

GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.**



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF GREATER LOWELL

Parent/Guardian Handbook

Revised Feb. 2023

Our Vision

To end generational poverty in Lowell.

Our Mission

To inspire and enable young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

Boys & Girls Clubs' Core Beliefs are at the heart of what we stand for as a movement. We believe in:

- A safe place to learn and grow
- Ongoing relationships with caring adult professionals.
- Life enhancing programs.
- Hope and opportunity.
- Character development experiences

Hours of Operation and Shut Down Periods-

Normal Club program hours are generally after school Monday- Friday between 2:00-6:00 p.m. Teens have extended hours from 6:00-8:00 p.m. during the school year on Tuesdays-Thursdays. Club hours are expanded in the summer months.

The Club will close on any day that the Lowell Public Schools are canceled due to snow or dangerous weather conditions. On half days the Club will be open from 11:00am to 6:00pm (**no teen night**). On national holidays the Club will be closed for staff training. Parents are encouraged to visit our **Facebook, Twitter and Instagram** for up to date information on cancelation, delays, or schedule changes.

Registration-

Parents are able to download our membership form from our website www.lbgc.org or pick up a hard copy at the front desk. Parents are responsible for keeping all information updated. Best time to register is between 10:00am-1:45pm or between 6:00pm-8:00pm Tuesday- Thursday. After School program registration starts on August 1st and early summer registrations runs between April 1st – July 1th. For your convenience we take the following forms of payments (Cash, Debit/credit, Checks). Members and their parents **must attend a mandatory orientation**. Current members must review and sign an updated parent handbook or attend orientation. Orientations are held every Tuesday at 6:00pm at the Club. Please make sure you sign up at the front desk before attending orientation.

Please note: during the school year we do not give refunds. Parents requesting a refund during our summer program must do so before the first day of summer programming. No refund will be given after the first day of summer programming.

Membership-

Membership in the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell is \$30 per year per child for the school year. During our summer program our membership is \$30 a week with a one-time registration fee of \$30 for new members. Boys & Girls Club members must be ages 8-18. All members must submit a membership application signed by their guardian. Parents of 8-12 year old members are required to attend an orientation with their child before they receive their Boys & Girls Club membership card. Teen members must attend orientation as well, but their parents

are not required to attend. Youth visitors may come to the Club as a visitor for 1 day (with a visitor pass & 24-hour notice), after which they must join the Club if they wish to continue participating in Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell programs and activities. We do not offer guest passes during our summer program. Eight year olds must provide a copy of their birth certificate. Youth who turn 19 during their senior year may finish the school year. New memberships will not be issued to any senior that is over the age of 18. Club members that have dropped-out of school must be engaged in a GED program and be employed or in a job training program to remain active.

Safety, Visitors and Member Check In-

All members are required to check in and out of the Club with their membership card. Members that lose their card must pay a \$2 replacement fee for a new card. Members that are between the ages 8-12 are encouraged to stay in the Club until they are picked up by a guardian. **Any member leaving the Club without communicating with a staff member may be subject to losing their membership.** Club members 14-18 may sign themselves out of the Club for the day at any time throughout the day. Once a teen has signed out they cannot return until the next day. Parents must come into the Club to pick up their child if they are between the ages of 8-13. For the safety of all of our members visitors and parents are asked not to pass the front desk. Adult guests for the day must check in at the front desk and are required to wear a visitor’s pass to enter the Club.

Open Door Policy:

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell maintains an Open Door Policy. It is the responsibility of the Parent/ Guardian to set and enforce their expectations regarding how and when their child/teen may leave the club. The Club is not a licensed child care center and cannot be responsible for the supervision of children beyond closing time. Parents/ Guardians are responsible for their children/teen’s transportation to and from the Club.

Recommended Ratios*

Type	Adult	Youth
Drop-in	1	25
Instruction	1	20
Group Clubs	1	15
Teams	1	15
Day Trip	1	8
Overnight	1 (with minimum of 2 adults present)	6

Additional volunteer staff members are assigned to each program space throughout the year. The number of volunteer staff will vary in each program space.

Club Card Policy

You must bring your card every time you come to the Club

1st time you forget = day pass

2nd time each month = day pass and parents will receive a call home

The first membership card is free. You may purchase as many additional club cards as you wish for \$2.00 each.

Cards are needed to check out equipment, use computers, as well as track daily attendance.

Early Drop Off and Late Pick up

Options are available. (**During our Summer Program Only**) The cost of this program is \$25.00 per week per member for summer program. You must pre-register for this no later than the Thursday prior to the week your child starts by 5:00p.m. **The Early Drop off program** enables you to drop off your child as early as 7:30a.m. And the **Late Pick up program** enables you to pick up your child as late as 6:00p.m.

