



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

# Parent/Guardian & New Member Handbook

HARTFORD – JACKSON – KEWASKUM – WEST BEND

262.334.3732

## **Welcome**

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to The Boys & Girls Clubs of Washington County. The Clubs are committed to a safe and positive environment in which:

- Relationships are characterized by dignity, respect and fair treatment.
- There is an opportunity for learning, participation, challenge, and broadening of experience.
- Members receive support, recognition and appreciation.

## **What We Do**

- We provide a safe place where all young people are welcome and belong.
- We offer a variety of fun and impactful programs that engage our members.
- We nurture positive relationships that inspire a sense of hope and opportunity.
- We guide members to develop the attitudes and behaviors to succeed in school, become economically self-sufficient, and develop healthy family and community relationships.

## **Who We Are**

**Youth Centric** – We are the member's Club. We are here to support and guide them.

**Compassionate** – We view our members as real people. Each member matters.

**Skilled** – We attract and develop talented youth development professionals and volunteers.

**Challenging** – We strive to improve. We have high expectations for ourselves and our members.

**Accountable** – We are open and transparent with results.

**Collaborative** – We are inclusive and work in partnership with all participants.

## **Mission Statement**

To enable all young people to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

## **Youth Development Strategy**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Washington County provide a developmentally rich environment by incorporating the *five key elements* for Positive Youth Development:

- Creating a Safe, Positive Environment
- Having Fun
- Developing Supportive Relationships
- Opportunity for and having High Expectations
- Recognize members for who they are and their achievements

We strive to enable all youth to help themselves realize their potential for growth and development. Our programs are created by youth development professionals and are offered in five core program areas:

- Health and Life Skills
- Education and Career Development
- The Arts
- Leadership and Character Development
- Sports, Fitness, and Recreation

Within this framework we hope to reach our goals as youth development professionals and provide a safe and positive place for youth to learn and grow.

## **Club Fees**

Membership: \$80.00/child or \$185 for family of three or more. *Only applies to members ages 7 & up.*

Transportation: Ask Unit Director for details – Varies by Club when transportation is offered

Replacement Membership Card: \$1.00

The Morning Club: \$15/day (7am-10am) OR \$10/day (8am-10am) OR \$5/day (9am-10am); Bulk Price Available - Summer Only!

Rise & Shine Program (Kewaskum): \$20/week

Summer Program Fee: \$10/child

## **Late Pick-Up Policy**

It is not the Club's responsibility to watch members before or after hours of operation. If you are running late at closing please contact the Club as soon as possible before closing to avoid late fee and other potential consequences, including suspension and discontinuation of membership.

The Boys & Girls Clubs holds the right to charge a late pick-up fee to a member's account for those members who are picked past the closing time at any of our Club locations.

The Club holds the right to call the proper authorities in the event of a child being left at the Club after 45 minutes with zero communication between Club staff and member parent/guardians and emergency contacts.

Ask your Unit Director on the specifics of the Club late pick-up fee.

## **Membership Application**

Memberships can be turned in in-person, via mail or online.

The following is required for membership:

- Accurate and fully completed membership application.
- Payment of annual membership fee and any outstanding balances, or a payment plan on file.
- If requested, proof of school registration and/or a birth certificate to ensure membership eligibility
- We accept payments in the form of cash, check, or credit card.
- Scholarships are available for those experiencing financial hardship. See Unit Director for details.

Membership year runs September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>. A membership form and parent handbook sign-off document must be completed and signed by a parent/guardian each membership year. The annual membership **will not be** pro-rated for partial year memberships.

The information you provide on the membership application is vital and necessary for our records and funding that our organization receives. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify us of any changes to your contact information or any other information that appears on the application as soon as they occur.

## ***Membership is a privilege, not a right.***

Prior to joining the Club it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to assure his/her child is physically, mentally, socially and emotionally capable of functioning in the Club's interactive atmosphere. In the event the care of your child detracts from the overall care of our members we may not be able to accommodate them and reserve the right to terminate membership without refund. We will do everything reasonably in our ability to accommodate all youth.

The Club may not be suitable or equipped to handle all children and the Boys & Girls Club reserves the right to refuse membership to any child at any time with reasonable cause.

### **Scholarship Assistance**

We offer scholarship assistance and/or payment plans for those experiencing financial hardships. See Unit Director for details. We handle these situations on a case-by-case basis.

