



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF MISSOULA COUNTY

Parent Handbook
After School Program 2022-23

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County! We are excited to have your child as a member of our Club. This handbook is intended to be a helpful, general information guide, to parents and members. In it you will find information on membership, policies, procedures, and general Club programs and guidelines. We look forward to working with you and your child(ren) knowing that together we will make our community a place for great futures to start here!

This Parent Handbook is intended to give parents and families of members of the Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County (BGCM) an overview of the policies and procedures of BGCM. It is not meant to signify all BGCM policies & procedures, or to remain fixed and inflexible in its contents. We will make every effort to communicate changes as they occur, but there may be situations where changes in BGCM's policies & procedures occur without notice. Please contact BGCM at 406-542-3116 if you have any questions or concerns.

MISSION

Our Mission is to inspire and guide all young people to develop positive values and realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens through quality out-of-school time programming.

FOUNDATION OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

Our Core Beliefs:

Boys and Girls Clubs provide young people with:

- Safe, positive, and inclusive environments in which to learn and grow
- Opportunities to develop positive, meaningful, and healthy connections with peers and adults
- High-quality programs and activities that build upon young people's strengths, allow them to explore new experiences, and help them develop skills for good decision-making
- Experiences that foster hope, a sense of belonging, and a purpose
- Opportunities for youth to lead, share ideas, and be heard and recognized

Our Perspective: Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF MEMBERS

Kristian Stipe	Chief Executive Officer
Kezia Halverson	Director of Youth Development
Bailey Bristol	Director of Programming

SITE COORDINATORS

Oscar Umhey	Bonner & Lolo Coordinator
Hayden Ijames	Foursquare & Mid-Missoula Coordinator
Lee Patterson	DeSmet & Target Range Coordinator

CONTACTING THE OFFICE

Office Address	1515 Fairview Ave, Suite 243 Missoula, MT 59801
Office Phone	406-542-3116
Office Email	bailey@bgcmissoulacounty.org
Website	www.bgcmissoula.org
Facebook Page	@BGCMissoula
Instagram Page	@BGCMissoula

Phone & Email:

Efficient, clear communication with parents and families is a top priority of ours and we take this job very seriously. With a small staff, there are instances in which staff are not in our office and able to answer the phone. As a result, we encourage families to make email their primary means of communications with the office, as we are committed to returning emails from family members within 24 hours.

Social Media:

We also encourage all parents and family members to follow our social media sites. We use Facebook and Instagram to share all of the wonderful things happening at our programs, as well as informational updates regarding the organization. These sites really help families stay in the loop on all things BGCM.

UPDATING CONTACT INFORMATION

It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to log into their parent portal to provide Club with accurate and current contact and pick up information, emergency contact phone numbers, custodial issues, and correct addresses. **Please update your Parent Portal immediately if any of this information changes during the course of the program.**

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM MODEL

Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County (BGCM) operates after-school programs out of seven sites across Missoula County aimed at providing youth with a safe environment filled with fun, high-quality, and engaging programs after school hours. Our model is focused on three key youth outcomes:

~ACADEMIC SUCCESS~

Increase grade-level achievement and reduce the dropout rate.

~GOOD CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP~

Increase community service and work to create community-engaged citizens modeling strong character.

~HEALTHY LIFESTYLES~

Encourage healthy behaviors and a lifelong commitment to practice healthy lifestyle choices to promote both physically and mentally wellbeing.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County's 2022-23 After-School Club Program begins on **Monday, August 29, 2022** (site dependent) and runs through **Friday, June 2, 2023**. Our programming ends the week before the last week of school to allow our staff adequate time to prepare and train for the upcoming summer program. We have also seen a pattern of low member attendance the last week of school and, therefore, will be using this week to ensure we are prepared for a successful launch of Summer Club.

After School Club Program Hours of Operation:

BGCM's after-school club programs run from **school release – 6:00PM**, Monday through Friday, at all of our sites on regularly scheduled school days.

Early Dismissal Days:

We begin our after-school program at the time of the earlier dismissal when our partner schools have early dismissal.

Early Release Days:

BGCM offers elongated after-school programming when our partner schools have early-out days.

