



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF THURSTON COUNTY

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# PARENT HANDBOOK

## 2023-2024

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**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
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Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County!

We look forward to building a strong and long-lasting relationship with your family.

The staff of Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of our members. Through our Youth Development Strategies, we hope to contribute in the growth, socialization, education, and daily fun of your child(ren) by providing a safe and positive place for all who attend.

This handbook is designed to give some basic information about the Club, our procedures, and policies. If questions or suggestions arise during the course of your time with us, our door is always open to discuss these matters.

Once again, thank you for choosing Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County.

We look forward to sharing in the laughter, tears, highs, and lows of your child's journey to adulthood.

Sincerely,

Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County Staff



## **BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THURSTON COUNTY**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County is to inspire and enable youth to realize their greatness.

### **Youth Development Strategy**

Our Youth Development Strategy is the approach that guides staff member interaction with the young people we serve that help build their:

- Sense of Belonging – a setting where they know they are accepted.
- Sense of Competence – the feeling that there is something they can do well.
- Sense of Usefulness – opportunities to do something of value for others, to assume real responsibility, and do real work.
- Sense of Influence – a chance to be heard, to lead, to take part in decision making, and feel that they have control over their own destiny.

### **Organization Overview**

The Boys & Girls Club is a youth development organization dedicated to promoting the health, social, educational, vocational, cultural, character and leadership development of youth. It aims to help young people improve their lives by building self-esteem and developing values and skills needed during critical periods of growth. These principles are a proven successful formula that has made Boys & Girls Clubs successful for over 130 years.





## **BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THURSTON COUNTY**

### **What Clubs Provide**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County:

- Provide youth a safe place to learn and grow; ongoing relationships with caring, adult professionals; life-enhancing programs; character development experiences; hope; and opportunity.
- Employ full-time youth development professional along with part-time staff and volunteers. Our staff are mandated reporters and by law required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to CPS.
- Help and encourage youth to adopt healthy habits, positive attitudes, and interpersonal skills to aid in their development of good character.
- Ensure all youth feel welcome, regardless of their backgrounds.
- Offer building-centered activities in a warm, friendly atmosphere specifically designed for youth development programs.
- Operate an Open Door policy. We are not a licensed childcare program; we are a drop-in after-school program. Clubs are open to all members at anytime during hours of operation and members may sign themselves out at anytime.
- Offer a varied and diversified program that recognizes and responds to the collective and individual needs of youth.
- Provide guidance to youth. Clubs emphasize values inherent in the relationship between young people, their peers, and adult leaders.

### **Club Program Areas**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County offers a variety of activities that meet the interests of all youth. Our core programs engage youth in activities with adults, peers, and family members that enable youth to enhance self-esteem and to develop their full potential. Our programs are designed to meet the physical, emotional, cultural, and social needs and interests of all our members.



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**Club programs and activities fall into the following Priority Outcome Areas:**

**Good Character and Citizenship:**

- Sample Programs: Youth of the Year, Torch Club, Keystone, Community Service Programs.
- Programs in this area empower youth to support and influence their Club and community, sustain meaningful relationships with others, develop a positive self-image, participate in the democratic process, and respect their own and others' cultural identities.

**Academic Success:**

- Sample Programs: Power Hour, Get Good Grades, STEM, MyFuture.
- Programs in this area enable youth to become proficient in basic educational disciplines, apply learning to everyday situations, and embrace technology to achieve success in a career.

**Healthy Lifestyles:**

- Sample Programs: Triple Play Challenges, Passport to Manhood, Smart Girls, Workforce Development, The Arts.
- Programs in this area develop young people's capacity to engage in positive behaviors that nurture their own well-being, set personal goals, and live successfully as self-sufficient adults.

**Membership Guidelines:**

Members of Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County are encouraged to participate in daily Club activities. Club members will have a variety of activity choices in the Games Room, Learning Center, Art Room, Gym, Tech Lab, or Teen Center. In all areas, trained youth development professionals create and implement activities for youth to engage as a group or individually.



## **BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THURSTON COUNTY**

### **Fees:**

Annual Membership is \$50.00 per child. If applicable, additional fees may include a Monthly Activity Fee \$150/month, Extended Hours Fee \$145/week, Morning Program \$150/month, and Field trips. Fees for Morning Program and Extended Hours are due by the 10th of the month. Fees paid after the 10th incur a late fee of \$10.00. The Club does not automatically print Tax Statements for fees paid. We will print them upon request. Scholarships are available to those who apply and qualify.

