



HANDBOOK

Parent & Club member Information and Resources



It is our pleasure to welcome you to Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka. Thank you for entrusting us with your child. Working together, we will make every effort to ensure your child, as a member of our Club, is safe and secure and that his/her experience is a positive one.



July 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka. Our purpose is to inspire and empower Club youth to achieve success and to nurture young people's self-esteem by instilling in them a sense of belonging, usefulness, influence and competence. We assure positive developmental experiences through five key elements for positive youth development:

- 1) Providing a safe, positive environment
- 2) Fun
- 3) Supportive Relationships
- 4) Opportunities and Expectations
- 5) Recognition

In addition, we offer targeted programs in three key youth outcome areas:

- 1) Academic Success – our vision is that every member progresses to the next grade level on time and graduates with a plan a place for the future
- 2) Good Character & Citizenship - to inspire a generation of civically engaged youth who balance self-concern with concern for others
- 3) Healthy Lifestyles – empowering youth to make healthful choices

It is our commitment to do everything possible to ensure youth have opportunities outside of school and home that promote healthy development and enable them to be successful adults.

Thank you,

Dawn McWilliams
Chief Executive Officer



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizen.

We accomplish our mission by:

- Providing opportunities in the following core areas: Character & Leadership Development; Health & Life Skills; Education, Technology & Career Development; Sports, Fitness & Recreation; and the Arts.
- Utilizing a team of positive, caring, committed staff and volunteers.
- Establishing services in locations that are safe, affordable and accessible.
- Providing support for families in the development of their youth.
- Enhancing core services by partnering with other organizations.
- Ensuring program activities meet established outcome measures through ongoing evaluation and modification.
- Utilizing our Youth Development Strategy – each child should have a Sense of Belonging, Usefulness, Competence, and Power/Influence.



Academic Success

Tools and skills to help members do well in school and graduate high school

Good Character and Citizenship

Tools and skills to help members grow as a person and give back to those around you

Healthy Lifestyles

Tools and skills to help members live a longer and healthier life

THE CLUB GIVES MEMBERS...

A safe place with programs to help members learn and grow

Relationships with caring adult staff

Hope and opportunity

A sense of **Competence**:

We want to give members the skills to feel ready for anything.

A sense of **Belonging**:

We want members to feel they always have a place to fit in at their Club.

A sense of Power and **Influence**:

We will listen to what our members have to say and ask their opinions whenever possible.



Club Membership to Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka Teen Center is open to any teen, regardless of sex, race, religion, national origin, disability, or any other protected status who meets the following criteria:

- To attend our Teen Center location, members should be enrolled and attending 6th-12th grade
- Completed enrollment packet
- Membership fee paid

MEMBERS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES

Please call the Club if you have questions regarding teens with special needs. We will make every attempt to serve members who have emotional, physical, psychological or behavioral needs. Though we are not a special needs facility, we will do our best to help all members have a positive and successful experience.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Administrative Office hours are from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm, Monday-Friday. The administrative office and Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

All sites will be closed for staff training and program preparation for a period of time at the beginning and end of summer programming.



After School

3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

School Days Out

7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Summer Hours

7:00 am - 6:00 pm

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of school closures due to inclement weather, Club locations may be open, delayed or closed. The decision to close locations is largely dependent upon staff safety. Any changes to normal programming hours will be communicated to parents via email as early as possible.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Anything of value should be left at home. Cash, toys, video games, gaming devices, iPods, tablets, jewelry, anything that looks like a weapon, trading cards, or any other item that would upset the member if it was lost, broken, or stolen should be left at home. Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka will not be held responsible for the loss, theft, or damage to any items if they are brought to the Club and/or on field trips. Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka will not provide reimbursements for any lost, stolen, or damaged items that are brought to the Club and/or on field trips.

NOT ALLOWED ON BOYS & GIRLS CLUB PROPERTY

- Gum
- Rags, drawings, signs and conversation related to gang activity
- Tobacco products, alcohol, drug or drug paraphernalia
- Weapons, or anything that looks like a weapon.



ELECTRONICS POLICY

Members at the Teen Center are permitted to use cell phones if used responsibly. No pictures or video will be taken at the Club. Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY OR ILLNESS

If your child becomes ill (vomiting, accident, fever, etc.) at Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka, he/she will be comforted away from program areas. Parents/Guardians will be notified and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible.

In the event of a medical emergency or accident, staff (after attending to the child) will attempt to contact parents or legal guardians. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, staff will take whatever emergency medical measures necessary for the care and protection of the child. By signing the Membership Enrollment packet you are giving Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka staff authorization to take emergency medical measures.

