



# Family Handbook

*Club Support Center*  
Boys & Girls Club of Chicago  
2102 W. Monroe Street  
Chicago IL, 60612  
(312) 235-8000



## Welcome Parents and Guardians:

We are excited to welcome your child into our Club programs. Please know that the safety of our members is of the utmost importance. We strive to provide meaningful activities and to support Chicagoland youth in achieving good character and citizenship, academic success, healthy lifestyles, among other accomplishments.

Founded in 1902, Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago (BGCC) is a private, non-profit organization serving youth. Serving nearly 20,000 youth ages five to 18, BGCC works to provide members with the emotional, educational, physical, and cultural resources that allow them to enjoy their childhood and thrive in adulthood. At our Clubs, they find caring mentors, avenues of opportunity and the tools they need to prepare for great futures.

This handbook is designed to give members, parents, and guardians helpful insight into BGCC. In this handbook you will find information about program activities, procedures, and policies to support your child in having a safe, positive and rewarding experience in our programs.

Please read carefully, if you have any questions please contact your Club Staff.

## Our Mission Statement:

Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago's mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible adults.

## Core Beliefs:

Boys & Girls Clubs provide children and teens with:

- Safe, positive and inclusive environments in which to learn and grow
- Opportunities to develop positive, meaningful, and healthy connections with peers and youth development professionals
- 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

## Programs Offerings:

- Power Hour to support homework help (Offered During School Year Only)
- STEM and STEAM activities
- Triple Play activities to provide healthy lifestyles, sports, and fitness
- Social Emotional Learning
- Summer Brain Gain
- Leadership and service activities like Torch and Keystone programs
- And many other fun and meaningful opportunities



## Membership:

BGCC programs are focused on youth. All youth who attend the Club must become a registered member. Children and teens must have a completed registration form, signed by a parent/legal guardian every year. This application includes demographic and important medical information as well as parent/legal guardian contact information. All memberships are renewed on an annual basis. We welcome all students with all abilities.

Parents/Guardians are asked to inform Club staff if contact information or phone numbers change throughout the year.

## Chronic Health Conditions:

Upon completing membership registration, parents must notify the Club Director if their child is suffering from any health conditions or needs to take medication during the Club hours. **BGCC staff will not administer medication.** If the child suffers from a chronic illness, such as asthma, please insure that the child has his/her/their inhaler at all times. The member will be encouraged to participate in all BGCC activities, unless noted on the Special Care Plan and membership form.

**Please note** it is imperative to share all health concerns/issues with club staff, so make sure to complete the assigned portion of the membership form and Special Care Form, if needed.

## Member and Parent Expectations:

Within 30 days of enrollment a parent/guardian must complete an orientation at the Club. All members and youth attending or participating in BGCC programs and activities must be able to comply with the BGCC member code of conduct, as well as Club rules and expectations. Each member's ability to comply with these guidelines helps to ensure that all participants receive a positive Club experience.

BGCC strives to maintain a Club environment that is built on respect for all. As such, there is a zero-tolerance policy for behaviors or actions that jeopardize the health, safety, and well-being of any individual(s) being served by or employed by the organization. This includes but is not limited to members, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, and partners of the organization. BGCC reserves the right to terminate any membership based on the behavior of the child or parent/guardian. Negative behavior of a parent/guardian will be viewed as a violation of organizational policies and will be addressed immediately with actions up to and including suspension or termination of membership. In such instances, refunds are not issued for membership or camp dues.

## Code of Conduct:

- Promote a positive, safe, and healthy environment for all
- Be courteous and respect the rights, beliefs, and property of others and the Club
- Speak, dress, and behave in a responsible way
- Seek positive solutions for conflicts that support the learning and growth of all

## Youth Development Strategy / Behavior Expectations:

BGCC strives to provide a safe space for members to learn, grow, and be successful. We incorporate the Five Key Elements of Positive Youth Development to support safe spaces for members: provide (1) safe, positive environment, (2) access to fun and a sense of belonging, (3) supportive relationships, (4) meaningful opportunities and expectations, and (5) formal and informal recognition. We also support social emotional skill development.

Staff will address conflicts consistently, fairly, and in a way that reinforces the Code of Conduct and culture/values of the Club and BGCC. Examples of negative behavior are:

- Hurting other youth or staff (i.e. hitting, pushing, play fighting)
- Damaging equipment or property
- Child placing themselves or others in dangerous situations
- Disrespecting fellow Club member or Club staff
- Bullying (repeated negative behaviors that target a specific person with the intention to intimidate)

In the event that BGCC staff have concerns about your child's behavior, staff will document incidents and may take steps including, but not limited to, the following:

- Additional coaching or redirection
- Talking to the member about the consequences of negative behaviors
- Contacting child's parent or guardian via call or sending a note is sent home.
- Scheduling a meeting with parent or guardian.
- Developing a behavior contract.
- Suspending or dismissing the member from the program.