### **Arrival & Departure**

It is the responsibility of the child AND parent/guardian to determine, understand, and enforce arrival and departure methods. Members are encouraged to come to the Club daily and do not need to prearrange visits.

Club members are not allowed on the Club grounds during operating hours unless they are signed in and participating in Club activities. Members should NOT be dropped off prior to the opening of the facility, as the Club cannot be held responsible for their supervision.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the Club regarding:

- Knowing your child's pick-up code. Authorized individuals must know the code to pick up.
- Stating who are authorized individuals to pick up your child. We Check IDs. Please have ID present at time of pickup.
- Permission for your child to check out from Club on their own. A sign-out form must be filled out by parents in this situation. See Unit Director for more details.
- Individuals, for legal reasons, who are not allowed to pick up your child. In this case, the Club **requires** a copy of the legal documents and picture of the individual for staff to uphold legal restrictions. Instruction of what the Club should do if that individual attempts to pickup must be stated to the Club in writing.

When arriving to pick up your child, please park in designated areas. You can either call in to the Club and give the pickup code or you can check in at our front desk for pickup. Parent/guardians and other visitors are required to check in at the front desk if entering the facility.

It is essential for safety and supervision that all members remain in program areas at all times. During Club hours, members are not allowed to wait for transportation in the front lobby or outside of the Club facility. If a parent calls in for pickup, they are expected to be outside of the facility in the appropriate parking area waiting for their member. Non-compliance can result in having to come into the facility every time for pickup.

Please be sure to pick up your child by the posted closing times. Late fees are given and enforced.

Club staff will make every reasonable effort to contact parent/guardians if a member chooses to leave Club without permission. If a child leaves the Club without permission, we will do our best to follow the member and make contact with the parent/guardian. In the event we lose sight of the child, we will cause the proper authorities to assist in finding the child.

### **Club Hours & Closures**

Varies by Location – See Individual Club for more details.

**After-School:** The Club is open for after-school programming, based on the Club's local school district's calendar.

**Non-School Days:** The Club is open extended hours on selected days, at certain Club locations, when school is not in session (i.e., Winter Break, Spring Break, Summer Vacation, etc.). Varies by location.

**Morning Club Hours:** Morning Club Hours, is a drop-in program available during the morning hours of non-school days for a daily fee at certain Club locations.

Extended Teen Hours: The Club stays open additional hours for teen-only activities (open gym, teen nights, college prep events, etc.). Hours, events, and age groups are determined and posted on a monthly basis.

Closed Days: The Club is closed on New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the day following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

Your local Club will be closed on any day that the local school district is closed for inclement weather.

In addition, Club will be closed at various points throughout the year for staff training, special events, and building maintenance. A closings document will be provided at the beginning of every membership year, however, dates are subjects to change. Additional days of Club closure will occur with notice – there is no time expectation on the notice to be given in the event the Club needs to close immediately.

Additionally, there may be days when it is necessary to close the Club due to unforeseen circumstances, such as: emergency repairs, severe weather, etc. Again, when such instances arise we will do our best to post this in a timely manner. Check e-mail, the Club Facebook page, and the website.

The Club reserves the right to change its hours and days of operation based on need and/or economic circumstances. If such changes occur, parents/guardians will be notified in advance.

### **Payment & Refund Policy**

The Club will maintain a financial account and record for each Club member.

Membership fees and any previously owed balance is due upon registration prior to summer and/or membership renewal period.

In addition, at the end of each quarter, all account balances must be paid to continue attendance. **Any overdue account may result in suspension from Club activities.**

Scholarship and payment plans are available to assist families. Members under payment plans must maintain scheduled payments to participate in additional Club services (field trips, sports leagues, special events, etc.). Contact your Club Director if you are unable to pay upfront and need to arrange a payment plan that works for your family.

All optional activity fees (such as: field trips and sports leagues) and program fees (such as: sports/life skills programs and transportation) **must be pre-paid.**

**There are no refunds for pre-paid optional activities.** If there are special circumstances surrounding your case for a refund or credit, please speak with your Unit Director to determine if your case for refund is exempt. The Club will, at most, provide a credit to your child's account of the amount paid for future use at the Club.

The Club accepts cash, checks and credit cards (credit cards may not be accepted at all locations). **Additional bank charges will be added for each returned check.**

### **Professional Staff**

The Club strives to be the best youth development organization in Washington County. All staff members are paid youth professionals. All staff receive background checks and training in Youth Development strategies prior to working with youth. Staff members are easily identifiable by Club uniform and identification badge.