### **Scanning In and Out:**

Upon arriving at the Club each day, all members are scanned into the facility. When members are picked up, they are scanned out. This process helps ensure we have accurate attendance records, but more importantly it ensures that members are checked in and out when they come and go from the Club.

### **Updating Membership Information:**

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian(s) to ensure that all membership information is up-to-date. Please inform the Front Desk Coordinator at your Club of any changes so we can notify key staff and update our database accordingly.

## **Club Operations**

### **School Year Hours of Operation:**

The Tumwater, Rochester, Yelm and Griffin branches are open for Morning program, please check with the Club for specific hours.

Clubs are open Monday-Friday after school from 2:00 - 6:00 pm.

All Branches are closed on the first Friday of the month during the school year.

Tenino Branch is closed on days when school is not in session.

Refer to your Club's Annual Calendar for a full list of dates.

### **Transportation Program:**

We do offer an Transportation Program the number of spots may vary from each branch, please contact your Club for more information.



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**Summer Hours:**

- Summer Drop-In Program: Monday to Friday 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm (Membership fee \$50.00)
- Summer Extended Hours Program: Monday thru Friday 7:30 am to 5:30 pm (145.00 per week, per child)

**School Break Hours:**

- During school breaks, Club hours are 7:30 am – 5:30 pm.  
Pre-Payment is required during school break sessions.
- During full-day teacher in-service days, Club hours are 7:30 am - 5:30 pm.
- Tenino, Griffin, and Olympia are closed on days when school is not in session.

**Inclement Weather Policy:**

If the school district (in which your Clubs is located) closes due to inclement weather, the Clubs located in that district will also close. In the event that the weather worsens over the course of the day, the CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County may decide to close the Clubs. Access our Facebook accounts ([facebook.com/bgctc](https://facebook.com/bgctc)) or the Facebook account for you specific Club for up-to-date closure information. Each branch has their own Facebook page, be sure to follow!

**Flyers/Newsletters:**

Information on Club activities, field trips, special programs, and all parent information is available at the Front Desk. Please check frequently for updates/flyers on Club happenings. The Club does not send out informational mailings, so please make sure to check the bulletin boards for the latest information.



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**Personal Possessions:**

THE CLUB IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONAL POSSESSIONS BROUGHT FROM HOME. (I.E. MONEY, BIKES, BACKPACKS, VIDEO GAMES).

There are cubbies, hooks, or a designated area available for storing backpacks and coats. All items need to be taken home daily. There is a Lost & Found area at each Club. Inquire at the Front Desk to locate lost and misplaced items. Lost and found items are donated to a local charitable organization every month. Toys, games, and electronic equipment are not allowed at the Club.

**Late Pick-up Policy:**

WE CHARGE \$1.00 PER MINUTE FOR MEMBERS REMAINING AFTER THE CLUB CLOSING. MEMBERS MUST WAIT INSIDE THE CLUB FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS. AFTER ALL AVAILABLE CONTACTS HAVE BEEN CALLED AND ONE HOUR HAS PASSED, WE WILL CONTACT THE PROPER AUTHORITIES. MEMBERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO RETURN UNTIL LATE FEES ARE PAID.

**Refund Policy:**

Refunds must be submitted prior to the first day of services. (Ex: morning program begins on the first of the month; refund must be requested by the first day of the month) Membership fees are non-refundable.

**Returned Checks:**

Returned checks are processed by our bank, applicable fees are deducted from the checking account, when this is not possible we must collect directly from the parent. Check writing privileges will be revoked if the Club receives more than two returned checks.

**Federal Tax Identification Number:**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County Federal Tax ID Number is 91-2124629. This may be helpful for income tax purposes.



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### **DCYF Payment:**

We accept DCYF payments. The Provider Number for Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County is 756847. We are a license-exempt program and fees are most often paid by DCYF for youth in foster care. DCYF services need to have prior approval from fiscal manager and caseworker. It is rare that fees are covered otherwise.

### **Illness/Medication Illness:**

Members that did not attend school due to illness, expulsion, etc. are not allowed to participate in BGCTC programs during that day. If a member displays symptoms of illness and/or fever while attending the Club, the member will be isolated and kept comfortable until a parent/guardian/emergency contact arrives. To ensure the safety and well-being of all members and staff, parents are required to pick up members within one (1) hour of receiving a call. If a member vomits while at the Club they cannot return to Club for 24 hours.

