

PARENT & MEMBER HANDBOOK



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF STORY COUNTY

210 S. 5th St.

Ames, Iowa 50010

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www.bgcstorycounty.org

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GREAT FUTURES START HERE.

Welcome to the Boys & Girls Club of Story County!

Dear Parents/Guardians & Members:

Congratulations! You have joined the premier youth development agency in the Nation. You are now part of the Boys & Girls Club movement, serving over 4 million youth annually at over 4,000 Clubs. At BGCSC we have been serving youth since 1963. We serve over 1,000 youth annually, and plan to expand our programming to reach more youth in Ames and Story County.

Our mission is to inspire and enable all young people especially those who need us most to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens. We take our mission seriously. We hire caring, educated individuals and train them to become our youth development professionals. We screen all employees and volunteers through an extensive background and referenced check to ensure member safety. We establish and implement engaging programs that challenge the youth intellectually, socially, and physically. We promote leadership through service to the community. We offer homework help and tutoring. We go on field trips to sports games, to zoos, wherever we believe the children will be inspired. We bolster their confidence and nurture their dreams. Most of all, we have fun! We want our members to enjoy their experience and feel like they belong.

Along with research-based, outcome driven programming, daily we offer a healthy snack and meal. This is included in your membership fees which covers 5% of the cost to serve each member. All program costs, field trip admissions, meals, snacks & activity fees are included in your costs. ***How are we able to keep our fees low?*** We raise 95% of our costs through annual fundraising efforts. We are generously supported by many community partners, corporations, and private individuals. Some of our major supporters are United Way of Story County, the City of Ames, Story County, and Renewable Energy Group. ***Why do we keep our fees so low?*** We are not a day care. We will not charge by the hour, the day, the month. We are a youth development organization. We want to be available to all school age children because we know that everyone can benefit from the programs we offer. We want to be accessible to all families because the research shows Boys & Girls Club programming make positive, life-changing impacts in the lives of children who participate in Club programming regularly.

We invite all members to participate fully in the programs we offer and to try something new every day. Make a new friend, try a new food, laugh out loud. Parents, we invite you to learn about the programming we offer at the Club and get to know the staff. If you have questions or concerns please address yourself to the Club program director, the operations director, or to myself. Thank you for partnering with us to help Great Futures Start Here!

Sincerely,

Erika K Peterson

Chief Executive Officer

MEMBERSHIP

JOINING THE CLUB

WE have two Club locations: one in Ames on South 5th Street and one in Nevada located at Central Presbyterian Church. The Ames Club is open to youth ages 6 -18. The Nevada Club is open to Middle School aged youth only (entering 5th grade to exiting 8th grade). The membership fee is \$25.00 for the School Year Club and \$50.00 for Summer Club. These fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. Enrollment for these two time periods is separate does not roll over from one to the next.

In order for your child to become a member, you will need to complete and return the membership application form, annual health review and exchange of information, sign and date the BGCSC Parent Member Acknowledgment form, and attend an orientation.

MEMBERSHIP DATA MANAGEMENT & CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The information gathered on your membership application is necessary for the health and safety of your child, as well for reporting that we must due on a regular basis for our funding. All the information is kept in the strictest confidence and any use of the information you give will be used only in a way that protects the privacy of your child and family. Individual information will not be reported.

Additionally, it is critical that the information on your application is kept current with our system. If there is a change in contact information, pick up authorization, or other information, please notify us right away.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the BGCSC that no person be excluded from participating on the grounds of race, creed, color, gender, religion, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, or income.

CLUB CALENDAR & HOURS

Ames and Nevada Club school year hours are Monday - Friday after school - 6:00pm. The Ames Club is open later for teen members Monday - Friday until 7pm. During all day club days, school breaks and summer club the hours are 9:30am-6:00pm for all members. Please see the list of this year's special Club dates for each site.

