



## Virtual Programming for Club Members: Parental Notification

Dear Parent/Guardian:

March 30, 2020

In an effort to continuously serve members during the Club closure, Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbia is providing distance-based, virtual programming for Club members, through which Club staff will facilitate program activities through online platforms. Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbia will use software, tools and applications provided by third parties that members, parents/guardians and/or staff will access via the Internet and use for purposes of communication and programming. Social platforms such as: YouTube, Facebook, Website, Instagram, Tic Tok, and Zoom.

This letter is to inform you that we will be utilizing the above mentioned platforms for distance-based, virtual Club program purposes. We will be following Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbia's safety protocols and policies to ensure the safety of our members. Please be aware that each social media platform collects different information about its users and has its own privacy terms and conditions to which members must adhere. Please review these carefully before registering your member.

Virtual Club programming will utilize the following:

- Technology consent on BGC Membership application unless parent chooses to Opt Out
- Utilizing BGC member's personal technology device or that of CPS to access virtual programs

We will use the online applications for the following program activities:

- BGC of Columbia Directors and staff will be creating videos for the YouTube channel with lesson plans, trivia questions, art classes, culinary classes, and healthy fitness challenges for members.
- On Zoom Directors will be checking in on members for Homework help. Our Director of Academics will be hosting these check-ins on Mondays- Thursdays.

Our commitment to keeping the young people we serve safe is always our number one priority. Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbia will actively monitor member activity on YouTube, Tic Tok and Zoom and will make every effort to protect member information by, among other things, maintaining control of, and access to, the data collected; prohibiting re-disclosure of member information; limiting the purposes for which the online platforms may use member information; ensuring there is no advertising and that no member information is collected for commercial purposes.

Further, all activities online must comply with Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbia's safety policies, including all relevant safety policies, including the Code of Conduct, Acceptable Technology Use Policy, Internet Safety Policy, Prohibition of 1:1 Contact Policy, which are available on our website at [www.bgc-columbia.org](http://www.bgc-columbia.org).

To Opt Out of BGC Virtual Programming please contact your child's site director via email with your child's/children's name to:

Main Site Elementary Director: [Octavia@bgc-columbia.org](mailto:Octavia@bgc-columbia.org)

Teen/Tween Director: [flor@bgc-columbia.org](mailto:flor@bgc-columbia.org)

Alpha Hart Lewis Director: [josh@bgc-columbia.org](mailto:josh@bgc-columbia.org)

Derby Ridge Director: [tarus@bgc-columbia.org](mailto:tarus@bgc-columbia.org)

Blue Ridge Director: [amy@bgc-columbia.org](mailto:amy@bgc-columbia.org)

We hope that our Virtual Afterschool Programming provides support to our families during this stressful time for kids and parents of school closure. We are here to help in any way!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Valorie Livingston, Executive Director



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF COLUMBIA

Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbia's safety policies, including all relevant safety policies, including the Code of Conduct, Acceptable Technology Use Policy, Internet Safety Policy, and Prohibition of 1:1 Contact Policy.

**Youth Development Strategy**

Club programs and services promote and enhance the development of youths by instilling a:

- ✓ **Sense of competence** - the feeling there is something boys and girls can do well.
- ✓ **Sense of usefulness** - the opportunity to do something of value for other people.
- ✓ **Sense of belonging** - a setting where an individual knows he or she has a place and where he or she "fits" and is accepted.
- ✓ **Sense of power or influence** - a chance to be heard and to influence decisions.

When this strategy is fully implemented, the self-esteem of girls and boys is enhanced and an environment is created which helps them achieve their full potential.

**Conduct of Members**

Basic Ground Rules for Club Members:

- a. Respect the rights of other people.
- b. No profanity at any time.
- c. Respect yourself and others

Member Expectations

Members must remain obedient and well-behaved. Any behavior that places themselves or others in physical or emotional danger is unacceptable and includes:

- Refusing to obey staff
- Irresponsible or destructive acts
- Foul language
- Bullying
- Sexual contact or overtures

Parents should be fully aware of the organization's behavioral expectations through an orientation and review of policy and code of conduct with Club staff, and should receive and acknowledge materials about the policy. If members above a certain age to come and go at will, parents should be aware of it and should sign a waiver giving such permission to the Club. The

orientation should also be in writing, provided to parents, who should acknowledge in writing that they have received and understood the materials.

Members should be instructed about:

- safe participation in Club activities;
- precautions concerning any hazardous conditions or situations;
- resistance and personal safety training to help members identify potentially threatening situations, and avoid or resist drugs, alcohol, sexual relations and violence;
- general emergency and drills to learn to remain calm and follow directions during an actual emergency; and
- Internet safety program before using Club computers to access the Internet.