If your child should receive a minor injury, they will be given first aid and you will be notified at pick up.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

If your child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, food allergy, etc.), we need to be well informed. Please identify the medical condition and or medication on the enrollment form in the applicable areas. You will be required to have your child's physician fill out an Individualized Care Plan, which outlines what should be done if a problem should occur during program hours. Please make sure that any medication is available



and that the appropriate information has been provided to us in writing, with instructions for us to follow in the event of emergency.

USE OF MEDICATION

Medicine must be kept at the Club in a secure area – members are not allowed to keep their own medications, except in, medically necessary circumstances.

The Club cannot administer any medication to any member, except in life-threatening situations. Members requiring medication during Club hours must self-administer medicine in the presence of staff. Member must be able to read the instructions for the medication as well as dispense and take the correct dose. Further, the member must have previously taken at least one dose of the medicine away from the Club to help ensure that no unexpected reactions to medicine will occur at the Club. Club staff must be thoroughly apprised of any possible reactions to and the storage needs of the medicine. A meeting must be arranged with the Club Director before any medicines are brought to the Club.

Additionally, a member must present a physician's order for us to file on all medications. All medication must be delivered to the Club Director in the original packaging or prescription bottle. **This includes non-prescription medicine such as Tylenol.** Prescription medication must be in its original container, with current label, and physician's instructions for administration. Any medication or medication containers not collected will be thrown out upon expiration or membership lapse.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT



Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka is licensed by KDHE. All staff receive training on the prevention and identification of child abuse. As per state law, all staff is required to report any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children and Families.

DROP OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURES

Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka operates as a licensed Drop-in Program for school age children and youth. According to state regulations, this means that a child may come and go at his or her own volition. Parents and guardians must select one of two options on the enrollment applications. The first option states, "My child is free to come and go at his or her own volition from Club program and activities." The second option states that "Based on the individual needs of my child, I request that my child not leave the Club premises or Club activity without my permission. I or another authorized person will pick up my child from Club programs.

Members must enter the building and check in at the designated check in station, where the information will be recorded in our membership management system. After signing in, members will go to the designated area to join their group.

Members will remain with their group until pick up. Adults documented on the enrollment form must come into the building for member check-out. If you arrive before the bus to pick up your child, they must still enter the building to check in before they leave with you. Please do not call to request your child to get ready for pick up or to meet you in the parking lot. Safety is our number one priority at Boys & Girls Club and Club members will not be permitted to leave the Club unless the



parent/guardian has authorized in the enrollment form that the Club member can leave the Club on their own volition.

Only authorized adults may pick up members and they will be required to show a photo ID.

Even as staff gets to know authorized adults, we will run random ID checks on all persons picking up members. To ensure the safety of our members, persons dropping off and picking up children are asked to park in a designated parking spot and come into the building to pick up their child. Please do not stop or park in front of the ramp, behind parked cars, or in the travel lane for traffic.

It is Club Policy that members be picked up on or before Club closure time. If a caretaker arrives after Club closure they may be subject to a late fee of \$1.00 (per member) for every minute after the Club closure time.

GUEST PASSES

We invite potential members to check out our programs. Obtaining a guest pass can be done by contacting our Membership Services Manager at 234-5601. Guest passes can be used for two days unless arrangements are made with the Club Director and Vice President of Operations.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Membership in the Club is a privilege, and the focus of our programs is impacting our members' lives in a positive manner. Members of Boys & Girls Clubs have high standards for their behavior. Acceptable behavior is defined by the following:



- Respect for themselves
- Respect for others
- Respect for staff
- Respect for Boys & Girls Club

While our primary focus in working with members is to acknowledge positive behavior, at times consequences are necessary. As often as possible, Club staff will attempt to use the following methods before resorting to a more formal disciplinary procedure:

- Reminding members that certain behavior is inappropriate and using redirection toward positive activities
- Using preventative management techniques and encouraging self-discipline
- Stressing positive behaviors
- Providing an enriching environment to diminish disruptive behavior
- Offering a selection of interesting activities and giving choices
- Changing environments (i.e. removal from program) before behaviors escalate
- Facilitating the settlement of disputes versus intervening
- Letting children experience the consequences of their actions when appropriate
- Establishing mutual respect

We ask parent/guardians to please let us know if anything exceptional or unusual is happening at home or in other aspects of the child's life. Having this information will help us when working with your child(ren).