EARLY BIRD CLUB

When school is out, clubs are open to provide youth development programs to our members. Our all-day club and summer club hours are 9:30am-6pm. For your convenience, we will open at 7:30am on these days. The cost is \$5/member/day if they arrive before 9:30am. A punch card will be used to track payment of early bird fees. These can be purchased at the front desk. Early bird fees are non-refundable, and non-transferable.

SIGN IN/SIGN OUT

All members are required to sign in immediately upon arrival. This takes place at the Front Desk. When leaving members must be escorted out of the Club by someone authorized to do so on their pick-up list. They must also sign out at the Front Desk.

SAFE PASSAGE POLICY

This policy states that members must sign in and out each day. Members under the age of 12 must be picked up from the Club by a parent, guardian, or other authorized adult. Members 12 and older, with parent permission, may leave the Club unescorted and is allowed, if parent consents, to bring a younger sibling from the same household home. No member regardless of age will be allowed to return to the Club once they have left the premises for the day without specific authorization from the CEO or Operations Director.

If a member leaves the Club building and premises without authorization to do so, and refuses to return to the Club, the police department will be called to assist with bringing the child back into the Club. The member must

then be picked up for the day. Members that leave unescorted without permission will face disciplinary actions up to and including suspension or termination of membership.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Boys & Girls Club has operating hours, like every business. At closing time, the staff is instructed to clear, lock, secure the building, property and to leave the premises.

- It is the PARENT/GUARDIAN'S responsibility to know the Club hours and the Club calendar, including times of closures and any changes, special hours or days when the Club is not open.
- Thirty minutes past closing, if there has been NO communication from parents/guardians regarding a late pick up for a member, a staff member may contact the local police department and/or Child Protective Services to assume custody of the child.
- Chronic (three occurrences) of late pick-up will result in the child's membership being suspended or revoked, determined by the CEO or Operations Director.
- **The Safety and Security of the child is paramount at all times.

HEALTH POLICY

It is our interest at the BGCSC to make sure that all children have a safe and positive experience while at Club. Part of that experience is to ensure the health and well-being of all our members, staff and volunteers.

Therefore, we have established health policies that protect the health of all who are in Club.

Any child with a communicable condition, must NOT attend Club until the condition is no longer contagious.

Some symptoms of communicable conditions are (but not limited to) diarrhea, vomiting, fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, a red, swollen sore throat, and regular coughing or sneezing. If a child displays any symptoms of illness while at the Club, the parents will be notified and must arrange for their child to be picked up within 30 minutes of being contacted.

LICE

If a child is found to have head lice or nits while at the BGCSC, you will be contacted and your child must be picked up within 30 minutes of notification. Your child may return to Club once they have been treated for the condition. Upon their return, they must have a signed note from you indicating the date of treatment.

MEDICINE POLICY

BGCSC staff are not authorized to dispense any form of medication, prescription, over the counter, or otherwise. Therefore, if your child has a medication they must take, please address your concern to your school's medical personnel to see if they are able to administer the medicine prior to attending Club.

Alternatively, arrangements can be made for you, or your designee, to arrive at Club and administer medication directly to your child in a designated area.

Additionally, medications cannot be brought into the Club. If your child is found to have an over the counter or prescription medicine in their possession, you will be contacted immediately to collect your child and the medicine they possess.

Prescription inhalers and epinephrine pens may be brought to Club and given to a staff person to keep in the Administrative office, behind closed doors. A staff will provide the inhaler or epi-pen if the need would arise. Staff who trained in First Aid are able to activate an epi-pen in the case of a life threatening allergic reaction.

EMERGENCIES

Staff members are trained in First Aid and are also able to handle everyday bumps and bruises. Should an emergency arise where medical attention is required, parents will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the person listed as the emergency contact on your child's Club membership form will be called. All efforts will be made to contact you prior to taking medical action. If however, you or another designated person

on your child's emergency contact list is unable to be reached, we will proceed as is stated on the medical treatment release on the member application. Please keep all emergency information up to date with the front desk.