Full-Days of Club:

BGCM offers full-days of Club throughout the school year on some days when school is closed. Please refer to our 22-23 Parent Club Calendar for the days that full-days of Club will be offered. All full-days of Club will be held at our Mid-Missoula location in the City Life Community Center (1515 Fairview Avenue) and our Lolo location and are open to all members attending our after-school programs across our sites. Full days of Club run from **7:30 AM – 6:00 PM**.

Communication regarding the details of the full-days of Club will be sent out to parents and family members about two weeks before the date of the scheduled full-days of Club. **Parents are REQUIRED to sign their child up for the full day** and will have until the specified deadline to sign up or cancel registration

for the full day. We will not honor texts or verbal sign-ups, it needs to be in writing to limit confusion and ensure an accurate count.

If a child is not signed up for the day, we will not have a space for them. Likewise, if a child is signed-up for the day and does not show up, we will still bill the parent for the day. We staff our full-days of Club, purchase food and supplies, and plan activities based on the number of kids signed-up for the day and must have an accurate count. This is another reason for the in-writing rule, it ensures that if you change your mind and cancel before the deadline, you will not be billed for the day.

Food for Full-Days of Club: We are providing your child with breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Members are still welcome to pack a lunch, but it is not required.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB PROGRAM FEE POLICIES

Payment methods and all related banking information must be provided in order to register your child for the after-school program.

If a payment is not received after 30 days, your child may be removed from the program. If you anticipate an inability to pay on time, please let the Program Manager know immediately. It is important to communicate your needs to us in order to keep your child enrolled. The payment plan schedule must be strictly followed.

Outstanding Balances: Members are ineligible to register if there is a current outstanding balance from previously attended programs. Please contact our office to make a payment arrangement for outstanding balances.

VISITORS

Parents, business professionals, service Club members, officials, or other interested persons must check in with staff upon arrival and make arrangements to be accompanied by a staff member.

HOMEWORK

We want our kids to go home with completed homework every day. If you notice that your child is not turning in homework, please speak to our site staff. Often kids will tell us that they don't have homework. If you would like to help your child with homework yourself, please let us know and we will not require your child to do their homework at Club.

A small number of Chromebooks are available to borrow for members to complete online or remote work at Club. Please see our Technology Policy for more information on technology use in clubs.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the Five Key Elements of the Boys and Girls Club is to ensure there is a safe, positive, and inclusive environment in which to learn and grow. This is to ensure all young people know they are welcomed and accepted. This ensures academic success, healthy lifestyles, and teaches good character and citizenship.



We use “The Three Be’s” to help remember how we should treat others and ourselves. To fulfill our mission, our Club works hard to create a safe, positive, and inclusive environment for youth of every race, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status, religion, or cultural beliefs. By creating inclusive environments at our Club, we improve the overall experience for all young people.

Inclusion Initiative:

BGCM strives to be inclusive of all its Club Members. This is achieved by creating a shared understanding of inclusive and affirming language and vocabulary and building momentum around a national dialogue for how to best support all youth, especially those who need it most. This is achieved by providing a culture of safe, positive, and inclusive environments for all young people, staff, families, and guests. We will respect everyone’s identified pronouns and names and expect Club Members to act in the same manner.

CLUB RULES

- Members must be respectful to everyone (themselves, each other, their families, and staff)
- Members are allowed outside only under the supervision of Club staff
- No running is allowed in the Club, except in designated areas when accompanied by a staff member.
- Food and drink are only allowed in designated areas during scheduled times
- No hitting, grabbing, kicking, or touching others – even if you are related
- No foul/bad language or inappropriate comment
- No bullying and/or cyberbullying
- No throwing anything unless it is part of an activity
- Shirts and shoes must be worn at all times while at the Club, unless instructed otherwise by staff.
- **Safety and child well-being are our top priorities. No horseplay of any kind will be tolerated. Members observed in any type of physical engagement, including play fighting, that is not part of a Boys & Girls Club activity, may be sent home immediately.**

MEMBERS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES

The Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County is excited to have your child at the Club! We welcome all children and we are committed to act in a non-discriminatory manner. For us to better serve your member with any special emotional, physical, psychological, or behavioral needs, please make sure to indicate on your member application and fully describe any unique requirements of your member. If you did not indicate this on your initial membership application, please be sure to notify the office via email at bailey@bgcmissoulacounty.org. Our Club site facilities are accessible for all youth and additional accommodations can be made as needed.