If a parent/guardian has a question/concern, please contact the Club Director/Manager. If this does not resolve the concern, contact the Club Support Center, at 312-235-8000.

## Relations and Mandated Reporting:

BGCC staff members are youth development professionals that are trained to provide guidance and mentorship to Club members, as well as supervise Club programs in a safe and effective manner.

BGCC advocates child safety through prevention, intervention, and treatment of child abuse and neglect. All BGCC staff are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and neglect as defined by the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. BGCC staff are obligated to report if they suspect a child is being abused or neglected to DCFS and the Chicago Police Department.

With any concerns or questions, please contact our Human Resources Department at 312.235.8000.

## Parent Communication:

Parent Communication – BGCC communicates by email/ Text. To receive updated communication from BGCC, please include a legible email address/cell phone number on the Membership Form. Please ensure you update your information, should it change during the program.

## Cell Phones & Electronics:

It is recommended that youth **not** bring electronics, such as tablets/laptops and/or gaming devices. Cell phones must be kept with the owner **at all times** when at Club. Use of electronics is not permitted in some areas of the Club. Members must follow the Club's rules of use. **BGCC is not responsible for lost or stolen items, valuables, electronics or cell phones.**

## Limited Access:

For safety reasons, the only individuals allowed to enter the Club program areas are members enrolled in the program, staff, professionals providing services to children, and persons with legal authority to enter, including law enforcement officers and Department of Children and Family Services staff.

Note: Parents/guardians are not allowed to enter the Club unless special circumstances require it and it has been approved by the Club Leadership staff.

## **COVID Protocols:**

BGCC follows COVID health protocols to support a safe and healthy environment for all. In alignment with public health recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Chicago Department of Public Health, members are not currently required to wear a face mask while in our Clubs. Masks will be optional, and members are welcome to bring their own mask to wear if they would like. BGCC does reserve the right to reinstate COVID protocols – including mask requirements, temperature checks and symptom screenings – if cases or other public health factors become a concern. Additional information will be provided at Family Orientation.

## **Daily Arrival and Dismissal:**

Members must follow procedures for signing in and out of programs every day. If a parent requests specific departure plans for their child, staff will make efforts to support plans that are written, signed, and documented, where appropriate. If a member attempts to depart against the understood wishes of the parent/guardian, staff will make reasonable efforts to keep a child within the facility. Because we are a drop-in program, not a licensed daycare facility, we will not physically restrain members who insist on leaving without parent/guardian permission. Members 12 and under who leave without permission may face suspension or dismissal, at the discretion of BGCC.

Members who walk home cannot sign themselves out for early dismissal. If your child is a “walker”, they must be picked up by an adult if they leave early.

## **Late Pickup:**

Parents/Guardians need to pick up their children at the designated time of their dismissal. If not picked up on time, the following will apply: 1<sup>st</sup> – warning, 2<sup>nd</sup> – last warning, 3<sup>rd</sup> – suspension. If not picked up after 45 minutes without communication, the Chicago Police Department will be notified. Additional consequences may include a late pick-up fee or additional limitations on access to programs, field trips, and activities.

## **Surveys:**

Throughout the year, members are asked for their feedback by participating in surveys and questionnaires regarding their Club experience, behavior, skills, attitudes, wants and needs. Surveys are used to let us know how we are doing, how we can improve our services, and for grant reporting purposes. All information gathered from these measures is reported confidentially and collectively. Please make sure to submit all documents if you do not want your child to participate in surveys.

## **Severe Weather and Emergency Closings:**

BGCC may close for snow, or for extreme cold or hot temperatures. When severe weather is predicted, parents should check the Club website for announcements about club closings or delays; a message via the REMIND APP or text will be sent out as well. Please make sure your child's emergency contact information is up to date.

## **Prior to member(s) attending program, parents/guardians are required to:**

- Read and agree to the terms of the Parent/Guardian Agreement.
- Participate in the Parent/Guardian Orientation.
- Submit all enrollment documents and payment.

## Parent/ Family Handbook Agreement

I/We have read the parent handbook for Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago and understand all the information, policies and procedures outlined in the handbook. We have also received a copy of these policies and procedures for our own records and reference.

By signing this agreement we consent to all the handbook policies and procedures and agree to them, including attendance and late fee procedures. By signing this agreement, we acknowledge that the information supplied in the membership form regarding our child(ren) and the information supplied is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge.

By signing this agreement, we also consent for photographs/video, in which my son/daughter may appear, to be used in any way BGCC may care to use and to be shared on our social media pages. By signing you also give consent for your child to participate in periodic surveys and questionnaires regarding their Club experience, behavior, skills, attitude, and beliefs. Surveys are used to let us know how we are doing, how we can improve our services, and for grant reporting purposes. All information gathered from these measures is reported confidentially and collectively. If you wish for your child to opt-out of the surveys, please contact the Club Director/Manager.