SNOW/INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The BGCSC will follow the local school district's inclement weather dismissals and closures. If schools are closed, we will be closed. If schools dismiss early due to inclement weather, the Club will be open until all members are picked up or until 6pm, whichever comes first. Please arrange to pick up your child as early as possible on these days so that you, your child, and our staff can get home safely. Notice will be posted on our Website, on our Facebook page, and with KCCI tv.

If there is inclement weather during an all-day club day such as over winter or spring break when school is not in session, we will post closure notices on our website, Facebook page, and with KCCI tv.

CLOTHING

Club is an active place. Members should dress comfortably in clothing that allows for plenty of movement. **Close-toed shoes are required** so as to best protect members' feet. Sneakers are best. All clothing should also fully cover members' undergarments, and fully cover the midriff section. Shorts, skirts or dresses should be at least mid-thigh length. Wording, logos, symbols, or decals should NOT display foul language, illegal substances, gang related colors or symbols, or degrading messaging toward any group or persons. Members wearing inappropriate attire, will be required to change clothing immediately, even if that means leaving the Club for the day.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please label all your children's belongings with their first and last names. We request that member leave all valuable belongings at home. We cannot guarantee the safekeeping of personal belongings at the Club. Electronic devices such as tablets and cell phones should be left at home.

Lost & Found: The Club maintains a lost and found area at the front of the building. All clothing, backpacks, and other belongings that are found in the building will be placed in this area. Every month, the area is emptied and its contents are donated. Fragile items such as eye glasses will be kept at the Front Desk.

Bicycles & Skateboards: A bicycle rack is available at the front of our building where Club members can lock their bicycles while participating in Club programs. Bikes, skateboards, scooters, etc. cannot be stored inside the Club, or ridden on Club property.

CLUB VALUES & RULES

The BGCSC has core values which are the foundation to our safe, positive environment. They also direct our Club rules for members:

- R **Respect** -** Respect yourself, others, staff, and the Club property at all times.
- I **Integrity** -** Be honest at all times and show good character.
- C **Compassion** -** Show kindness, care, and show tolerance towards others.
- E **Excellence** -** Show great distinction in being a Club member and aim for greatness.
- S **Safety** -** Show safety by being safe and watching out for your own well-being and be thoughtful in all you do.

Please familiarize yourself with these rules and discuss them with your child. Also, be aware that additional rules apply in specific program spaces or at individual events.

DISCIPLINE

The Club is committed to providing the best possible experience for our members. We value the safety of our youth and teens and strive to maintain a positive environment. In order to do this, staff must provide consequences to those who exhibit inappropriate behavior. The following steps will be used:

- Step 1:** Verbal warning and redirecting their attention
- Step 2:** Age-appropriate time out (sitting quietly for a period of time, 5-10 minutes)
- Step 3:** Incident (disciplinary) Report and parent notification
- Step 4:** Suspension for a period of time or permanent loss of Club privileges.

In the case of behavior which jeopardizes the safety of Club members, staff or Club property, such as fighting, stealing, vandalism, or possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or weapons, the Club reserves the right to skip the above listed steps and enforcing an immediate suspension or revocation of membership privileges.

The BGCSC has a **NO TOLERANCE** stance on violence, threats, or dangerous behavior. You will be contacted immediately to collect your child if such behaviors are exhibited. We reserve the right to contact law enforcement to assist us, if deemed necessary for the safety of your child and/or others.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING

Staff members at BGCSC are mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect to Child Protective Services. We are not required to inform you if we make a report, although we will often tell you that we have done so. Reporting should be regarded as a request for an investigation into a suspected incident of abuse or neglect. A report does not necessarily constitute a proven fact; rather, it is the raising of a question about the state of the child.

ALCOHOL/DRUGS

For the safety of your child, if the designated pickup person arrives to pick up a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, we will offer that person the opportunity to call for a ride home, rather than driving. If the person refuses, we will contact the Ames Police Department and Child Protective Services.

If a member is found to be in possession of and/or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, law enforcement and parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Club privileges may be suspended or revoked.

