

**GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.****



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB  
OF GREATER WATERBURY**

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**Member & Parent/Guardian Handbook**

**1037 East Main Street ♦ 203-756-8104**

**2018 - 19 School Year**

## **Introduction**

This Handbook is designed to inform members and parents/guardians of the policies and procedures of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury. It contains rules by which the Club operates and helpful hints that will make everyone's experience more enjoyable. **Each member and parent/guardian must review this Handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures as a condition of membership.**

The Boys & Girls Club is a non-profit youth organization that seeks to help children from all backgrounds develop the qualities needed to become responsible citizens and leaders.

The purpose of the Club is to promote character development in young people by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence with each member.

*The after-school program at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury, serving school-age children and youth, is exempt from child care licensing by the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. The drop-in after-school program follows the membership requirements and safety standards set for by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.*

## **Membership**

Membership at the Club is open to all youth who are at least five (5) years old and enrolled in school (Kindergarten or higher) to youth who are eighteen (18) or younger and are in high school. A parent or legal guardian is required to register children. Registration must be completed in person at the Club. All application forms must be completed in full or will not be accepted. The information requested is necessary for safety and for purposes of the funding that supports the Club.

Every member must have a complete and current Application on file for every school year. **All parents/guardians must attend an**

**orientation session every school year.** Failure to attend the orientation may result in revocation of membership privileges.

Membership is open to all youth without regard to race, color, religion or national origin.

## **Fees**

The membership fee is \$100 per year. The membership year runs concurrently with the school year. Additional fees may be charged for any school holidays or vacation days or in-service school days on which school is closed but the Club is open. In addition, fees may be charged for additional programs that are scheduled during non-Club hours. Summer Camp is not included in the membership fee.

\*Membership at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury is a privilege and should be treated as such. Membership may be revoked at any time for inappropriate behavior. **No refunds will be given in cases of revoked membership.** See *Discipline Policy*

We would like to thank all of our members and their parents for becoming a part of our family. Please remember that we are a "club" and not a "daycare." We have a volunteer Board of Directors that raises the funds to continue our operations; without them, we could not be so affordable. If we work together, we can successfully create and maintain a place where young people can learn, grow and mature.

## **Parent Orientation**

**All parents/guardians MUST attend orientation, every year.** During this orientation, parents and members will have the opportunity to discuss any of our policies and how the program will operate. The subjects reviewed at the orientation are important. While the Club will post reminders, the Club expects all members and families to be aware of our policies and procedures. Policies and procedures will not change over the course of the school year and will be followed and enforced consistently throughout the year.

## **Hours of Operation**

The Club is open for after-school programming from 2:30 – 6:00 pm for children 12 and under and from 2:30 – 7:00 pm for youth ages 13 – 18. The Club's hours vary on days when school is not in session, i.e. school holidays/breaks. Our administrative hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday- Friday. Registration will be accepted between 9:00 am – 2:00 pm ONLY.

\*The Club reserves the right to change its hours and days of operation based on need and/or economic circumstances. If such changes occur, parents will be notified in advance. Additionally, there may be days when it is necessary to close the Club due to unforeseen circumstances such as emergency repairs, inclement weather, etc. We are occasionally closed in preparation for fundraising and special events and for the professional development and training of staff. We always send "Remind" notices and post notices at the front desk. The Club follows the schedule of the City of Waterbury Department of Education and will automatically close if Waterbury schools are closed due to weather or other emergencies.

All parents/guardians **must** provide a cell phone number (or of a phone capable of receiving texts) to receive important messages from the Club including those pertaining to closures and emergencies.

## **Holidays**

The club will be closed the following holidays; Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day & the day after, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Memorial Day and Independence Day. The Club may be closed on other holidays; notices are posted at the front desk.

## **Pick-up Procedure**

All parents/guardians are required to enter the building to pick up their child and to sign their child out. The front desk will notify the child that it is time to leave; parents/guardians may not go into the

program areas to find their child and must remain at the front desk until their child appears. Club members will not be allowed to wait outside to be picked up or leave the building unaccompanied.

Subject to parental/guardian written permission, an Open-Door Policy shall apply to TEEN MEMBERS who are in high school ONLY. This Policy allows teen members who are in high school to come and go at any time during the Club's operating hours. Teen members are, however, **required** to sign in and out. Failure to sign in and out will result in the loss of the Open-Door privilege. Staff will not prohibit teen members with the proper permission from leaving the Club. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the teen member and the parent/guardian to determine, understand and enforce the arrival and departure method they see fit.