## **Code of Conduct**

The Club's core belief is to provide a safe place to learn and grow. Positive attitudes keep the Club fun. Below are guidelines members are expected to follow:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe

Please take the time to remind your child of the need to follow Club rules and staff directions at ALL times.

## **Parent/Guardian & Contacts – Behavior Expectations**

Parents, guardians, and contacts of the member are expected to display the same conduct as all staff and members who enter our buildings (*see Code of Conduct section above*). If there is a case of misconduct (yelling, swearing, blatant disregard for Club policy, disrespect towards anyone in our building, or anything deemed as misconduct by the Club), parents are subject, but not limited, to the following actions:

- Not permitted entry into Club facilities.
- Meeting with Unit Director, Operations Director, and/or Executive Director.
- Membership Suspension
- Permanent dismissal from Club participation with no refund (membership, sports leagues, events, etc..)

The Club holds a Zero-Tolerance policy for any parent/guardian, contact or any individual that enters into our Club space without proper authorization. If any incident occurs that is deemed as unacceptable or inappropriate contact, the Club holds the right to call the proper authorities.

## **Conflict Resolution**

In the case of a conflict or issue arises that relates to Club operations it is expected that respectful and timely communication takes place between the member's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Club Unit Director and/or Operations Director. In the case of a Club conflict or issue, your Unit Director should be contacted first.

## **Behavior Policy**

The Club strives to keep the consequences for unacceptable behavior clear, appropriate and timely. Safety of all members is of utmost importance. Our standards, along with the expectation that all members use good common sense, exist to ensure your child and every other child at the Club can safely enjoy the activities.

Any member who disrupts programs or creates a dangerous situation will be handled appropriately on a case by case basis. Members who do not follow rules can expect to lose privileges and face consequences up to, and including, suspension and/or loss of membership. Corrective actions will be determined by the staff and administered in light of the inappropriate behavior, including:

Warning: Staff describes the inappropriate behavior and provides guidance to avoid reoccurrence.

Chill zone/Zen Den: Member is placed away from the situation for a specific amount of time.

Alternative Consequence: Member is temporarily removed from the area where incident occurred to complete a task, logically connected to the inappropriate behavior.

Referral: A behavioral write-up is completed with staff and member. Member will be restricted from the program area where the infraction occurred or have other consequences assigned. Parent/guardian is contacted.

Behavior Contract: A contract will be made that will be completed and agreed upon between the Unit Director, member and parent/guardian. This contract will hold a child to, but not limited to, the following

consequences if the child performs any behaviors as stated by the contract: in-club suspension, out-of-club suspension, membership cancellation.

**Suspension:** Member is not allowed to return to any Club in Washington County or participate in Club activities for time decided by the Unit Director. Suspending members has its time and place and is used when other strategies have failed, or the seriousness of the incident warrants the need to separate a member from the Club. Each situation will be assessed on an individual basis and acted on with an individualized plan or strategy.

**It is our policy to keep parents informed of their child's progress and to notify them of misconduct.** Please call the Club if you have any questions concerning corrective measures. Your support and involvement as parent/guardian is vital to our success as Youth Development Professionals.

In the event of a long-term suspension (more than 60 days) or expulsion, you can appeal such a decision after 60 days. Please contact your Unit Director for more information.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is intentional, unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates a negative Club environment for a Club(s) member. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

When deciding whether an incident can be defined as bullying, we look at four main factors:

- The issue has happened repeatedly.
- The same people are involved.
- What happened was on purpose.
- It hurt (body or feelings).

If all four statements are true, then we can call the behavior bullying. If not, we can't label it as such. If bullying occurs, the Boys & Girls Club will take appropriate corrective action in accordance with our Behavior Policy.

### **Personal Belongings**

All personal belongings brought into the Club by a member are the responsibility of that member. **The Club is NOT responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items.** Members are discouraged from bringing anything to the Club that is not completely necessary, such as toys, balls, electronics, and trading cards.