Please call the Club if you have questions regarding children with special needs. The Club will make reasonable accommodations to provide equal opportunity and service to members who have emotional, physical, psychological, or behavioral needs. The Club does not implement individualized education plans for Club Members and is not a special need facility but will work with families to understand special needs of all children participating in Club activities and programs to help all members have a positive and successful experience.

CELL PHONES/PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY

Cell phones or items of personal technology (iPods, tablets, etc.) are not to be used while at the Club without express permission from a member of the staff. This includes texting, gaming, video capture, picture taking, internet usage and the use of Facebook and/or other social media by Club members. If a Club member possesses personal technology, the device should be silenced and kept out of sight inside a pocket, backpack, or bag. If these devices disrupt our daily process or are out at any point during the member's stay while at the Club without staff permission, progressive discipline will be implemented, and the item in question may be confiscated. The item will then be released to a parent or guardian upon pick up. Boys & Girls Club employees will not be held liable for wireless communication devices or personal technology that is lost or stolen.

While at club, your child(ren) may utilize Club-owned technology including, but not limited to Chromebooks. This technology is made available for homework use during Power Hour and for educational purposes. We ask Club members to be responsible with this technology. If we find that a Club member has intentionally damaged this provided technology, you may be liable to cover the cost of replacing it. If the use of technology become a problem or if the club member is using the technology for inappropriate applications, then the privilege to use that technology at Club may be revoked. We do understand that cell phones are a means of communication with your child. You can reach out to our main office at (406) 542-3116 if you need to contact anyone in our clubs.

In keeping with the spirit and intent of our mission statement and core programming values, handheld gaming devices, iPods, tablets, etc. are **NOT ALLOWED** in the Club, except under specific supervision or on specifically designated days.

Boys & Girls Club accepts **NO** responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged devices or property.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR IN BOYS & GIRLS CLUB VEHICLES

We pick-up members from certain schools and occasionally go on field trips. To ensure we get to our destination quickly and safely, please be sure to read through the following vehicle rules with your kid(s).

1. Get in, find a seat, and sit down.
2. Always wear your seatbelt.
3. Remember inside voices and no food.
4. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
5. Take turns getting out and remember your belongings.



PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings. We request that students not bring extra items with them to the Club (For example: Cell phones, game boys, fantasy game cards, dolls, toys, etc.).

Students will be expected to dress appropriately while attending the Club and all Club functions. All clothing that displays logos or images that promote drug use, alcohol, violence, profanity, or racism must be turned inside out, replaced, or covered. Midriff tops, shirts that expose skin in the waist or stomach area, excluding bathing suits, oversized or baggy clothing where the underwear can be seen will not be permitted. Failure to follow these standards will result in the member being sent home. **This expectation also applies to parents/guardians or guests who attend Club functions.**

Club members will get the most out of their club day if they are prepared for the activities offered. Closed toed shoes or sturdy sandals are a must for most of our outside activities. If a club member does not have the proper footwear, they will not be able to participate in the activity. Flip flops are NOT recommended for club days.

LOST & FOUND

A Lost & Found bin will be located at each of our program sites and any personal items left at the Club will be placed there at the end of the day. As needed, all items left in the Lost & Found bin will be donated to a local charity without prior notice.

ATTENDANCE & NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE POLICY

We plan our day based on how many kids are scheduled. We will not be able to pick up a child if they are not scheduled. If a child is scheduled to be at the Club but will be absent for the day due to illness, change in parent schedule, etc., we must have notice. You may always call the office. If we have 3 incidents where a child is scheduled but does not come to Club without notice, we will not be able to pick the child up for Club anymore and will give the spot to the next child on our waiting list.

NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Club offers a free daily after-school snack each day and breakfast, lunch, and snack on full-days of Club through the Missoula Food Bank and Community Center and MCPS. We ask that members do not bring gum to Club. Club members are welcome to bring their own snacks to club. Certain allowed foods may change site-by-site depending on allergies of the group.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Colds, Flu, or Other Illnesses

The Club cannot provide care for sick children. Please do not allow your child to come to the Club if they are ill. We are concerned for the health and welfare of all of our members as well as our staff; therefore, we require that each child be picked up as soon as possible in the event they become ill while at the Club. The state health department requires that a sick child be separated from the other children and picked up within a reasonable amount of time. Failure to do so may require the Club to contact Child Protective Services. If your child stays home from school due to an illness, they may not attend the Club that day.

Allergies

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the Club of any allergies your child might have. Please provide this in writing on the member application. When necessary, provide additional information about signs, symptoms, and treatment of allergies.

Smoking & Drugs Policy

Smoking, use of alcohol, or illegal drugs is prohibited at our Club sites or on any sponsored outing or trip. All weapons are prohibited.

Medicines

Prescription and/or non-prescription medications will **NOT** be administered by Club staff or stored at the Club at any time. The only exception will be the administration of an EpiPen if written permission is in the child's file prior to the event and the child is unable to administer the EpiPen dosage on their own behalf. Members requiring medication during Club hours must self-administer medicine in the presence of a staff member. To accomplish this, a 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 members will not have unexpected reactions to medicine at the Club. Finally, all Club Staff must be thoroughly apprised of any possible reactions to and the storage needs of the medicine. To ensure this process occurs, a meeting must be arranged with the Program Manager before any medicines are brought to the Club.

Lice

Our policy mirrors school policy. If a child is found to have lice, they should not return to Club until the day after a treatment has been given. If we are notified of a lice outbreak, we will notify the parents of all the potentially affected kids and check our members as we can.

Impetigo

Impetigo is a highly infectious skin infection that is usually found around the mouth or eyes. Children diagnosed with Impetigo should not return to Club until 24 hours after antibiotics have been started.

Whooping Cough

Whooping cough is a highly contagious respiratory tract infection. Children diagnosed with Whooping Cough (pertussis) may not return to Club until receiving a doctor's note clearing the child of the infection.

Pink Eye

If it is determined or suspected that a child has pink eye, Club Staff will contact the child's parent/guardian and asked that they be immediately picked up from Club. Due to the high infection rate of pink eye, the child will not be allowed to return to Club until receiving a doctor's note clearing the child of the infection.

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive, behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

BGCM is committed to providing all members with a safe environment and will not tolerate any form of bullying at any Club activity on or off Club property. BGCM endeavors to prevent bullying of all kinds, including cyber bullying, by enforcing rules of good conduct that clearly describe the expectations of how Club members should and must treat each other.

BGCM is committed to each member's success in the Club environment, which is safe, free of discrimination, threats, intimidation, violence, and bullying. We work to assure that all members have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential as caring young citizens, and who share a meaningful and respectful bond with others in the Club and the community.

Staff and/or volunteers who observe an act of bullying will take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If the staff member and/or volunteer believes their intervention has not resolved the matter, they will report it to the Club's Admin Office and document the incident in writing.

A member of the Club's Administrative Team, or the appropriate staff member, will inform the parent or guardian of any member who was observed as a victim or perpetrator of bullying. Depending on the frequency and severity of the conduct, intervention, counseling, correction, discipline and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to remedy the impact on the victim and change the perpetrator's behavior, up to, and including terminating membership.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN & PICK-UP POLICY

Your child(ren) will be released only to people who have been identified in your Parent Portal. If our staff does not recognize you or the adult picking up your child, identification will be requested. It is your responsibility to update your Parent Portal of any additions or changes to the list of those who have your permission to take your child(ren). The Club also needs to be notified (in-writing to the Director of Programming) when someone other than the individuals listed on your registration form will be picking up your child(ren). Even if it is an emergency, the Club needs your permission to release your child to someone other than you.

It is very important to Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County that your child arrives home safely. Therefore, if the person who arrives to pick up your child appears intoxicated or otherwise incapable of transporting your child home safely, a staff member will call the other parent or the emergency contact. If the parent refuses to agree not to transport the child, the Club staff will call the police and make a report.