### **COVID-19:**

We are required to follow Department of Health regulations related to COVID-19. Daily screenings, strict symptom protocol, cleaning procedures, group size limits, and mandatory quarantines for exposed individuals are all part of regulations we must follow in order to operate. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as we work to keep our members and staff safe.

### **Medication:**

Any medication (prescription or otherwise) administered to a member attending the BGCTC must adhere to the following protocols:

- Medication must be in the original container with written dosage clearly marked.
- Only send the medication amount needed while at the Club (Ex. If a member is to take one pill daily for 1 week, send only five pills).
- All medication must be hand delivered to the Front Desk Coordinator, Program Director, or Branch Director in order to be properly secured. Do not send youth with medication. This policy also pertains to over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol. Written parental permission to administer these is required as well.





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- Parents must provide written directions on the proper administration of medication as well as provide an Authorization to Administer Medication form signed by the child's physician.
- If a child has asthma and uses their inhaler at the Club, an Authorization to Administer Medication form must be completed and signed by the member's physician.

### **Club Security**

To keep our members safe while participating in our program, we have set forth the following guidelines:

- No one is allowed to leave the reception area and go into the Clubhouse without checking in and receiving permission from a staff member. This applies to ALL adults.
- Persons picking up members for the first time will be asked to show proof of identification. They may be asked multiple times until staff recognize them.
- Phone calls asking staff to find and send members for pick-up to a vehicle outside the building is not allowed. Front Desk Coordinator must remain at the desk and cannot comply with this request.\*
- Boys & Girls Clubs operate their clubhouses with an open door policy, which means that if you do not want your child to leave the Club, it is your responsibility to instruct your child accordingly. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to inform the Club Director/Program Director of special custody arrangements regarding your child and any documents pertaining to these details must be provided to Club staff.
- We highly recommend that elementary school-aged members not walk home alone, especially after sunset.

\*COVID-19 exception- during the pandemic we have modified our pickup policy and do not allow anyone into our building besides our members and staff. We will allow phone calls, as in most cases our front door will be locked. We look forward to having parents and guardians back in the building.



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### **Important Security Policies:**

- The Club strictly prohibits the use and/or possession of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products on the Club premises or at any Club sponsored activity.
- All weapons and simulated weapons are banned including but not limited to toy/water guns, sling shots, or knives.
- Inappropriate attire is not allowed in Boys & Girls Clubs. This includes overly revealing attire regardless of gender, or attire depicting alcohol, tobacco, or inappropriate stereotypes.
- If absent or suspended from school, members are not allowed to attend the Club during those days/instances.
- Boys & Girls Clubs reserves the right to have individual and/or personal property searched, if there is a reasonable concern for Club security.
- Once a member scans out for the day, they are not permitted to return that day unless accompanied by their parent/guardian.

### **Club Rules & Discipline Procedures**

#### **Club Rules:**

Boys & Girls Clubs has adopted a simple set of rules to guide youth when they are in the Club. The rules are simple to follow and easy to remember:

- Sign in & out every day.
- Follow all staff directions.
- Keep hands, feet, and all objects to yourself.
- No swearing or teasing.
- Food and drinks are allowed in designated areas only.
- Offices, storage, and non-staffed areas are off-limits to all members.
- Checkout with Front Desk staff before leaving the Club.
- Respect yourself, others, and the CLUB.
- HAVE FUN!





## **Club Discipline Procedures**

During the day-to-day operation of our programs, there may be occasions when a Club member chooses to disregard a Club rule. The Club staff will use these moments as “teaching” opportunities for our members, guiding them into making positive choices in the future.

### **1st Occurrence:**

Warn or talk to member about the choices they were making. Time away from activity. If applicable, Club service may occur.

### **2nd Occurrence:**

Member will spend time away from program area, if applicable doing a Club service. A Parent/Guardian will be informed of the situation when they arrive at the Club. Parents/Guardians may be contacted to schedule a conference with Program or Branch Director, if the member continues to choose inappropriate behaviors.

### **3rd Occurrence:**

After Club staff have exercised all avenues of behavior support and the member requires parental intervention, parent pick up will be required. Club Staff may suspend or expel any member for behavior that is judged extremely inappropriate.

