

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



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF GREATER HOUSTON



**Parent & Membership Orientation Guide**

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## **1. ABOUT THE CLUB**

### **A. *Mission Statement***

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston is to inspire and enable all youth, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

### **B. *What is the Boys & Girls Club?***

The Boys & Girls Club:

- Provides year-round programs for youth ages 7 to 17
- Has full-time professional leadership, supplemented by support staff and volunteers
- Requires no proof of good character
- Ensures that all boys and girls can afford to belong to a Club
- Is for youth of all religions and ethnicities
- Is non-sectarian
- Has an open door policy
- Has varied and diversified programming
- Is guidance-oriented

### **C. *Statement of Policy***

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston makes no discrimination in admissions or determination of enrollment on the bases of ethnicity, sex, religion, creed, national origin, sexual preference or any other protected group.

### **D. *Boys & Girls Clubs of America and United Way Affiliations***

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston is a private, non-profit organization affiliated with Boys & Girls Clubs of America and a United Way member agency.

## **2. MEMBERSHIP / REGISTRATION**

### **A. *How to Register***

- A parent or guardian must fill out a membership application.
- Pay a \$5.00 registration fee. Membership is valid from date of enrollment through December 31. The summer registration fee is \$15.00.
- Parents must provide the child's original birth certificate if the child is seven years of age or 17 years of age. Membership coordinators will make a copy of the birth certificate and return the original to parents.

### **B. *Who Can Join?***

Any youth aged 7-17 may join the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston. The organization does not discriminate based on ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, economic status or any other protected group.

### **C. *Refund / Transfer Policy***

Registration fees for the school year and summer are **non-refundable**.

Memberships are transferable from one Club to another Club; however, members will be required to complete a new membership application at the new Club.

**D. *Membership Cards & Replacement Cards***

- Each child will receive a membership card that must be shown to check into his/her Club.
- If your child loses his/her card, you may purchase a new one for \$1.00.

**E. *Attendance Policy***

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston is an after-school youth development program that supports the educational goals of each school system. Therefore, members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston who have been suspended from school are not allowed to attend the Club until the terms of the suspension have been met.

**3. TRANSPORTATION**

***After-School Pick-Up Rules:***

- After-school pick-up is available at selected schools. Please check with the Club Director for details.
- An after-school pick-up application must be completed. Please retrieve the appropriate form from the Club Director.
- The Club's Rules & Regulations apply while riding in the bus.
- The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston reserves the right to remove a member from the bus service for any of the following reasons:
  - Ongoing behavior problems (violations of the Code of Conduct) while riding on the bus;
  - Continuous failure to arrive at the designated pick-up location on time.

In the event a member is removed from the pick-up service, the parent will be given written notice so that alternate transportation arrangements can be made.

**4. OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston is a drop-in facility and has an open door policy that states:

- Members are not required to attend their Club everyday.
- Members are advised to stay on Club premises; however, **we cannot legally require a member to stay at their Club.**
- Boys & Girls Club is **NOT** a day care center, **NOT** a licensed facility and **NOT** responsible for the time or manner in which your child may arrive at or leave the Club. The Club is a drop-in program with an open door policy. The children are free to come and go as they choose. Please contact the Club Director if you have any questions.

**5. PICK-UP POLICY**

**A. *Parent Pick-Up:***

A parent or guardian must come into the building to pick up their member(s). If a member is not picked up by one hour after closing, the local Police Department may be notified.

**B. *Late Pick-Up:* Please see the attached Parent or Guardian Late Policy Form that must be filled out upon registration.**

## **6. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

Clubs will follow the Inclement Weather Policy for the local school district.

## **7. MEDICAL/INJURY**

No child will be allowed to remain at the Club if he or she is ill, has been ill and not fully recovered, or if there is a reasonable assumption that he or she is ill. Parents should use the utmost discretion when considering whether or not to send their child to the Club.

## **8. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **A. Code of Conduct**

1. Each member must bring his or her own Membership Card to the Club every day. Replacement cards are \$1.00. Anyone caught borrowing another member's card or lending their card will be suspended from the Club.
2. For your safety, running is not allowed anywhere in the Club except the in the gym.
3. Suggestive garments or inappropriate attire is prohibited. Any member determined to be dressed inappropriately will be asked to cover up or go home to change.
4. Jewelry, t-shirts, hats or caps with drug/alcohol or gang related emblems are prohibited.
5. Tattoos must be covered at all times.
6. Shirts must be worn at all times. Pants/shorts must be worn on the hip, not sagging around the buttocks. Shorts must be longer than the middle finger when standing with hands to the side. No open toed shoes (such as sandals or flip flops), slippers or sneakers with wheels are allowed.
7. No du-rags, stocking caps, rat-tail combs, metal picks or rakes are allowed.
8. No visible body piercing are allowed, earrings are acceptable on females only. No jewelry can be worn in the gym area when playing a team sport.
9. Cellular phones, beepers, CDs, MP3 players, I-pads, e-readers, or any other electronic items/games from home cannot be used inside the Club. We recommend that they are not brought at all because we cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen items.
10. Inappropriate display of affection will not be tolerated. (i.e. kissing, hugging, holding hands, etc.)