No youth are allowed at the Club unless they are signed in and participating in Club activities. Members should **not** be dropped off prior to the opening of the Club, as the Club cannot be held responsible for the supervision of such youth.

Please utilize marked spaces within the parking lot and remember that there is NO parking in handicap spots. Please do NOT block the entrance to the club or park in a manner that prohibits others from leaving. Please be courteous of our neighbors – do not block passage on the street and do not park in their driveways. These procedures are designed for the safety of all users and to minimize potential problems that might occur with the shared use of the parking lot.

## **Pick-Up Policy and Late Pick-Up Fee**

Please remember that the Club closes at 6:00pm for those 12 and under and 7:00 pm for teens. Members must be picked up by closing time. **A late pick-up fee of \$15 will be charged per child for every half hour (or portion thereof) you are late.** This fee will apply immediately after closing. After one hour, without contact from a parent or guardian, the authorities may be notified. Staff will collect and issue a receipt for any "babysitting fees." **Members may not return until these fees are paid in full.** If you are late more than 3

times, you must schedule a meeting with the Executive Director before your child may return to the Club. **Remember:** Only those people having the authority to pick up a child, as listed on the Member Application, will be allowed to pick up your child. Please list at least 2 additional people authorized to pick up and contacts besides yourself.

### **Illness Policy**

If a member is too ill to attend school, then he/she is too ill to attend the Club. We do not have the staff to attend to sick children nor a place for them to rest quietly. As soon as signs of illness are identified, the parent/guardian will be contacted and will be required to pick up their child within one hour. If greater than one hour passes, our standard late fee will be charged. This is not only for the comfort and safety of your child but the well-being of all of our members. *Staff are not permitted to administer medication to youth.*

Any changes to Emergency Contact Information must be provided to the Club in writing immediately.

### **Attendance**

Unlike school, attendance at the Club is not required but it is encouraged. If a member does not attend school for any reason, however, he/she may not attend the Club that day.

No youth are allowed at the Club unless they are signed in and participating in Club activities. "Hanging out" is not allowed. Members are required to participate and stay within their program/group at all times. If a member is signed up to participate in a special enrichment program, attendance is required. The member must attend every session for its duration. Parents/Guardians may not pick up their child until the special enrichment program is done for the day. Members should **not** be dropped off prior to the opening of the Club, as the Club cannot be held responsible for the supervision of such youth.

### **Membership Cards**

The Club does not issue Membership Cards. All members must be fully registered and must check in at the front desk daily. Youth not registered will be required to obtain a Day Pass, daily, until registration is complete. A Day Pass is \$5. There is a limit of four (4) day passes per school year and which point a membership is required.

### **Transportation to the Club**

Bus transportation is provided directly to the Club from particular City schools – those schools may include Catholic Academy of Waterbury, Chase, Generali, Gilmartin, Maloney, Rotella, St. Peter & Paul, Wallace, Walsh, WAMS, Wendell Cross and Wilson. Free transportation from these schools (or others) is subject to availability as determined by the bus company and the City. Parents/guardians must complete the bus form included in the Membership Application and provide an alternative transportation plan for your child in cases when the Club is closed (i.e. emergency dismissal due to weather). The Club will provide the school with your child's name and alternative transportation plan. Children are expected to follow rules and behave accordingly on the bus from school to the Club. Failure to follow the rules on the bus may result in a child being denied the ability to ride the bus and/or termination of the bus.

When available, the Club may pick up from various schools that do not provide free transportation. Transportation provided by the Club is \$140.00 per month. Parents/guardians must complete a form authorizing the Club to pick up their child along with the Membership Application and include an alternative transportation plan for your child in cases when the Club is closed (i.e. emergency dismissal due to weather). The Club will provide the school with the authorization, your child's name and alternative transportation plan. Payment must be made no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month.

## Summer Program

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Waterbury is open 7-8 weeks each summer. The cost of the summer program is not included in the membership fee. The summer program is open to members and non-members. Registration begins in early spring. Information can be found at [www.bgcgwater.org](http://www.bgcgwater.org).

All Club rules apply during the summer program.