**Depending upon the severity of the situation Club Staff has the right to determine the order of these guidelines. If your child is suspended or expelled, immediate pick-up is required.**

The member may not return until parent/guardian meets with the Program/Branch Director. Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County reserves the right to suspend a member at any time during the day. Usually an immediate suspension will only occur for the following reasons: fighting (violence of any kind), theft, or blatant disrespect of staff, volunteers, parents, or members.

**Every member begins the day with a clean slate!**



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## **Technology Policy for Youth**

Club members in grades K-5 are NOT permitted to use cell phones, except when given permission by Club Staff, while at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County (BGCTC).

Teen members ARE allowed to use their cell phones during designated times in the Teen Center.

Club members are NOT permitted to record video or take photos of others while at BGCTC.

Members ARE permitted to use their school issued devices while at the Club. The device must be connected to the BGCTC WIFI network to ensure filtering of inappropriate content.

Members are NOT permitted to share cell phones or other devices with other Club Members.

Use of BGCTC Tech Lab computers and/or Chromebooks is permitted for program participation purposes. Attempts to access inappropriate content could be grounds for suspension from the Club.

Nonadherence to the Technology Policy could result in suspension from the Club.

Upon return to the Club, members will only be allowed to bring a cell phone and/or electronic device to the Club with Club Director or Administrative Staff permission



## **BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THURSTON COUNTY**

### **Youth Safety**

At Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County, our highest priority is the safety of Club members. We work every day to create a safe and fun environment, giving kids every opportunity to be successful in life. Our goal is to equip young people with the critical thinking and social-emotional skills to make healthy, safe and smart choices. We provide strict policies and guidelines at Club facilities and within the staffing structure. Inappropriate behavior of any kind, including child sexual abuse or misconduct, is never tolerated. For the nearly 3,000 young people who enter the doors of our eight Thurston County Clubs each day, our youth development professionals offer safe, inclusive spaces and experiences that empower members' learning and growth.

### **BGCTC Safety Policies**

#### **The following policies mitigate the risk of child abuse at our Thurston County Boys & Girls Clubs:**

- All staff undergo thorough background checks upon hire as well as annual background checks while employed at Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County. This includes a statewide criminal check, a national criminal check, social security number verification and check of the sex offender registry. Staff and volunteers whose work is part of our OJP mentoring program also complete finger print verification.
- Reference checks are required and completed at hire. If previously employed at a Boys & Girls Club, reference checks from that Club are required.
- Drug testing is required of all staff as a pre-employment requirement; random drug testing of staff also occurs.
- Two adult staff members are required inside the Clubs at all times. Under no circumstances should a staff member be in a room alone with a Club member without being in view of others.
- It is a staff member's responsibility to maintain a professional relationship with members. Staff may NOT have contact with members outside of approved Club activities for any reason, including babysitting, sharing or communicating via email, phone or through social networking.
- At Clubs without a Staff Only Restroom, the restroom must first be cleared of any children prior to adult use of the facilities. Clearing the restroom must be completed for use by staff, volunteers and parents of Club members. At Clubs with a Staff Only Restroom, the restroom is strictly for adults. Youth are not allowed to use it and staff are not allowed to use the Youth Restroom.
- Only one member at a time can use the restroom.
- During peak hours of operations, staff members may be assigned to monitor the entrance to restrooms.
- All Club staff receive training on Child Safety through Praesidium and/or BGCA.
- If any staff member is accused of abuse of a child, local law enforcement are contacted.
- All critical incidences at the Club are reported to Boys & Girls Clubs of America.



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**All staff are mandated to report any cases of suspected or reported abuse and neglect.  
Child Protective Services will be notified.**

**Common Summer Camp Questions....**

What is a Boys & Girls Club? We are an independent non-profit drop-in youth development program affiliated with the national organization of Boys & Girls Clubs of America and we are required to follow their standards. We are a “best practice program” which means our program has been scientifically proven effective in youth development.

How is Boys & Girls Club funded? 78% of Boys & Girls Clubs funding comes from private individual donations. Donations in any amount are accepted. All Boys & Girls Club branches are separate organizations and funded separately by their own communities. Robust community and parent support allows for low program fees.

How do I donate? What can I donate? Just about everything you see at the Club is donated. You can donate time, materials/supplies, or money. Contact the Branch Director or Front Desk Coordinator to make a donation. All donations are tax deductible.

How much is camp? \$145.00/ per week. Scholarships are available to those who apply and qualify.