Occasionally, misbehavior is so severe or repetitive



that additional steps must be taken. In these cases, a progressive discipline policy will be implemented. When this occurs, the Club Staff will select an appropriate level of discipline. Those levels include the following:

Verbal Redirection - Club staff will ask the member to choose a different behavior and give them logical consequences for failure to comply. (i.e. apology, sitting out for a period of time, leaving the area, etc.)

Think Time - Required time away from the group to reflect on how positive choices could have changed outcomes, also time to refocus and regain self-control.

Written Warning - Member's behavior is formally documented and parents/guardians are notified of the member's behavior. Written warnings are given to ensure parents/guardians know that continued behavioral issues may result in future suspension.

Suspension - Member is removed from Club programs for 1 or more days. The Club may also include certain requirements for a member to return to the Club. There will *not* be a refund of fees due to suspensions.

Suspension/Termination of Membership - May result in response to continued inappropriate behavior. The Club/Unit Director and any member of the Senior Management Team are the only staff persons authorized to suspend members. (Parents will be notified by phone call and/or conference when the child is picked up). In this instance, no refund of fees will be given.

Actions that may result in suspension and/or termination are



listed below but are not limited to:

- Violent behavior that may endanger other Club members or staff
- Striking a staff member in any way
- Excessive or abusive language
- Not complying with the Club rules
- Bringing a weapon into the Club or onto Club property
- Fighting
- Theft
- Vandalism or abuse to building property or equipment
- Bullying or harassing of another member
- Excessive arguing
- Anything in the form of sexual misconduct
- Bringing illegal drugs/alcohol into the Club
- Attending the Club while under the influence of an illegal drug and/or alcohol
- Excessive continual suspensions could lead to termination of membership

Any level of disciplinary action may occur on the first offense or any subsequent offense depending upon the nature of the situation and the age/maturity of the member involved. Each member shall be informed of the offense and shall be afforded an opportunity to explain his/her behavior before disciplinary action is taken.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka is funded through a variety of sources including individual donations, grants and membership fees. The fee structure for each location is largely influenced by the type and amount of grant money that is



available to off-set costs incurred at each site. The collection of membership fees is critical to keeping costs low for families. Please contact the Membership Coordinator at membership@bgctopeka.org or (785) 234-5601 for additional information regarding membership fees.

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU AS A PARENT/GUARDIAN

Club staff will use training, and support to act in a manner that helps to de-escalate members' behavior. This will be done in a manner that is mindful of the individual, responsive to the specific situation, and done with respect, care, and concern for the child. Staff will interact with parents/guardians in the same regard. As a parent/guardian, it is expected that conflicts/challenges/concerns are addressed with Club staff in a manner that is mutually respectful. Staff will not be yelled at, threatened, or demeaned by parents/guardians. Every effort to reach an agreement should be done with reasonable attempts made from both sides (staff and family). In the event that this does not happen, parents/guardians will be addressed via the Senior Management Team regarding resolution to the problem.

The Club is frequently confronted with conflicting requests from the parents of our members – parents who may be separated or divorced, parents may argue about who is to deliver or pick up the child, parents may demand that the Club prohibit one or the other from taking the child

It is our policy to deliver the child to either parent, guardian, or authorized caregiver unless a court order regarding the subject is presented to the Club directing us to act in a specific manner. In addition, the Club will not disclose attendance information contained on our membership



tracking system without an order from an appropriate court requiring us to do so.

STAFF TO MEMBER RATIO AND TRAINING

All Club activities are under continuous adult supervision members. The ratio complies with Boys & Girls Clubs of America best practices:

Instructional:	1 adult to 20 youth
Drop-In:	1 adult to 25 youth
Group Clubs:	1 adult to 15 youth
Swimming:	1 spotter to 10 swimmers
Overnight:	1 adult to 6 youth <i>(min of 2 adults present)</i>

Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka prides itself on being a safe place for kids. Our staff and volunteers receive a very thorough orientation and training process in the following areas:

- Appropriate interactions between adults and members
- Safe supervision of Club activities
- Reporting accidents and incidents
- Emergency response procedures for CPR/First AID
- Crisis Prevention Institute-Nonviolent Crisis Interventions
- Abuse and Neglect awareness and reporting
- Professionalism

Thank you for the opportunity to share in your child's life!

All Boys & Girls Club sites are licensed by KDHE and chartered by Boys & Girls Clubs of America.



Visit our website and social media pages for additional information: www.bgctopeka.org



@bgctopeka



@BGCTTheCLUB



@bgctopeka



@BGCoftopeka