

# **Member & Parent Handbook**

**2020-2021**

*Great Futures Start Here*



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF GLACIER COUNTRY

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

## **Introduction**

This handbook is designed to inform members and parents of the policies and procedures of the Boys & Girls Club of Glacier Country. It contains rules by which the Club operates and helpful hints that will make a member's experience more enjoyable. Each member and parent should review this handbook as a condition of membership.

The Boys & Girls Club of Glacier Country 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 Boys & Girls Club believes in 5 core areas of programming to educate, inspire, and promote a positive and healthy lifestyle in young people. The 5 core areas are:

Character & Leadership Development

Education & Career Development

Health & Life Skills

The Arts

Sports, Fitness and Recreation

Boys & Girls Club of Glacier Country is a private, non-profit organization affiliated with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA). We pay annual dues to BGCA and are responsible for raising all of our own funding in which we do through individual giving, fundraising, grants, planned-giving and an annual giving campaign. We do not receive funding directly from BGCA.

## **Membership**

Membership at the Club is open to all youth beginning Kindergarten and older without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. A parent or legal guardian is required to register children.

**Fees:** The Club does not turn anyone away for the inability to pay. The membership fee is based on a sliding-scale of household annual income. It ranges from \$25-\$125 per month per family. The membership year runs concurrently with the school year. There is a **\$20** application fee at the beginning of every school year.

All membership fees are designated to our general operations expenses.

Registration for our summer program is open to our regular members first, and if all spaces are not filled at that time, registration will be open to the general public.

Membership and summer fees are non-refundable.

We are not responsible for your child's supervision until your child is signed in by a staff member at the Club.

As we are not a daycare facility, we do not have the capacity or staff training to provide assistance with youth needing help in the bathroom, cleaning themselves or changing clothes. All members must have the ability to address these needs themselves.

### **Hours of Operation**

The Boys & Girls Club of Glacier Country is open for after-school programming from 3:00 – 6:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 2:00-6:30 p.m. on Wednesday. Summer program is open 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday-Friday.

\*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. As soon as we confirm any of those dates we will post notices at the Club and send notices home. **The Club will automatically close if Columbia Falls Schools cancel classes due to weather.** The Club follows Columbia Falls Schools on ALL weather-related cancellations and delays.

### **Holidays**

The club will be closed the following holidays; Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day & the day after, the week of Christmas, New Year's Day, Memorial Day and Independence Day. **This is not an inclusive list.**

### **Volunteers**

We welcome and need adult volunteers to assist us with our programs. All volunteers must first pass a background check and adhere to a schedule set by the Unit Director of the Club.

### **Pick-up Procedure**

All parents/guardians are required to enter the building to pick up their child and to sign them out. Club members will not be allowed to wait outside to be picked up. Members who have permission to walk home must have that marked on their membership application and must discuss with the Unit Director.

No member will be allowed to return to the Club once they have been signed out and leave the premises for the day.

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

Please remember that the Club closes at **6:30 p.m during school and 6:00 p.m. during summer program.** Members need to be picked up by closing time. A late pick-up fee of **\$10** will be charged per child for every 15 minutes you are late. This fee will apply immediately after closing. At 30 minutes after closing your child will receive a minimum suspension of 1 day. After one hour, without contact from a parent or guardian the authorities will be notified. Staff will collect and issue a receipt for any "babysitting fees" at the time of pick-up. 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. Only those people listed on the member registration form contact list will be allowed to pick up your child. Please list at least 2 additional contacts besides yourself.

### **Field Trip Policy**

Permission slips for field trips must be signed prior to participating in a field trip providing parental consent. For field trips that require a fee, the fee must be paid independently from any other fees. Therefore, field trip fees and membership fees cannot be made with one check. Field Trip fees are given directly to the field trip site for payment the day of the field trip. This includes the swimming pool.

### **Illness Policy**

If a member is too ill to attend school, then they are 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. If a member becomes ill while at the Club, 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 babysitting 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 is NOT permitted to administer medication to youth.***

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

1. BE courteous of others, including staff, volunteers, and the Club's neighbors.
2. BE respectful of yourself, others, and the Club equipment and facilities.
3. BE aware of and follow the rules of the Club (as given by staff and volunteers).
4. BE involved and engaged in a program or activity until it is completed.
5. BE helpful in cleaning up and putting away materials you use.
6. BE selective and choose only Club approved programs or games on computers and tablets. Violence, swearing, and sexual content are forbidden.
7. BE prepared for the weather; wear appropriate clothing, shoes, etc. Follow the dress code.
8. BE ready to have fun!

### **Participation/Programming**

Members are required to participate and stay within their program/group at all times. Most groups are scheduled for 30-45 minutes. Members are encouraged to participate in all activities. The Club is dedicated to introducing children to a wide array of programs to help develop the whole child. Those who refuse to participate must remain with their group and sit quietly.