The following actions are prohibited and will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including revocation of membership:

11. Violence against another member or Club staff.
12. Cursing, use of racial slurs, name-calling, bullying, cyber-bullying or any other use of bad language
13. Possession of drugs, alcohol, guns, knives or any other weapons.
14. Display of gang paraphernalia, signs or any action showing affiliation or activity
15. Persons caught stealing will be subject to suspension and/or prosecution. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
16. Aggressive action or group demonstration that is disruptive and interferes with Club activities.

## **B. Discipline Policy**

### Minor Offenses:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense\*: Verbal warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense\*: Time out (can be in or out of program area depending on how disruptive the behavior is)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense\*: Write-up and sent to Club Director

\* Within one program period or one day.

- Parents will be notified of all write-ups.
- Three write-ups of minor offenses will result in suspension.
- Examples of consequences for minor offenses include, but not limited to:
  - Clean-up duty
  - Exclusion from a particular program area
  - Exclusion from field trips or other special activities
  - Essays or other writing assignments
  - Out-of-Club suspension

### Major Offenses:

- All major offenses can constitute an automatic suspension without warning.
- Major offenses are:
  - Fighting
  - Disrespecting Staff Members
  - Inappropriate Language (cursing, name-calling or other offensive or explicit language)
  - Stealing
  - Vandalism / Destruction of Property
  - Inappropriate Touching / Inappropriate Sexual Behavior
  - Gang Activity
  - Bullying and Cyber-Bullying

NOTE: This is only a guideline. Actual consequences are determined on a case-by-case basis and are at the discretion of the Club Director. The length of a suspension is determined by the severity of the offense and the number of previous offenses. In general, suspensions are 1-5 days; however, repeated offenses can result in an indefinite expulsion from the Club. Only Club Directors can suspend a member.

## **9. FIELD TRIP POLICY**

Before any Club member participates in a field trip, he or she must have a signed permission slip that gives parental consent.

## **10. PERSONAL ITEMS**

- Members are responsible for personal items. Please label all belongings to increase the potential of lost items being returned.
- No cell phones, electronic devices, toys, radios, trading cards, etc. The Club is not responsible for these items and will not provide reimbursement.

## **11. TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES**

### **A. Club Members**

Club members are responsible for appropriate behavior on the Club's computer network just as they are in other client facilities. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General Club rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with Club standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The Club members are advised never to access, keep or send anything that they would not want their parents or staff to see.

### **B. The Rules**

Privacy – The Technology Center Directors may review communications to maintain system integrity and will ensure that Club members are using they system responsibly.

Storage Capacity – Users are expected to remain within allocated disk space and delete e-mail or other material, which take up excessive storage space.

Illegal Copying – Club members should never download or install commercial software, shareware or freeware onto network drives or disks, unless they have written permission from the Technology Center Director. Club members should neither copy others' work nor intrude their files.

Inappropriate Materials of Language – Profane, abusive or impolite language should not be used to communicate nor should materials be accessed that are not in line with the rules of Club behavior. A good rule to follow is never to view, send or access materials that you would not want your Club staff or your parents to see. If members encounter such material by accident, they should report it to the Technology Center Director immediately.

### **C. Guidelines**

1. Do not share your password with another person.
2. Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work.
3. Do not damage the computer or network in any way.
4. Do not interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software, shareware or freeware.
5. Do not violate copyright laws.
6. Do not view, send or display offensive messages or pictures.
7. Do not waste limited resources such as disk space or printing capacity.
8. Do not trespass in another's folders, work or files.
9. Notify the Technology Center Director immediately if, by accident, you encounter materials that violate the rules.
10. Be prepared to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privilege if the rules are violated.

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OF GREATER HOUSTON

## PARENT / GUARDIAN LATE POLICY

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston is honored to provide services for your child. However, we are not a daycare center and abide by our open door policy that allows the children the freedom to come and go as they please. When our clubs close\*\*, we do not allow children to loiter outside of our facilities. Therefore, if you are picking up your child and are late, the following actions will be taken:

- 1) A written warning will be given on the 1<sup>st</sup> infraction.
- 2) On the 2<sup>nd</sup> infraction the child will be suspended from the program for 3 program days.
- 3) On the 3<sup>rd</sup> infraction the child will be suspended for a week or 5 program days.
- 4) The 4<sup>th</sup> infraction will result in the child being removed from the program for the remainder of the year.

In the case of an emergency, please contact your club immediately.

If a child is not picked up within one hour of the stated closing time (regardless of which infraction number), Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston staff have been instructed to call Children's Protective Services and have the child placed in a shelter. If a child continues to be past the closing hour\*\*, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston reserves the right to terminate enrollment in the programs.

**\*\* Fall/Spring Hours of Operation:**

Monday – Thursday: after school – 8:00 p.m.

Friday: after school – 7:00p.m.

**\*\* Summer Hours of Operation:**

Monday-Friday: 9:00a.m. – 5:30p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Club Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff's Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Club Director's Signature