COMMUNICATION

Our goal is to maintain proper, open-communication with our member's families. If at any time you have a question about your child's behavior or any other Club-related concerns, please contact the Chief Executive Officer or the Operations Director. Likewise, we will communicate with concerns or issues that arise during Club time, in effort to better serve your child, and to collaborate with you as their parent. We must be able to reach you or a person you designate on your approved pick-up list at all times regarding your child. Any issues regarding your child's safety or major behavioral issues need to be communicated within 24hrs.

PROGRAMMING

ATTENDANCE

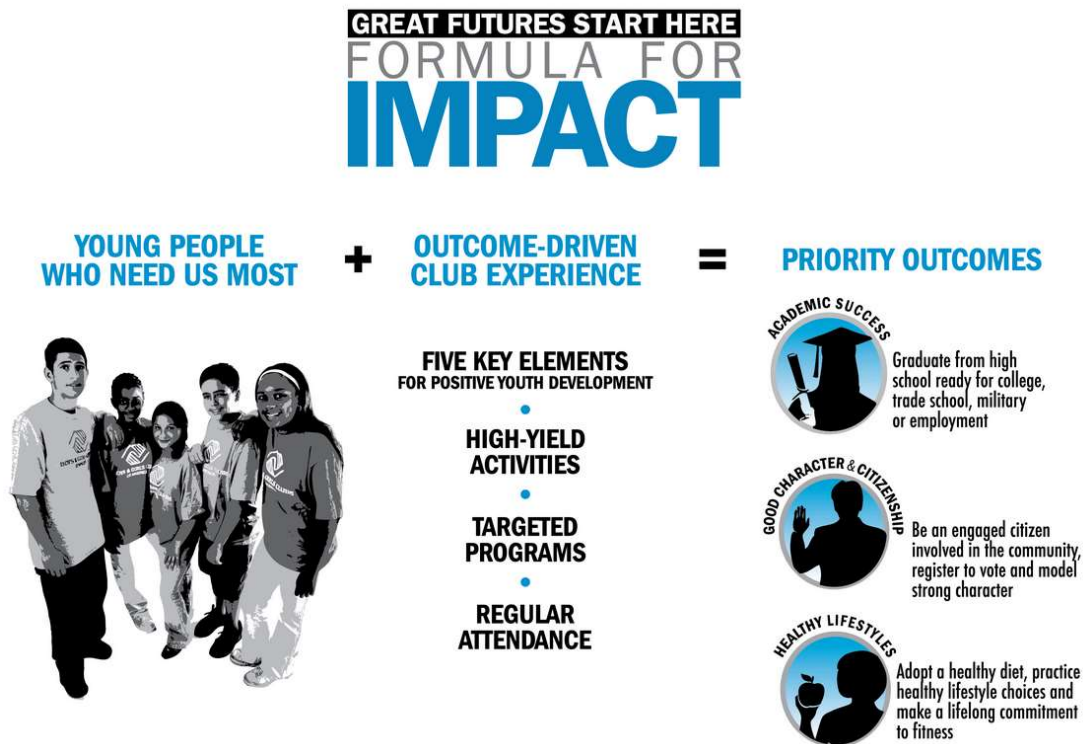
As a youth development organization, member participation is critical for them to gain the most from each of the research-based programs we offer. Research has shown that children who attend 2 days per week have more positive impact results than those who attend less. Some of these results include improved academic achievement, higher graduation rates, reduced substance abuse rates, and less fighting in or out of school. Therefore, we strongly encourage youth to attend at least 2 days per week and at least 2 to 3 hours per visit.

During the academic year, a Club member may only attend Club if they attended school the same day. If they were absent due to illness, suspension, or any other reason, they may not attend Club that day.

FORMULA FOR IMPACT

The National Boys & Girls Club Movement has adopted the Formula for Impact, a theory of change that describes how individual Clubs and the Movement as a whole can increase our impact. A theory of change is a planning and evaluation process that defines all the building blocks required to bring about a long-term goal; it creates a commonly understood vision of the goals, how they will be reached, and what will be used to measure progress along the way.