Membership at the Club is a privilege, and behavior that is disrespectful and potentially dangerous is not tolerated and may result in a verbal warning, time out, parent notification, suspension and even immediate suspension, especially when the safety of another member is at risk. Decisions regarding discipline are final.

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

1. Will treat everyone fairly and consistently and in a professional manner.
2. Open communication regarding member's difficulties and accomplishments.
3. Be good role models for our members.
4. Provide positive and supportive relationships.
5. Provide a safe environment on Club property and during Club activities.
6. Provide members opportunities to increase skills in leadership, athletics, and in making healthy choices.
7. Provide educational enrichment.

### **Supervision**

Our staff is trained Youth Development Professionals. A staff member will oversee each of our designated program areas at all times. Staff maintain a 1:15 staff/student ratio for youth K-5<sup>th</sup> grade and a 1:20 ratio for youth 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Please take the time to remind your child of the need to follow Club rules and directions at ALL TIMES. All staff has cleared background checks.

## Expectations of Our Club Member's Parents

1. Please respect that our staff are not allowed to text parents regarding their children at any time. All questions or concerns must be addressed to the Unit Director only. Staff are not allowed to pick up Club members during Club hours. Staff are discouraged from fraternizing with Club member parents as such relationships could possibly cause discourse within our program and could potentially cause unsafe circumstances to our members.
2. Approach conflict with staff and/or other parents in a manner that is respectful and is not witnessed by members or other children. If you have an issue with a staff person, please schedule a time to discuss it that is convenient for both you and the Unit Director or Executive Director. Remember, they have more than your child they are responsible for and cannot ignore other members to meet with you.
3. **NEVER** confront one of our members who are not your own child. If you have a concern with one of our member's behavior, please address an adult staff person and let them handle it. Treat the other members as you would want your child treated and remember they are still kids.
4. You are responsible for any damages that your child may intentionally or unintentionally cause to Club property.
5. Respond as quickly as possible when members need to be picked up.
6. Maintain open communication with staff, informing us of any accomplishments or issues so that we may better serve members.
7. Refrain from any physical punishment of children or verbal attacks of children on Club property.
8. Encourage your child to follow Club rules
9. Ensure that an up to date emergency contact is always available.
10. Expect your child to clean up the area he or she was using before leaving the Club.
11. Understand that the Club is not a day care facility but a resource for children and their families that provides enrichment experiences in each of the five core program areas.

## Suspension

Violation of Club Rules and Regulations may result in a written warning, suspension or even expulsion from the Club, depending on the severity of the offense. It is up to the discretion of the Director, if they determine the circumstances have compromised the safety of the members or staff.

## Rules

The Unit Director and Program Staff are responsible for posting a list of Club member rules where all members can observe them. It is the responsibility of the Staff to ensure that all members have read the Club rules and understand them

## Discipline Policy

The Boys & Girls Club of Glacier Country strives to keep the consequences for unacceptable behavior clear, appropriate, and timely. 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. First-time 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, or suspension. If asked to come and pick up your child, you must do so within one hour or our standard "babysitting fee" will be charged. **Children restricted or expelled for behavioral reasons will not be granted a refund.**

Only the Unit Director and CEO has the power to suspend a child. The Director can suspend up to 2 weeks. Any other disciplinary action must be decided by the CEO.

**Minor offenses:** running in the building, eating outside the designated areas, horseplay, disruptive during program, unable to follow directions (these are offered as examples and not meant to be an all-inclusive list) could result in:

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Staff will give guidance and redirection

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Staff will give guidance along with small assignment to complete in order to produce healthy habits.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Staff will document and notify Director.

4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Director will contact and inform parent of the incident and initiate possible disciplines and solutions that could include community service, writing assignment, and/or suspension.

**Immediate Suspensions:** Will range from 2 days to 4 weeks. This includes: bullying, fighting, abusing Club equipment or property, inappropriate non-contact minor sexual behavior, possession of a knife, youth leaving the Club without a staff or approved adult, being in an unsupervised area, stealing, gambling, fighting, disrespecting anyone from a staff to a Club member.

**Indefinite Suspensions:** Possession of a gun, threat with a weapon, hitting a staff member, vandalism, distribution of drugs or alcohol, sexual misbehavior, continuous misbehavior.

### **Personal Belongings**

All personal belongings brought into the Club by a member is the responsibility of that child. The Boys & Girls Club of Glacier Country is NOT responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items. Please discourage your child from bringing anything to the Club that is not completely necessary. Items that your child brings to the Club should be clearly marked with their name. All belongings, including cell phones, are to be kept in their backpack until they leave.

Items that are not collected from our lost-and-found by Friday of each week will be donated to a local charity.