LATE PICK UP

Members between the ages of 8-12 can be picked up any time before 6:00 pm.(During School Year) Parents picking up Club members after 6:10 will receive a late pick up notice. **Three pick up notices in the same month may be subject to a \$10 late fee charge. Please note this fee must be paid before your child can come back into the Club.**

Education Support

Parents that are interested in homework, tutoring support and other educational services are encouraged to sign members up by signing the waiver at the front desk. Information will be used to inform and track members' homework, reports and other academic assignments.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

We want all of our members to be successful at the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell. Every program offered by the Club is guidance oriented. The Club uses its Youth Development Strategy to give members a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence. Behavior management is accomplished through a positive approach which respects the child as an individual. Basic rules include respect for others, the property of others, the Boys & Girls Club facility and the members' safety.

Disciplinary problems are handled as follows:

For Inappropriate Behavior- Behavioral problems will be handled initially with a problem solving approach, clearly stating the problem and giving the member the opportunity to respond positively. Club staff will reinforce that the behavior and its consequences are in the member's control. An immediate consequence will be given for every future inappropriate behavior.

For MINOR PROBLEMS- Staff members may draw from a range of methods to establish what will work for an individual child. (Examples include reflection time, thinking it through worksheets, re-walking down a hallway, restrictions from activities or program areas, apologies, practicing alternative words/behaviors, etc.). If the behavior continues parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the Director of Operations, or Program Director to develop a plan on how to best address the behavior.

MAJOR SANCTIONS are enforced by the Director of Operations, Program Director and full time program staff. Members violating any of the concerns listed below may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

MAJOR SANCTIONS include but are not limited to:

- Fighting or Attempt to Injure
- Bullying
- Stealing
- Being in an Unsupervised Area
- Inappropriate use of social media sites
- Disrespect for Facilities and/or Equipment. (*Any broken equipment must be paid by parents*)
- Failure to Comply

- Escalating a Conflict
- Contraband
- Potential Danger to Members

Parents will be notified of any inappropriate behavior. Consequences vary, and will be determined by the Director of Operations or Program Director providing guidance and discipline.

Please communicate any concerns or information that will enable our staff to serve you and your children better.

Meal Program

Our Meal program provides a variety of delicious and nutritious foods. Each month our Chef prepares a meal from a different culture, this gives our members an opportunity to try different types of food and learn more about other cultures.

- We serve dinner every day from 4:00 – 5:00p.m. for FREE!
- Teens get an extra snack at Teen Night at 6:30p.m.
- During Summer programming:
 - Breakfast is held from 9:00a.m. - 10:00a.m.
 - Lunch is held from 1:00p.m. - 2:00p.m.
 - Teen Snack

If your child has a food allergy please inform our Chef as well as add this information to the Club member's membership file. Please see the front desk for a copy of monthly meal menus.

Child and Adult Care Food Program is offered through the Massachusetts Department of Education

In accordance with federal laws and US Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs)

Phone policy

- Club members must ask the front office staff for permission to use the office phone. Staff will call parents and deliver the message. All calls must be made after 6:00pm, with the exception of emergency calls.
- Parents who call for their children will not be put on hold; written messages will be taken and delivered to your child.
- We ask that cell phones stay at home. If a Club member brings a cell phone to the Club, staff may hold on to it until the end of the day. Parents will then be reminded of Phone policy. *Please note: If cell phones are lost, stolen or broken the Club will not be held responsible.*

Core Programming/ Outcomes

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell provides diverse activities that meet the interests of all youth. Our staff and volunteers strive to engage youth in activities that are fun and enjoyable while enabling them to develop self-esteem and to reach their full potential. Based on the physical, emotional, cultural, and social needs and interests of girls and boys, and recognizing developmental principles, we focus on three priority areas.

Academic Success

The Boys & Girls Club is determined to inspire our members to achieve academic success. We support and recognize their current academic achievement and help them progress to the next grade level. We teach them to express themselves through technology and the arts. We prepare them for long term success through career and college exploration, and we provide them with the opportunity to develop a life plan for when they graduate from high school.

Healthy Lifestyles

The Boys & Girls Club encourages our members to develop decision making skills and healthy habits that will last a lifetime. We provide them with structured athletic leagues, informal sports programs, free play time and fitness training to keep them physically active every day. We motivate them to make smart nutrition choices, and to make smart decisions about alcohol and drug use and personal relationships.