Each element of our Formula for Impact is also informed by research into the ways in which young people grow and thrive, as well as by analysis of the best practices and traditions of highly effective Clubs.



In keeping with the Formula for Impact, the BGCSC incorporates a variety of engaging programs designed to encourage development of the whole person. Our Triple Play program incorporates sports, recreation and nutrition to teach wellness, leadership and healthy lifestyles. Project Learn provides homework help, tutoring, high yield learning activities, and technological skills development. The SMART Moves programs are gender-based programming which teach self-esteem, relationship skills, communication, and physical development. Torch and Keystone Clubs focus on leadership, volunteerism, and the democratic process. Additionally, we implement programs developed locally for member enjoyment.

PROGRAM GOALS

It is the goal of our program to serve the needs of families, while addressing the special interests and concerns of their children. Our trained staff work to provide a quality program designed to promote academic success, character and leadership development, and healthy lifestyles. Our weekly activities may include, but are not limited to: sports, games, arts and crafts, films, field trips, reading, and leisure time. The focus is to ensure fun, quality programs that provide safe and positive experiences.

FACILITIES

The BGCSC's Clubhouse in Ames is a 12,000 square foot facility that is designed solely to meet the needs of our communities' youth. The following spaces are used to offer fun & educational programs and activities each day:

- *Games Room: Recreation tournaments involving billiards, board games, foosball, air hockey, etc....
- *Gym: Individual fitness challenges, large group fitness activities such as basketball, dodge ball, volleyball, Tae Kwon Do, dance, etc.
- *Learning Center: Homework help, tutoring, arts & crafts, etc...
- *Teen Room: This space is reserved for youth in seventh grade and higher and is staffed by our teen coordinator at all times that it is available to youth. Attached to an enclosed outdoor patio area, teens have supervised indoor and outdoor space to enjoy the Club experience with their peers. The teen room contains iMac computers, PS4 video console and flat screen TV, lounge chairs, study tables, a digital projector, and a white board. The patio area has picnic tables, benches, and yard games for youth recreation.
- *Technology Center: The Technology Center is geared toward learning 21st Century technology skills. It is equipped with a 3D printer, 12 iMac computers, internet access with firewalls, a video game console and a flat screen TV.
- *Outdoor Playground, Basketball Court, and Field: There are outdoor play areas designated for use exclusively for Boys & Girls Club members during Club hours and activities. Weather permitting and under staff supervision, daily we attempt to provide outdoor play.
- *Field trips: Field trip participation is designated on a sign-up basis. Members who have expressed interest by signing up, will then be chosen based on participation and behavior. If the field trip is outside the city limits, or occurs outside of Club hours, parents will be notified and a permission slip will be required for members to participate.

New members are encouraged to receive a tour of our facility, meet staff members, and receive more specific information about rules and expectations within the program.

The Nevada Club is hosted by Central Presbyterian Church located at 932 5th Street Nevada, Iowa. This space located on the 3rd floor includes a central area with gaming systems, computers, a communal table, restroom and small kitchenette. There are two adjacent rooms for targeted programming such as homework help, news broadcasting, and science club. Cooking club and meals takes place in the kitchen on the ground level.

Seasonal schedules are available at each club location. In addition, many on-the-spot fun activities happen each day within the various areas of the Club. Schedules are subject to change due to attendance, staffing, and other factors.

MOVIES

Movies will occasionally be shown during special events and programs. In an attempt to be as sensitive to material content as possible, Club wide movies (for ages 6 and up) will be rated no higher than PG. Movies for teens (13 and up) could be rated up to PG-13. Movies are selected by an authorized staff person. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Operations Director.

VEHICLES

Club vehicles are used to transport members to and from Club sponsored activities, to pick up members from Ames Middle & High Schools when school is in session, and occasionally to transport Nevada Club members home. Staff who drive the Club vehicles have been trained and screened prior to beginning their driving responsibilities. Occasionally, chartered vehicles or public transportation may be used for Club sponsored events or may be contracted to transport youth home. Club staff are not permitted to use personal vehicles to transport Club members.