When does Summer Camp begin and end? Ask the staff at the Front Desk of your Club for details.

How many weeks of summer camp are there? 8/9 weeks, depending on the particular Club branch.

When is the Club closed in the summer? July 4th for Independence Day.

What are the Summer Extended hours? 7:30 am – 5:30 pm.

When and what is drop-in? 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Drop-in is the time that requires no weekly fee except for the annual membership. If a child arrives to the Club before 2:30 pm, the Extended Hours program fee of \$145.00 is assessed.

If I sign my children up for Extended Hours, does that include the field trips? No. Field trips have separate fees and operate using a weekly, first-come first-served basis sign-up process. Field trip fees are non-refundable. If your child misses the trip, you will not receive a credit for the fee you paid.



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What is the member to staff ratio? 1/20 on site (at Club) and 1/8 off site (on field trips).

What if I am late picking up my child? Please call and let us know if you are stuck in traffic or running a few minutes late, as we will be tolerant. However, if it becomes a pattern, we will charge \$1/min as stated in the handbook. If you are more than an hour late and we have not received a phone call and emergency contacts are not able to pick your child up, we will notify law enforcement to pick up your child(ren). See Late Pick Up Policy on page 10 for more info.

What if I want to cancel a week of Extended Hours? If payment for the week has already been made, refunds must be requested by filling out a refund request form and submitting it no later than the Friday before the week being cancelled. Once a refund has been approved, a check will be issued within two weeks. If payment has not been made, a cancellation form must be filled out in writing no later than the Friday before the week being cancelled. Balances will be adjusted to reflect the new amount owed. If the cancellation procedure is not followed accordingly, you will be charged full price for the week(s) being cancelled.

Do you provide lunch? Usually, Lacey, Rochester, Tumwater, and RMAC offer FREE lunch in the summer, this will be confirmed by June 1st, call Club for up-to-date info. If your child attends one of the other Clubs, please send a peanut-free sack lunch and water bottle with your child daily, with your child's name clearly marked. All Clubs do provide breakfast and afternoon snacks. We do not provide microwaves.

What should I send with my child to Club? Water bottle, lip balm, sunscreen, peanut-free lunch, a change of clothes for water games, and closed toed shoes.

What should I NOT send with my child to camp? Please do not send anything of significant value with your child. The Club is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

My child burns easily, can you apply sunscreen every hour? No. It is our policy to not apply sunscreen. Sunscreen should be applied in the morning before coming to camp. We will remind campers periodically to re-apply lotion. See Medication on page 11 for more info.

What if I don't want the camp T-shirt? A camp T-shirt is required to be worn by members on summer field trips, with the exception of swimming trips.





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If my child is absent from Club do I need to call? No. We are a drop-in program and different from day care, there are no daily fees or penalties for being absent. You do not need to call us if your child will not be attending.

What are “program areas”? Program areas are the rooms within the Club that house the core enrichment activities your child will participate in daily. These include: Technology, Art, Education, Recreation, Field, and Teen Center. Dedicated staff members (“Program Staff”) monitor and host activities in each area.

What is “assembly”? All of the kids gather in the gym, sometimes to play large group games, or to dance. The kids eat their snack and received details about the days’ activity choices. There are three assemblies during a typical summer day: morning, after lunch, and before afternoon snack.

Am I allowed to go to a program area to get my child? Yes. Check in at the Front Desk first and then you are welcome to enter the Club’s program areas. This provides a great opportunity for your child to show you what they do while at the Club. (Not during COVID-19)

When will my child go on field trips? There is a full schedule of trips available at the Front Desk, please take a copy.

Can my child stay behind at the Club from the field trip? Yes! Field trips are optional and are paid for separate from Extended Hours. If your child is signed up for a field trip, we will insist that they attend it, as this was your intention for them when you signed the permission slip and paid the fee. If your child is not interested in attending a particular trip, please do not sign them up for it, there is plenty to do at the Club if they do not go on the trip. Field trip fees are non-refundable.



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**Parent Statement of Understanding**

**This confirms that I \_\_\_\_\_,**

- Received and read the Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County 2022-23 Parent Handbook.
- Understand its contents, policies, and procedures.
- Understand that the policies and procedures contained in the Parent Handbook may be changed and/or updated by Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County at any time.
- Understand that this Handbook supersedes any prior handbooks or policy manuals issued by Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County.

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_**