up in the quiet, everyday moments. Sometimes it looks like homework help or a safe place after school. Other times, it looks like Mr. Leo taking a moment to teach a member how to tie his shoe.

At the Club, it is not just about programs. It is about relationships, patience, and showing kids they matter. When Club kids feel supported, they grow with confidence, and Topeka grows stronger alongside them.





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### What Support Looks Like at the Club

#### Reading Together, Growing Together

Our Book Buddies program connects youth across age groups to build confidence, leadership, and positive peer relationships. Members were paired together to complete books together in a supportive and encouraging environment.

Youth learn each other's names, interests, and favorite parts of the story while practicing respectful listening and cooperation. These moments strengthen literacy skills and, just as importantly, create meaningful connections that help kids feel supported by one another.

### Learning to Navigate Conflict with Care

During a recent restorative circle, members explored what conflict really means and reflected on the quote, "Conflict is inevitable, but combat is optional." Youth were reminded that the circle is a safe space to speak honestly and from the heart.

Members shared what conflict looks like to them, why it happens, and positive ways to handle disagreements without hurting others. These conversations build emotional awareness, empathy, and the skills needed to maintain healthy relationships.



### Supportive Relationships

- 93% of members report the adults at this Club care about me.
- 92% of members report the adults at this Club believe that I will be a success.



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## Community Support That Makes a Difference

### Kroger and Dillons Community Cares Card

You can help support Club kids every time you shop. By selecting Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka as your organization through the Kroger or Dillons Community Cares program, a portion of eligible purchases is donated back to our Clubs.

It is an easy way to invest in safe spaces, caring staff, and programs that help kids feel supported every day.



### Club Leadership

**Reshon Moore | Membership**

785-234-5601 | [membership@bgctopeka.org](mailto:membership@bgctopeka.org)

**Ciarra Kendrick | Senior Director of Club  
Leadership, Adams Club**

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**Amy Erickson | North Area Director**

785-380-1269 | [amy Erickson@bgctopeka.org](mailto:amy Erickson@bgctopeka.org)

**Amber Gierstorf | Tecumseh Area Director**

785-559-1433 | [TAD@bgctopeka.org](mailto:TAD@bgctopeka.org)

**Catherine Turner | West Area Director**

785-580-7769 | [westareadirector@bgctopeka.org](mailto:westareadirector@bgctopeka.org)

**Isaiah DeClerck | Teen Services Director**

785-559-1952 | [teendirector@bgctopeka.org](mailto:teendirector@bgctopeka.org)

### Family Role in Helping Kids Feel Supported

Small moments of support make a big difference. When young people know they are supported at home and at the Club, they are more likely to build confidence, resilience, and healthy relationships.

- Conversation starters can be simple and meaningful:
- What was a time today when you felt supported by someone?
  - How did you support a friend or classmate today?
  - What helped you feel calm or confident when something felt hard?

By creating space for reflection and open conversation, families reinforce the sense of belonging and safety youth experience at the Club. Together, we are helping raise young people who know how to support others and who feel supported as they grow, learn, and lead in Topeka.