Good Character & Citizenship

The Boys & Girls Club shapes the future leaders of Lowell and beyond. We help our members develop the social skills needed to model positive behavior and resolve conflict among their peers. We encourage them to find their voice, express their beliefs and give back to both the Club and the community by coaching, refereeing, tutoring, mentoring, and volunteering at neighborhood cleanups, educational forums, advocacy programs and cultural events.

[For a schedule of program and activities offered at the Club please see the front desk.](#)

Club expectation

Club members are expected to follow the Club's core values of Commitment, Excellence, Fun, Integrity, and Teamwork.

Club members are expected to be able to:

- Follow program expectations
- Participate in program activities
- Positive communication with staff members and other Club members
- Stay in program areas and not wander away from the group
- Follow staff and volunteer directions
- Treat others with respect
- Keep hands and feet to yourselves
- Make new friends and stay connected to old friends
- Help problem solve challenges
- Have a positive outlook
- Play safe and make safe choices
- Show CLUB LOVE when club members do well or complete a project
- Be independent for personal care needs such as washing hands and toileting

Items from Home

The Club provides all sports equipment and other materials needed for projects. **If items are brought from home, the program cannot be responsible for their loss or damage.** The program attempts to spend some time each day outside if the weather permits and the temperature is 70 degrees or above. Please send hats, gloves, and boots (if appropriate).

We have a **"no electronics" policy at most Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell.** We want our Club members to interact and have fun with each other! We also offer a number of computer related programs. If your child needs to have a phone in his backpack for other use, please remind them that it must stay off and in his/her backpack during program hours.

Club Dress Code

The Club does not accept any clothing that is lewd, depicts violence or hate for any individual or group, degrades the beliefs of others, or promotes drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons or other prohibited items. Clothing or accessories that display offensive images or words that would be considered socially, culturally, or ethnically inappropriate and disrupt the educational process is strictly prohibited.

Clothing must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, down to approximately 3-4 inches in length to the upper thighs and tops must have a shoulder strap. See-through or mesh garments must not be worn without appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of the dress code. Shirts that are too short or are unbuttoned revealing the chest/stomach are prohibited. Torsos must be covered. Tube tops, halter tops and backless shirts and dresses are prohibited. Shorts, dresses and skirts must be no shorter than mid-thigh.

Club members must wear appropriate clothing for exercise. The clothing must not be constructive or revealing when in the club gym. Any revealing clothing is prohibited in the gym.

Medication, Emergency, Illness

Parents may not send a Club member to the program if the Club member has any communicable illnesses or is sick. For example: The Club member has an oral temperature of 100 degrees or greater. The Club member has had persistent vomiting and/or diarrhea in the 12 hours prior to coming to the program. The Club member has lice or lice eggs. If a child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, the child will require a statement from the doctor indicating that the illness is no longer communicable upon return to the program.

Club staff members **will not administer any medications.** Parents can set up a schedule to come into the Club and give their child medication. Members that use an asthma pump or epi-pen may carry it with them and use it as needed.

For Club members who do not feel well (Vomiting, Diarrhea, uncontrollable or persistent cough, etc) A staff member will notify the parent of a Club member's illness. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be notified to pick up the Club member. **It is expected that the Club member will be picked up within an hour.** Until the parent arrives the Club member will be excluded from activities/programs with other Club members and will rest quietly under the supervision of a staff member.

If an accident or medical emergency occurs, the staff member in charge will: Administer the necessary first aid immediately, Call an ambulance if the club members injury requires emergency room treatment, Call the parent or emergency contact (if the parent cannot be reached), Stay with the Club member at the hospital until the parent or emergency contact arrives.

Communication with Parents

Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell communicates all important information via email. In the event of weather or other emergencies, important information may be emailed to you on weekends. Parents can also get information on the Club social media sites (Facebook Twitter, Instagram). **Please make sure the email address, and emergency contact we have for you is current.**

Membership questions: Call Membership Manager at 978 458-4526 ext. 22
Program related questions: Call Youth Development Director at 978 458-4526 ext. 28
Other questions or concerns: Call Director of Operations at 978 804-8227

**Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell
Parent Acknowledgement and Receipt of the Parent-Student Handbook
2023-24**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell (BGCGL) Parent Handbook. I understand that it contains important information on policies and procedures. I realize this handbook is not intended to cover every situation which may arise but is simply a general guide to refer to. I understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with the information and that I agree with the policies and rules of the Club.

I further understand and acknowledge that BGCGL may change, add or delete any policies or provisions in this handbook as it sees fit in its sole judgment and discretion.

I acknowledge and understand that this Club Parent Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior handbooks or materials previously distributed.

Club Member's Name _____ **Date:** _____

Parent's Printed Name _____ **Date:** _____

Parent's Signature _____ **Date:** _____