### **Member Mobile & Electronic Device Policy**

The use of cell phones by Club Members at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbia (BGCC) provides a unique opportunity to add value to the daily experience within our clubs. The BGCC recognizes electronic devices such as smart phones, tablets, laptops, iPads, and other similar computing devices; portable music and entertainment system such as iPods, MP3 players if properly utilized, can serve as both a valuable learning tool as well as a critical communication mechanism in the event of an emergency. Members will be able to carry their cell phone at the Club if their family agrees to the following:

#### ***Acceptable Use:***

- Use their device in a way that is consistent with staff instructions and expectations during those designated times
- Allow club professionals to monitor the use of members devices during those designated times, seek permission from Club professionals to take any photo, audio or video, recordings during any designated Club program or activity
- Assist Club staff in sharing pertinent information regarding their safety and location in the event of an emergency at the Club

#### ***Unacceptable Use:***

- Absolutely NO photo, audio, or video recording will be permitted without staff supervision
- Members will not be permitted to engage in any type of cyber-harassment or cyber-bullying

### **Standard Practices for Child Safety**

(Safety/Facility Committee) must ensure it is aware of current laws, codes, and ordinances affecting:

- child care regulations;
- safety and building codes; and

- the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which is locally interpreted

### **1:1 Contact Prohibition**

All Boys & Girls Clubs must prohibit one on one interaction between youth and staff and volunteers, including board members. Exceptions may only be made when delivering medical or counseling services by a licensed, trained therapist or similar professional.

The Boys & Girls Club of Columbia is committed to providing a safe environment for members, staff, and volunteers. To further ensure their safety, the Organization prohibits all one-on-one interactions between youth and staff and volunteers, including board members.

#### **Staff\*\* shall NOT**

Initiate one-on-one contact with a member.

Have a private meeting or communication with a member. This includes in-person meetings and virtual communications such as texting, video chat, and social media.

Transport one member at a time. This includes personal and private vehicles.

#### **Staff\*\* shall**

Ensure meetings and communications (in-person and virtual) between members and staff and volunteers include at least three individuals.

Ensure in-person meetings take place in areas where other staff and/or members are present.

Communicate to another staff if an emergency situation arises.

Exceptions may only be made when delivering medical or counseling services by a licensed, trained therapist, or similar professional or in an emergency situation. All exceptions shall be documented and provided to Club leadership. Staff shall immediately inform Club leadership if a staff member, volunteer, or board member violates this policy.

Should any adult staff, volunteer, or board member violate this policy, the Organization will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The following guidance and definitions are applied to policies and procedures:

#### **I. What exactly is one-on-one contact?**

a. One-on-one contact is defined as any **private** contact or communication (including electronic communication) between a member under the age of 18 and an adult, including staff, volunteers, board members, and others that may come in contact with members during regular programming and activities.

i. **What is private contact/communication?** Private contact is any communication, in-person or virtual, that is between one youth member and one adult that takes place in a secluded area, is not in plain sight, and/or is done without knowledge of others. Private places can include, but are not limited to vehicles, rooms without visibility to others, private homes, hotel rooms, etc. Examples of private contact include, but are not limited to:

1. Meeting behind closed doors (in rooms without windows or visible sightlines) or any spaces that are not visible to others.

2. One staff member transporting one member in a vehicle.

3. Electronic communications (text, video, social media, etc.) between one member and one adult.

ii. **What is public contact/communication?** Public contact is any communication or meeting, in-person or virtual, that is between at least three individuals, including two staff and one member, one staff and 2 members, and variations of this combination. Examples of public contact include, but are not limited to:

1. Meeting in plain sight of others (i.e. in a quiet corner of an active games room)
2. Transporting members via public transportation (bus, taxis, train, air, etc.) or transporting multiple members.
3. Electronic communications (text, video, social media, etc.) between multiple members and adults (i.e. group chats).
4. Public places can include, but are not limited to buses, airports, shopping malls, restaurants, schools, etc.

## II. How will this policy affect mentoring programs?

a. Mentorship is a key component of Boys & Girls Club programming and has tremendous impact on members. Prohibition of one-on-one contact does not have to negatively impact mentor programs and/or relationship building. Mentors are encouraged to adjust their practices to include:

- i. Holding mentor and coaching sessions in areas where other staff and/or members are present or can see you. For example, in large rooms where meetings are visible but not heard.
- ii. Copying parents, staff, or other members (when appropriate) on written and/or electronic communications.
- iii. Scheduling meetings during Club hours and at the Club site.
- iv. Documenting interactions between mentors and youth.

## VI. Are there exceptions to this policy?

a. Exceptions can be made when delivering medical or counseling services by a licensed, trained therapist or similar professional (i.e., counselors, social workers).

b. Exceptions can be made when the emotional or physical safety of a member is at risk and a private, one-on-one communication is deemed necessary by Club leadership. All instances of exceptions should be communicated with Club leadership and documented. If medical care is given, Clubs should reference HIPAA for state-specific guidance.

c. In emergency situations, which could create a safety risk, exceptions can be made, i.e., if a member is not picked up by a parent and leaving them alone at the Club could be a safety risk.

d. Should exceptions need to be made, the Club shall have policies in place to monitor interactions, including, but not limited to:

- i. Disclosing the meeting to Club leadership and regularly checking-in with the member and adult during conversations.
- ii. Placing time limits on conversations.
- iii. Meeting in rooms with clear sight lines (i.e. rooms with windows, glass doors).
- iv. Documenting the interaction.
- v. Disclosing the emergency situation to another staff member.