In case of illness or discipline problems, a parent/guardian is required to come **IMMEDIATELY** to pick up the child. If the child is not picked up, they will not be permitted to attend the program on the following day.

Evening pick-up is between 5-6PM. Failure to pick up your child on time will result in a warning the first time, followed by fines for subsequent occurrences. Fines will be assessed as follows: \$1.00 per minute. All fines will be added to the parental bill. After 15 minutes, if the parent/guardian has not made contact, the staff will begin to make phone calls to the child's emergency contacts. If, after 30 minutes, the staff is unable to reach anyone on your emergency/authorization list to arrange for the child's transportation home, Child Protective Services will be contacted. This is our last resort and not anything we want to do.

Please make sure the individuals on your contact list are responsible and willing to step up to help you and your children if an emergency situation should occur.

Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County reserves the right to discontinue service to a family if late pick-ups occur more than 3 times in a school year or summer Club period. Notice will be given before termination of services happens.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Boys & Girls Club of Missoula County follows a gradual discipline policy:

1. Initial behavioral problems - staff speak with the member about the incident
2. Member behavior does not improve/worsens - Removal from program area
3. Member continues behavioral problems - Issue is brought to the attention of the Program Director/Administrative Office.

Once the concern is brought to the Administrative Office, decisions on discipline and possible suspensions will be decided. Parents/guardians will be contacted by a member of the Administrative Team to discuss the concerns.

Some incidents warrant more progressive discipline than others. Discipline is decided based on the gravity of the incident. More severe incidents will be sent directly to the Administrative Team, regardless of number of occurrences. These more severe incidents include (but are not limited to):

- Inappropriate bathroom use
- Stealing
- Prolonged aggression/defiant behavior
- Purposeful Physical Violence incl. hitting/pushing, spitting on, or throwing an object at another member or a staff person
- Discriminatory language or actions
- Repeated disrespect for others or club property.
- Purposeful damage to club or site property
- Leaving Club premises without permission
- Drugs/alcohol/nicotine/tobacco products
- Violence with intent to harm (fighting)
- Sexual acts
- High level threats
- Weapons

Please note: Every Situation is unique and is dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Each individual case is evaluated and reviewed by a member of the Administrative Team.

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 to positive activities
- Using preventative management techniques and encouraging self-discipline
- Stressing positive behaviors
- Changing environments (i.e. removal from program space) before behaviors escalate

- Facilitating the settlement of disputes versus intervening
- Letting children experience the consequences of their actions when appropriate
- Using “Think-Time”—the child is allowed time away from a group activity for a short time period to regain self-control
- Establishing mutual respect

We encourage parents/guardians to inform the Administrative Team if there is anything exceptional or unusual is happening at home or in other aspects of the child’s life. Having this information helps the Club when working with each Club Member.

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Ensuring the safety of children is fundamental to the mission of Boys & Girls Club of America (BGCA) and we are committed to helping our Club provide a safe and secure experience for youth. BGCM takes the steps below to ensure the safety of our Club members:

1. **Criminal background checks are required** for every staff member and volunteer who have direct contact with children.
2. Through BGCA’s partnership with Praesidium, one of the nation’s leading safety experts, BGCA provides a **24-hour toll free Child Safety Hotline** to allow local Club managers, staff members, volunteers and Club members to confidentially report suspicions or concerns. 1-866-607-SAFE (7233)
3. Ongoing training and supervision of staff is critical. Our Club’s staff participates in a wide variety of **child safety trainings** conducted through seminars, conferences and webinars.
4. **Safety policies and procedures** must adhere to the highest standards. Clubs are required to report any suspected child abuse to local authorities. No adult should ever be left alone with a child—all activities inside and outside the Club must have appropriate ratios of staff and members.
5. **Safety checks** are performed in order to comply with our National standards we complete annual Safety Checks.
6. **All facilities and vehicles** are required to comply with federal, state and local safety laws.
 1. Staff that operate our Club Vehicles undergo driving record checks.
 2. To match State standards, children under 6 and 60 must ride in booster seats.