**Electronic devices are NOT allowed in the Boys & Girls Club program space (cell phones, portable music players, hand-held games, etc.) unless otherwise specified by the Unit Director or Youth Development Staff in charge of the program area.** They must be kept in your child's bag or storage space. Special circumstances can be worked out with the Unit Director if your member needs their cell phone during Club. Teen Room members are permitted to use cell phones during designated times and for appropriate use ONLY. Any misuse of a cell phone will result in loss of privilege and confiscation of the device. Staff will confiscate any items that do not uphold Club Code of Conduct, cause a distraction, or hazard. The front desk will hold confiscated items, which may only be retrieved by an authorized adult. Necessary items, such as backpacks and jackets should be clearly marked with the member's name. Items not collected from our lost-and-found will be donated to a local charity on a regular basis. Collection times will be posted.

**Parents and members acknowledge that the club reserves the right, for the health and safety of the Club and its members, to search a member or a member's belongings with or without cause.**

Parent/guardians will be notified if such a search is conducted.

### **Phone Calls**

Our phones are for Club business and emergency use only. Please make any necessary arrangements before your child comes to the Club. **Members are not to have cell phones out during Club hours without permission.** If a member has a cell phone, we encourage him/her to check it in at the front desk for safe keeping until he/she is picked up. If you need to contact your child at Club, please feel free to call the Club (262) 334-3732.

### **Internet Use**

Internet access is available to members. The Club places reasonable restrictions on the material members' access or post through the filter system. Staff supervise use of technology. Members who use Club technology for uses other than those outlined by staff will have appropriate corrective actions, including loss of access.

### **Dress Code**

Youth should dress comfortably and wear clothes that allow them to participate in typical Club activities and programs. The following guidelines apply to the appropriate dress of members:

- Shoes must be always worn.
- Open-toed shoes and shoes with heels are discouraged
- In the gymnasium, close-toed shoes with gripping soles are required.
- Inappropriate clothing of any kind is NOT allowed at Club. Examples of inappropriate clothing includes but is not limited to: clothes that are too short, tight and/or revealing in any way, clothes with questionable or distasteful advertising (graphics, words, or content), clothing that promotes content that is inappropriate for school age children (ex: alcohol), showing undergarments or showing gang affiliation.

Members breaking the dress code may be asked to change or leave immediately. This judgment is left solely to the discretion of the Club staff.

### **Field Trips**

The Club provides a variety of opportunities for our members to participate in activities outside of the Club that support our core beliefs and programs. To attend a field trip, members must return signed permission slips and any necessary fees prior to leaving. Sign-ups are taken on a first come, first serve basis (meaning eligible members who return the required permission slip and pay associated fees and any account balance due).

As part of corrective consequences, members may be excluded from field trips. Please remember all our Club rules extend to field trips. Members who fail to follow our rules and general Club expectations for appropriate behavior will prompt an immediate call to a parent/guardian to remove that member from the field trip at his/her own cost. *A parent/guardian MUST be available by telephone at all times during any Club-sponsored field trips in the event the staff needs to contact him/her.*

### **Transportation**

Transportation from schools is provided in a limited capacity from select locations. Please check with your Unit Director for information on availability and cost. Members are also encouraged to check with their schools, as well, for possible transportation alternatives.

### **Transportation Rules**

Transportation is provided for offsite experiences through Club vans and buses. Drivers are prohibited from using their phone, except in cases of emergency, while they are driving. The following rules apply to all Club vehicles.

1. The driver is in full charge of the vehicle and members must obey the driver promptly and willingly.
2. A transportation log will be kept to specific the day, time, and locations traveled to while members are in the Club vehicle.
3. Appropriate behavior is always required. Members will:

- Talk in a way that will not distract the driver.
  - Sit face forward and remain buckled in their seat while the vehicle is in motion.
  - Not use profanity/vulgarity.
  - Respect the rights and property of others.
  - Keep their hands, feet and objects to themselves.
4. Club cell phone use policy applies on vehicles.
  5. Windows may be opened only with permission of the driver.
  6. No member shall extend any part of their body or belongings beyond the window ledge.
  7. The driver may assign seats, at his/her discretion.
  8. Members are to assist in keeping litter off the floor.
  9. Food and beverages are not allowed to be consumed (exception – water).
  10. Members will not sit on the driver's seat or touch any equipment.
  11. Hazardous materials are not allowed. The driver shall determine which articles are hazardous.
  12. Except for service animals, no animals or insects are allowed.
  13. Parent/guardians of members damaging Club vehicles will be responsible for reimbursement.

### **Food**

We ask members to keep food and drinks out of program areas and eat only during designated times and areas. Members can bring their own snacks/drinks and have them during established mealtimes and locations.