SUPERVISION

Each program space within the Club is staffed by trained professional staff members, and supported by volunteers. They ensure the safety of our members and work hard to prepare and offer quality programs and activities. All staff and volunteers are required to pass background and reference checks before beginning to supervise or assist programming and/or activities with Club members.

We maintain a 1 to 15 ratio of adults to youth during Club programs for youth in 4th grade and below. Older youth and free play time will not exceed 1 to 25 adult to youth ratio. The field trip ratio is 2 to 13 for members through 6th grade, and 1 to 14 for members in 7th grade and up.

We prohibit private, one on one meetings and/or communications between Club staff or volunteers and Club members. If an individual meeting with a member is necessary, a second adult or member must be present, or the meeting must take place in the plain sight of others. If communication with a member is necessary, such as email or text, Club channels will be used and a Club supervisor or the member's parent will be included in the communication. Please the Operations Director or CEO know if you have questions.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an integral part of our programming. All volunteers who will have direct, repetitive contact with Club members, must pass our background and reference checks before their service begins at the Club.

PARENTS & VISITORS

The BGCSC values health and safety of our members. Adults (including parents) who are not volunteering are NOT permitted to be in program spaces. Parents/Guardians who are picking up their child/ren from the Club should wait in the reception area until their child has been brought to the front for pick up. Exceptions may be made for special events such as tournaments, talent shows and recognition events.

FAMILY NIGHTS

Occasionally, the Club will host a family night where members' families are welcome. During these events, all parents/guardians and non-club members must sign in. You are responsible to supervise your children and any non-club youth who arrive with you.

TELEPHONE & CELL PHONE USAGE

Club members may request to use the telephone at the front desk in order to contact a parent or guardian. Phone calls should be limited to a needs-only basis. Club members may also be paged to accept phone calls from parents or guardians. In order to allow Club members to enjoy the activities they are participating in and respect the efficiency of the front desk area, please limit these phone calls.

We understand that many of our older members utilize personal cell phones on a regular basis; Phones should not be used while participating in a structured program or activity.

Cell phones should also be used appropriately. If someone is found to be using their personal cell phone in a manner that does not coincide with the Club's values/rules, that member will lose his or her right to carry his or her cell phone within the Club. Club members cannot photograph or video other Club members or staff using their cell phones, while on Club premises, or while involved in Club programming.

COMPUTERS, INTERNET, WI-FI, & SOCIAL MEDIA

There are computers available at the BGCSC for our members use. During after school hours, computers are limited to homework and educational activities. Technology programs are a part of our weekly schedule, and there is also scheduled time for our members to enjoy personal time to use the computers. Prior to use of Club computers, or to be able to access the WIFI at the Club, members must watch an internet safety video and acknowledge they will use the technology in a safe manner. All efforts will be made to monitor internet access to ensure Club members' online safety.

Regardless of close supervision and monitoring, there remains the possibility of coming into contact with inappropriate material. Please talk with your member about appropriate use of the internet and social media. If a member mistakenly accesses inappropriate content, he or she should immediately tell a staff member.

Using computers and related equipment at the Club is a privilege.

Club staff and volunteers are not permitted to connect with Club members via social media, email, or other media, unless through designated Club channels and strictly for Club business or programming.

FOOD & VENDING

Club members are expected to keep all food and drinks in appropriate areas. Our Kid's Café serves a meal and snack daily. Labeled water bottles are encouraged. Coin operated snack and drink machines are provided for members use if they so desire. These machines are stocked with some of the healthiest choices available to encourage members' healthy lifestyles. The Club is NOT responsible for money deposited into these machines.

PHOTOGRAPHS, RECORDINGS, MEMBER CREATIONS

The BGCSC may use photos or videos including, or projects created by members for advertising or publicity purposes. They may be used in, but are not limited to, the following: newspaper, social media, website, flyers, brochures, etc... If you do not want your child to be photographed or recorded for the purposes listed above, please be sure to indicate this desire on your child's membership application.