### **Phone**

The phone at the Club is a business phone. **Members may call their parents only in an emergency or under absolutely necessary circumstances. They will not be allowed to call to see what time or who will be picking them up.** The use of the phone is a privilege and any member who abuses this privilege will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **DRESS CODE**

All members must dress in a manner that allows full participation in Club activities. Members will be sent home for violating dress code.

- To meet safety requirements, members are required to wear shoes at all times. During winter this means members must have an extra pair of closed-toe shoes.
- No skirts or shorts above mid-thigh
- No half-shirts or tops that are backless, strapless, or sheer
- No clothing that is demeaning
- No tobacco, alcohol or illegal substances may be depicted on any clothing.
- No vulgar or sexually explicit graphics or words on clothing.

- No gang symbols and/or attire
- No pants hanging below the belt line.

### **Telecommunications and Other Personal Devices**

The Club discourages members from bringing cell phones, personal gaming and music devices such as MP3 players, IPODS, Game boys, Nintendo DS, etc. to the Club or any related activities or field trips. If such devices are brought, they are not to be used without the expressed consent of the Staff and are to be turned off when not in use and are NEVER to be taken in the restrooms or used in rooms where staff members are not present. Staff has the right to confiscate any device at any time members abuse the regulations for its use. The staff at 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.

### **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.

### **Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement**

You will not plagiarize works that you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours.

You will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when you reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright without authorization.

### **SAFETY**

Safety is always the Club's primary concern. The Club's policies and procedures are designed to facilitate effective monitoring and supervision in order to keep Club members, staff, and volunteers safe from harm, including abuse, and false allegations thereof.

In conjunction with local law enforcement and public safety personnel, the Club maintains a comprehensive plan to ensure members' safety. In the event of an emergency evacuation, the person listed as the member's primary contact will be notified by phone. Staff and volunteers are trained in the prevention and reporting of suspected child abuse. They also receive training in appropriate staff/member interactions. This includes both appropriate and inappropriate verbal and physical interactions. Staff are also trained on how to provide discipline and guidance to members of all ages; staff and volunteers are prohibited from using physical punishment. Staff and volunteers will not abuse members in any way, including (but not limited to): physical, verbal, sexual, and mental abuse and neglect. The Club enforces its policy that establishes a drug and alcohol-free workplace. Staff and volunteers must pass background checks before working with members. Club members of all ages are prohibited from engaging in the following: hazing, bullying, derogatory name-calling, Truth or Dare or similar games, ridicule or humiliation, sexual activity.

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

The Boys & Girls Club of Glacier Country computer network 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 that network and the Internet as well as other personal technology devices while at the Club.

- **Educational Purpose**

The BGCGC network has been established for educational purposes limited to classroom activities, career development, independent scholastic research on appropriate subjects and Club staff supervised activities only.

The Club network has not been established 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 you access or post through the system. You are also expected to follow Club Member Behavior Standards when accessing the network.

You may not use the Club network for commercial purposes. This means you may not offer, provide or purchase products or services through this network.

You may not use the Club network for political lobbying. 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.

Members in grades K-5 are not allowed on any social media during Club hours. Members in grades 6-12 will be allowed to engage in social media within certain guidelines. Computer access can only be during your groups scheduled computer lab time. No personal pictures, including selfies, may be taken or uploaded during Club hours or on Club field trips. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. Involvement in cyber bullying will result in loss of computer privileges.

### **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 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.



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

### **Inappropriate Access to Material**

You will not use the BGCGC network 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 a Staff member. This will protect you against a claim that you have intentionally violated this policy.

Your parent or guardian should instruct you if there is additional material that he or she thinks would be inappropriate for you to access. The & Girls Club of Glacier Country fully expects you to follow your parent's or guardian's instruction in this matter.

### **Illegal Activities**

You will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the BGCGC network or to any other computer system through the BGCGC network. 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 BGCGC network 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.

### **System Security**

You are responsible for your individual user account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use your account. Under no conditions should you ever provide your password to another person.

You will immediately notify a Club Staff member or adult volunteer if you have identified or witnessed a possible security problem. Do not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.

### **Disciplinary Actions of Technology Misuse**

Members who violate the Acceptable Technology Use Policy or Responsible Use Guidelines may be denied future Internet and/or network privileges for a defined period of time or may be subject to other disciplinary measures as set forth by the Boys & Girls Club of Glacier Country.



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**OF GLACIER COUNTRY**

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**Parent/Member Handbook Acknowledgment**

Club Member Name (Print):

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Club Member Signature:

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Parent Name (Print):

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Parent Signature:

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Date:

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\_\_\_\_ Please add my cell phone number to the Remind app. I understand that I must download this app in order to receive communications from the Boys & Girls Club. The purpose of this communication is to update you of unexpected closings/emergency situations or to remind you of upcoming events.