*The Summer Enrichment Program is a licensed day camp under the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood.*

## Personal Belongings

**All personal belongings brought into the Club by a child are the responsibility of that child. The Club is NOT responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items.** Please discourage your child from bringing anything to the Club that is not completely necessary, including toys, dolls or electronics. Items that your child brings to the Club should be clearly marked with their name. Items that are not collected from our lost-and-found in a timely fashion will be donated to a local charity.

- **Cell Phones and Other Personal Devices**

The Club strongly discourages members from bringing cell phones, personal gaming and music devices (such as IPODS, Game Boys, Nintendo DS) to the Club or any related activities or field trips. If they are brought to the Club, **they may not be taken out of the member's bag while at the Club.** Parents and members are to be reminded that we, as stated in this *Member & Parent Handbook*, are not responsible for any personal property brought to the Club. If such devices are brought, they are NEVER to be taken in the locker rooms or restrooms. Staff has the right to confiscate any device at any time the student abuses the regulations for its use. The Club cannot guarantee the safe keeping of confiscated equipment.

Members are not allowed to take any pictures of any other members without parental or guardian permission.

Any inappropriate texting or sexting (inappropriate picture mail) is illegal and will be investigated and the incident will be turned over to the proper authorities.

## Phone

The phone at the Club is a business phone. **Members use the phone in cases of an emergency.** Members must use the phone at the front desk after first requesting permission from a staff member. Use of the phone is a privilege and any member who abuses this privilege will be subject to disciplinary action.

## Visitors

All visitors are required to check in at the front desk. We ask that any visits do not disrupt scheduled programming.

## Volunteers

We encourage and welcome parent/family volunteers to assist us with our programs, in particular, family and holiday programs. Please see the Director of Operations about volunteering.

## Participation/Programming

Members are required to participate and stay within their program/group at all times. Most groups are scheduled for 45-60 minutes. Members are encouraged to participate in every activity in all of the 5 core service areas which are: Character & Leadership Development, Education & Career Development, The Arts, Health & Life Skills, and Sports, Fitness & Recreation. The Club is dedicated to introducing children to a wide array of programs to help develop the whole child.

The Club offers a range of special enrichment programs for which members must sign up in advance. These programs run for a limited duration and may only be offered one time. The Club receives grant or other restricted funding for these enrichment programs and is required to report on participation and outcomes. Therefore, if a member is signed up to participate in such a special enrichment program, attendance is required. We also request that, if a child is participating in a special enrichment program, parents do not pick up the child until the program is done for the day.

### **Supervision**

Our staff are trained Youth Development Professionals and have undergone background checks. A staff member will oversee each of our designated program areas at all times. Please take the time to remind your child of the need to follow Club rules and directions at ALL TIMES.

### **Discipline Policy**

The Club strives to keep the consequences for unacceptable behavior clear, appropriate, timely and consistent. The safety of all members is of utmost importance to us. Our standards, along with the expectation that all members use good common sense, exist to ensure that your child and every other child at the Club can safely enjoy the Club's activities. Any member who disrupts programs or creates a dangerous situation will be disciplined appropriately. Members who do not follow rules can expect to lose privileges and face consequences. Offenses are never excused as such and will be handled based on their severity. Our staff makes every possible attempt to resolve discipline problems in a positive and constructive manner. At times, if necessary, discipline may include being written up, assigned club service, suspension or expulsion. If asked to come and pick up your child, you must do so within one hour or our standard "babysitting fee" will be charged. **Refunds will not be given in cases when membership is restricted or terminated for behavioral reasons.**

Violation of Club Rules and Regulations may result in a discipline ranging from a warning or time-out to a written warning and/or meeting with the parent/guardian to suspension or even expulsion from the Club, depending on the severity of the offense. It is up to the discretion of the Director of Operations and Executive Director, if they determine the circumstances have compromised the safety of the members or staff.

### **Rules and Regulations of the Club**

1. Members must check in and out of the Club.
2. Members must choose and participate in the scheduled activities – NO HANGING AROUND.
3. Members must do homework during Power Hour. Those not having homework must do quiet activities or read.
4. Staff are in charge and should be treated as such. Disrespect for staff and other members will not be tolerated.
5. Profanity, arguing, fighting, and rudeness are not acceptable.
6. Bullying will not be tolerated.
7. Possession/use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs or weapons on Club property will not be tolerated.
8. Horseplay or any unsafe behavior is not permitted.
9. Destruction of the Club's, staff or another member's property will not be tolerated.
10. Members are not allowed in any area where there is no staff supervision.
11. The Club is not responsible for any personal property that members bring to the Club.
12. No cell phones or any other electronic device or toys (iPod, laptop, etc.). Such devices must be left in the member's backpack or school bag. Any confiscated items may be picked up at the front desk as the member is being signed out. The Club is not responsible for any lost or stolen equipment.
13. No eating or drinking in the gym – except water - or in any other program area where food and drink may be prohibited.
14. No smoking or drinking alcohol inside the Club or anywhere on Club property – this applies to everyone, including parents/guardians and visitors.