**PLEASE KEEP THE ABOVE FOR YOUR RECORDS  
PLEASE TEAR AT THE LINE AND RETURN BOTTOM PORTION TO CLUB STAFF**

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Parent/ Family Handbook Agreement  
2022-2023 Afterschool Program

I/We \_\_\_\_\_, have read the family handbook for Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago and understand all the information, policies and procedures outlined in the handbook. We have also received a copy of these policies and procedures for our own records and reference.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# 2022 AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM AQUATICS HANDBOOK

## BE COOL, BY THE POOL

Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago is committed to making swimming part of the list of basic life skills and reducing water-related injuries, particularly in communities where children are most at risk. Our Aquatics programs have begun to fill this gap to address children's aquatics support needs. By offering a variety of programming such as open swim, learn-to-swim and so much more, the aquatics program strives to help all ages stay safe around water and learn the skills needed to make swimming a lifelong pursuit for healthy living!

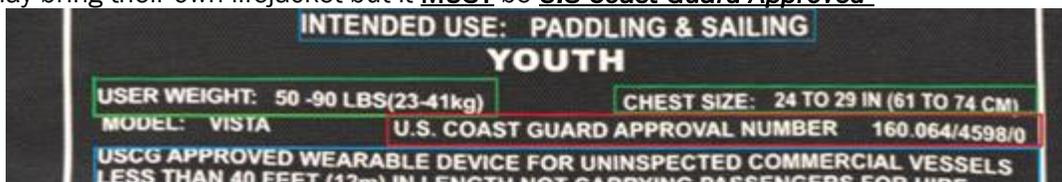
### General Policies and Procedures

Swimmers are given 15 minutes to change in and out of the locker room. Swimmers are expected to be on deck, ready to swim by the time stated on the calendar.

Each aquatic facility is staffed with lifeguards and an additional coordinator on deck to check-in and assist 20-minute rotations for all lifeguards on duty.

Lifejackets are available on-site upon request by participant.

Participants may bring their own lifejacket but it **MUST** be ***U.S Coast Guard Approved***



Aquatics staff is not responsible for lost or missing items.

### Programs

- **Level 1: Introduction to Water Skills:** Helps participants feel comfortable in the water.
- **Level 2: Fundamental Aquatic Skills:** Gives participants success with fundamental skills.
- **Level 3: Stroke Development:** Builds on the skills in Level 2 through additional guided practice in deeper waters.

All Learn-To-Swim Lessons are conducted at our Legacy sites: True Value, Pedersen-McCormick, Valentine and King. Please contact your respective Aquatics Coordinator for more information.

- **Open Swim:** Non-registration program, recreational swim with Club members based on age group. During Open Swim, swimmers must pass a swim test with Aquatics Coordinator before being allowed to swim in the deep end.

### Swim Test

Swimmer must swim length of the pool towards the deep end, tread water for 30 seconds, and swim back to the shallow end without stopping.

### What to Bring?

- Swimsuits (polyester shorts, no cut-offs, one piece, no cotton t-shirts)
- Towel
- Swim Cap (if your hair is longer than your ears)
- Goggles
- Flip-flops

### Locker Rooms

- All items must be removed from lockers by the end of the day.
- The use of cameras and other picture-taking equipment, including cell phones, is prohibited in the locker rooms.
- Aquatics Staff are not responsible for any missing items.
- All participants must be able to change into their swimsuits on their own, assistance will not be provided. If assistance is needed - please check-in with your Club Director/Manager.

### Pool Rules

- Obey the lifeguards and follow pool rules. They are there for your safety.
- All persons are required to shower before entering the pool area.
- Food and drink are not permitted in the pool area except in designated spectator areas.
- No Horseplay
- Clean swimwear is required.
- No running allowed on pool deck.
- Except during programming no swim gear allowed at any time (snorkels, scuba gear, kayaks, tubes etc.)
- Goggles, towels, and other items should not be shared.
- No flotation devices may be used in the pool unless U.S. Coast Guard approved.
- Persons with open wounds, excessive sunburn, abrasions that have not healed, or bandages of any kind cannot be allowed in the water.

### Additional Guidelines based on CDC guidelines per COVID

- Don't come to the pool if you, or someone you live with, is sick.
- Face coverings are required when out of the water AND around others. There are hooks along the pool deck to place all-face masks.
- Aquatics Staff will stagger locker room access for social distancing guidelines.

For questions, please contact **Aquatics Director, Cynthia Bedolla:** [cbedolla@bgcc.org](mailto:cbedolla@bgcc.org)