



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Boys & Girls Club?

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell is an after-school program serving youth ages 8 – 18 from 2 – 6 PM each weekday during the school year. Additionally, the Club is open from 6 – 8 PM for teens each weeknight, and from 9 am – 5 pm during the summer months.

What does it cost to attend the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell?

Our annual membership fee is \$40 per year (September – August), and includes all programs, services and meals. Summer program registration is an additional \$40 per week. Teen membership is \$5 per year.

How often do Club members attend the Club?

Club members can attend the Club as often or infrequently as they like. Most members attend at least a few days each week, and some attend all five days of the school week.

Is the Boys & Girls Club just a recreation program?

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell offers much more than just recreation. We are proud to provide programs such as homework help, cultural enrichment, art, music, team sports, fitness, recreation, technology, field trips and much more. Teens also have access to workforce development programs, community service opportunities, leadership and civic engagement programs. The Club serves a nutritious, hot dinner each day, and a snack during teen nights. We have a full time social worker on staff to support youth development. Additionally, a Family Advocate provides family outreach and referral services.

We welcome community members to come take a Club tour in order to see the full scope of programs and services provided. If you are interested in scheduling a tour - please fill out this [quick survey](#) to let us know when you are available and someone will reach out to schedule your tour.

Is the Club only for youth who live in low-income households?

Any young person in the Greater Lowell area is welcome at the Club. We keep the annual membership fee intentionally low so that the Club is accessible to all youth, regardless of their family's ability to pay.

Do you provide transportation to and from the Club?

A partnership with Lowell Public Schools provides some transportation directly from schools to the Club. You can check with your school to confirm whether or not they offer this service. Some members, including those that go to Lowell High School, can walk to the Club. Public transportation is provided for students at the Greater Lowell Technical High School. Families must arrange for a caregiver to pick youth ages 12 and under from the Club.

What is the quality of programming can you expect to receive for just \$40 per year?

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell prides itself on providing high quality programming to our members, and takes many steps to ensure that we can do so. The Club utilizes the Weikart YPQA - The Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) is a validated instrument designed to evaluate the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs.

Are staff working at the Club high school students?

Our professional youth development staff are ages 18 and up, and many have chosen a career in youth development. All entry level staff are supervised by full-time program coordinators and managers. In addition, several of our staff are former Club members themselves.

All staff attend mandatory training through the Boys & Girls Club of America on positive youth development and programming techniques. Multi-day staff training sessions occur 4 times throughout the year, and cover a range of topics from safety, instructional techniques, behavior management, and more.

Is the Boys & Girls Club safe?

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell has a strict policy around who can enter the Club – only Club members and full time staff can access the Club itself beyond the front entrance. Doors are locked throughout the day to prevent unwanted access.

All staff members and volunteers have to undertake a background check as well as take mandatory child abuse prevention training prior to working with youth at the Club. The Club has intentionally designed program spaces with a constant line of vision, as well as security cameras

on the interior and exterior of the building. We are happy to report very few instances of violence or wrongdoing at the Club, with those that do occur resulting in suspension in membership.

How do you provide so many programs and services for just \$40 per year?

In order to remove barriers to access, the Club is committed to a very low annual membership fee, and provides scholarships for those who cannot afford this fee. However, the actual cost to provide programs and services at the Club averages about \$1,800 per Club member. This is still far less than most afterschool programs cost to attend, even those with fewer services.

The gap between what our Club families pay to attend, and the cost of providing services is made up with community support in the form of individual, corporate and private foundation funding, along with government funding and support from the United Way and Boys & Girls Clubs of America. The bulk of support comes directly from the community, with government, United Way and BGCA funding making up less than 31% of our total budget.

Do you receive most of your funding from the government?

While we do receive some funding from local and state government sources, most funding for our Boys & Girls Club comes from individuals, corporations and private foundations.

What is your connection to the Boys & Girls Club of America, or other local Clubs?

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell is a member of the federation of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, meaning that we pay dues and receive some services and pass-through funding from BGCA. Our Club operates as an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization, with our own Board of Directors and Board of Trustees. Our Board of Directors holds fiduciary responsibility for our Boys & Girls Club. While we do collaborate with other local Clubs, we are not affiliated or fiscally connected to these organizations.

How much of your funding you receive goes directly to impact the youth you serve?

About 70% of the operational budget goes directly towards programming, which includes program staff salaries, equipment, supplies and building expenses. Annually, about 30% of the operational budget goes towards program support, including administrative, finance and development team salaries and other administrative expenses. The Club would not be able to operate efficiently or effectively without these program support services.

How can I help?

Many folks want to get involved in making sure the Club has the resources needed to continue to serve youth, and expand both services offered and the number of youth served each year. Here are ways that individuals and corporations can ensure that the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell can continue to meet the needs of our community.

- ❖ Make a donation – the Club accepts donations via check, credit card, gifts of stocks and donor advised funds. [Click here](#) for more information.
- ❖ [Join our email list](#) for updates and information on upcoming events
- ❖ [Volunteer](#) – Individuals and groups are both welcome for on-going or one time volunteer opportunities
- ❖ [Take a tour](#) – The best way to really understand what happens at the Club, who we serve and who are staff are, is by visiting the Club. [Fill out this form](#) to schedule your visit.
- ❖ [Contact us](#) with questions or if you have an idea of how you might like to get involved. [Click here](#) to send us a message.

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