15. Members are not allowed to wait outside for their parents.
16. Members must stay with their groups on all field trips and club activities.
17. Club phone is for emergency use.

### **Expectations of Our Club Members**

1. Be respectful of everyone. Listen to staff and volunteers.
2. Follow Club Rules.
3. Participate.
4. If there is not a staff person in an area, then stay out of that area.
5. Never leave the Club or a field trip or Club activity without permission.
6. Help to keep our Club clean and take care of our equipment.
7. If you have a problem of any kind, talk to a staff person.
8. Try to bring a smile every day; a positive attitude is contagious.
9. **HAVE FUN!**

### **Expectations of Our Staff Members**

1. Treat everyone fairly and consistently and in a professional manner.
2. Required to document any violation of policy and rules.
3. Notify parents of any violations of Club policy and rules.
4. Be here because they care about our members.
5. Be cheerful and treat every member with dignity and respect.
6. Be good role models.

### **Expectations of Our Club Member's Parents/Guardians**

1. Be supportive of our staff. If you have an issue with a staff person, notify the Director of Operations to schedule a time to discuss the issue with the staff person.
2. Absolutely **NEVER** confront a member who is not your own child! If you have a concern with one of our member's behavior, notify the Director of Operations and we will handle

it. Treat the other members as you would want your child treated and remember they are still kids.

3. You are responsible for any damages that your child may intentionally or unintentionally cause to Club or another member's property.
4. Pick up your child on time.
5. Do not smoke or drink anywhere on Club property, including the parking lot.
6. Reinforce Club rules and regulations with your child.

### **Acceptable Technology Use Policy and Responsible Use Guidelines**

The Club's computers and Internet access are available to members to enhance their educational experience and become literate in an increasingly technological world. The purpose of this policy and these guidelines is to foster the appropriate use of the Internet as well as other technology devices while at the Club.

#### **• Educational Purpose**

The Club's computers are for educational purposes limited to classroom activities, career development, independent scholastic research on appropriate subjects and staff supervised activities only.

They are not for our members to use as a public access service or public forum. The Club has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material accessed or posted through the system. You are also expected to follow the Club's behavior standards when accessing the network.

Computers may not be used for commercial purposes. This means you may not offer, provide or purchase products or services through this network. Computers may not be used for political purposes but may be used to communicate with elected representatives and to express yourself on political issues.

#### **• Unacceptable Use**

You will not post personal contact information about yourself or other people. Personal contact information includes but is not limited to home, school, or work addresses or telephone numbers.

You will not agree to meet with someone you have met on-line without your parent or guardian's approval. A parent or guardian should accompany you to this meeting.

You will promptly disclose to the Director of Operations, education or technology staff or teen center staff any message that you receive that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.

- **Respect for Privacy**

You will not re-post a message that was sent to you privately without permission of the person who sent you the message.

You will not post private information about another person.

- **Inappropriate Access to Material**

You will not use the Club's computers to access material that is profane or obscene (pornographic), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature).

If you mistakenly access inappropriate information, you should immediately tell the Director of Operations or Club Staff member or adult volunteer. This will protect you against a claim that you have intentionally violated this policy.

You will not post information that could cause damage or danger of disruption.

You will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks. You will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If you are told by a person to stop sending him or her messages, you must stop.

Your parent or guardian should instruct you if there is additional material that he or she thinks would be inappropriate for you to access.

- **Illegal Activities**

You will not attempt to gain unauthorized access another's computer system through the Club's computers. This includes attempting to log on through another person's account or access another person's files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purpose of "browsing".

You will not attempt to make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses.

You will not use the Club's computers to engage in any illegal act, including but not limited to arranging for the purpose or sale of drugs or alcohol, engaging in criminal activity, or threatening the safety of another person.

- **Inappropriate Language**

Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and materials posted on Web pages. You will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful forms of communication. This applies to verbal and written language, diagrams, photographs, representations, videos or any other form of communications.

You will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.