Refrigerators and microwaves are NOT available for member use – exemption exist for medical related situations.

During the school year we provide free snacks afterschool. During the summer we provide a free lunch and snack. Concessions are available at all Clubs during operating hours.

All food allergies **must** be reported to staff. It is also the child's responsibility to know their allergy and how to make appropriate choices based on that allergy. We are not responsible for members who bring in outside food that a child may be allergic to. We discourage anyone bringing in snacks and foods with nuts.

If members have special diets (excluding food allergies), based on medical conditions, please speak with your Unit Director.

### **Member Health & Safety**

As stated on our membership form, it is **required** that all medical, physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral conditions and allergies, as well as medications that are deemed necessary for the health and well-being of the member, are disclosed to the Club. Please report if any changes occur to the mentioned conditions/allergies or medications.

Failure to report such information may affect the Club's staff ability to appropriately work with members and be in tune with the special needs they may have. In the case of an emergency, it is necessary Club staff be able to provide emergency and medical personnel with appropriate information about your child. The Club holds the right to cancel membership in the event important information is withheld from the Club regarding any health condition, or a relatable condition, that impacts the wellbeing of a child.

The Club is committed to providing a safe environment for the youth of all ages. Staff assumes the responsibility for identifying any abuse or neglect of members or any safety hazards in the Club that could cause injury or disease. If you have a concern for member safety, please notify your Unit Director.

In the event a child is injured or becomes afflicted with illness/disease, the Club is not liable for assisting in payment of medical bills.

### **Medication**

Members are allowed to store medication at the Boys & Girls Club. A medication consent form must be filled out with the Unit Director of the Club. Please know that the Club is not allowed to administer a member's medication (exception: allergy medication such as an EpiPen). Members must administer their medication on their own, but they will be supervised staff.

Medications need to be picked up at the end of our school year and summer programming, otherwise they will be properly disposed with the local health department.

### **Accidents**

The Club strives to maintain a safe and secure environment. Our trained staff is attentive to providing the safest environment possible. The completed membership application authorizes the Club staff to seek medical treatment for a member, if necessary. In the event of a serious injury, the staff will call 911 immediately and then call the child's parents/guardians or alternative emergency contacts.

### **Infestation or Contagious Conditions**

Any and all suspected transferable infestations or transmittable contagious conditions will be addressed in the following manner and without exception:

- Parents will be contacted for immediate removal of the member from Club facilities.
- Proof of treatment from an appropriate professional **AND** approval from the Unit Director is required before the child will be allowed back into the Club.

The Club will consult with local health department officials on whether a post/notification must be made to parents about any infestations or communicable disease that has been identified in the Club.

As an organization, our various Clubs perform random lice checks once every winter, spring, summer and fall.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers are an integral part of the Club experience. We welcome volunteers who wish to share their time and/or talents. We are always in need of tutors, youth mentors and assistants for programs and events.

If you or someone you know would like to volunteer at one of our Clubs, please stop by the Club or contact the Club's Unit Director. Background checks are required of all volunteers prior to working with our members (18 years and older).

Prior to volunteering, it is necessary to check with the Unit Director on the requirements for volunteering. All volunteers must be 16 (unless approved by the Unit Director). Each Club requires that volunteers engage in a certain amount of activity deemed as volunteer work during their time at the Club. The Club holds the right to dismiss a volunteer at any time if requirements of the volunteering agreement are not met.

### **Donations**

While our annual cost to provide programs and services is over \$445 per child, the Boys & Girls Club is committed to maintaining membership dues at \$80 a year so that all youth have the opportunity to participate. Financial or in-kind donations from member families or their employers are greatly appreciated. Donations may be tax deductible. Please check with your Unit Director for additional giving opportunities.

### **Confidentiality**

Strict guidelines are in place to ensure confidentiality. No individual data will be publicly released. Individual student information may be grouped and summarized for reports to the community to show positive impacts of particular programs. Member information may only be shared with parent/guardian.

**Contact Us**

Please do not hesitate to speak to a staff member or the Unit Director whenever you have a question or a concern. We ask you to respect staff time while the Club is operating. If your question or concern will take staff time away from the other Club members, we ask you set up time to meet with the staff during non-Club hours or request to speak with the Unit Director. If the need arises, however, and you feel an issue or complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved, please know parents/guardians may always contact the Operations Director and/or the Executive Director of the organization.