

Thank you for taking the time to learn what Boys & Girls Club of Washington County (a.k.a., the Club) is all about. We believe that all members and their parents or guardians can benefit from the information in this handbook. If there is anything else we can help you with, please let us know.

Our Mission

Inspire all of Washington County's young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

Core Beliefs

Boys & Girls Club provide youth with...

- A safe place to learn and grow
- Ongoing relationships with caring, adult professionals
- Life-enhancing programs
- Character development experiences
- Hope and opportunity

Membership

Membership is open to all youth between the ages of 6 (and in first grade) to 18. A birth certificate may be required for 6 year old members. A membership application form must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian each calendar year (even if you are simply renewing your membership).

Our membership fee is \$50 for one full year. An additional program fee is assessed for our summer program to help cover the cost of field trips, transportation and special programs. Summer registration begins in March/April. Additional fees may be charged for certain field trips. However, our goal is to always keep costs associated Club membership as low as possible so as to not exclude anyone based on economic circumstances.

The information you provide on the membership application is critical. We ask that every effort be made to provide contact information that is both current as well as accurate. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to notify us of any changes to your phone number (cell, home, work, emergency contacts, etc.) and/or address information as soon as such changes occur.

Membership in Boys & Girls Club of Washington County is a privilege, not a right. The Club reserves the right to refuse membership to any child at any time, with or without cause.

Membership fees are non-refundable.



Club Location & Contact Information

Boys & Girls Club of Washington County (Main Unit)
1710 E Tom Green St, Brenham, Texas 77833
(979) 277-9383

Burton Unit – at Burton ISD campus
12504 W Cedar St, Burton, Texas 77835

Club Hours

The Club is open for after-school programming Monday – Friday, 3:00 – 7:00 p.m.

The Club will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on most days when school is not in session (i.e., Spring Break, Summer Program). The exceptions to this are Club-recognized holidays on which the Club will be closed. These include New Years' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

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 or guardians will be notified in advance. Additionally, there may be times when it is necessary to close the Club due to unforeseen circumstances such as emergency repairs, inclement weather, etc. Again, when such instances arise, we will do our best to post this information so as to mitigate any inconvenience this may cause.

Transportation

Transportation from Brenham ISD's elementary and high school campuses is provided by Durham Bus Services. You must register your child with Durham Bus Services to ride the Boys & Girls Club bus. To register, call (979) 277-0090.

Member Pick Up

Parents or guardians are required to come into the building to pick up their child. This gives staff an opportunity to communicate any issues as well as to get to know the families of the children we serve.

Please be sure to pick up your child by the posted closing times. Boys & Girls Club reserves the right to contact the appropriate authorities for assistance when members are not picked up by a reasonable time AND after all emergency contact alternatives have been exhausted. **If a child is not picked up by closing time, the following consequences will apply: 1st late pick up = a written warning, 2nd late pick up = 3-day suspension, 3rd late pick up = 5-day suspension, repeated late pick ups = possible expulsion (at the discretion of the Executive Director).**

Open Campus Policy

Boys & Girls Club of Washington County is an **OPEN CAMPUS**. This policy allows members to come and go at any time during the Club's operating hours. However, if a member chooses to leave, they may not return to the Club the same day unless they left with a parent or guardian or for a Club-approved reason.

Staff members, under normal circumstances, are not allowed to prohibit a member from leaving the facility per the regulations of the Texas Department of Protective & Regulatory Services governing facilities/programs exempt from licensure as child care facilities. Thus, it is the responsibility of the child AND the parent or guardian to determine, understand and enforce whatever arrival and departure methods they see fit.

Please note that youth are not allowed on the Club's grounds during operating hours unless they are signed in and participating in Club activities. Members should NOT be dropped off prior to the opening of our facility, as the Club cannot be held responsible for the supervision of such youth.

It is important to remember that Boys & Girls Club of Washington County is NOT A DAYCARE and is not governed by licensure as a childcare facility.

Member ID Badges

All members will be given a photo ID badge and lanyard. This badge is required for entry into the Club and to participate in all activities and field trips. We use the badges to assist with identification of each member and to maintain accurate attendance records.

Lost badges will be replaced once for free. If lost again, please see the front desk for replacement costs.

Visitors

All visitors (including parents or guardians of current members) will be asked to sign in at the front desk and receive a name tag if proceeding into the Club past the front desk for any reason.

Supervision

Our staff are trained Youth Development Professionals. Trained volunteers often support our staff. A staff member and/or trained volunteer will oversee each of our designated program areas. Please take the time to remind your child of the need to follow Club rules and directions AT ALL TIMES whether said directions are given by a staff member or a volunteer.

Member Code of Conduct

One of the Club's core beliefs is to provide a safe place to learn and grow. Positive attitudes keep the Club fun. Below are some simple guidelines members are expected to follow...

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| Respect yourself. | Play fairly and be honest. |
| Applaud the efforts of others. | Avoid inappropriate language. |
| Dress appropriately at all times. | Running is reserved for athletics. |
| Say only good things about others. | Bring your membership card everyday. |
| Be respectful of Boys & Girls Club staff. | Resolve disagreements in a positive way. |
| Listen during appropriate times and assemblies. | Be respectful of other members and their property. |
| Participate only in program areas open to your assigned group. | Take care of your Boys & Girls Club facility, grounds, and equipment. |

ABSOLUTELY NO DRUGS, ALCOHOL OR MEDICINE MAY BE BROUGHT ON TO CLUB GROUNDS.

Parent or Guardian Code of Conduct

Parents or Guardians are expected to:

- Understand the policies of the Club
- Be positive role models by showing respect and courtesy to other members and staff
- Demand that their child treat other members, volunteers and staff with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability
- Refrain from ridiculing or yelling while at the Club
- Respect staff by addressing concerns privately at an agreed upon time and place

Parents or Guardians are expected to communicate with members, volunteers and staff in a positive manner. All communication, concerns and interactions should pertain to the parent or guardian's child and no other member. Any parent or guardian who engages in disorderly or improper conduct of any kind, such as use of speech or language that is offensive and/or inappropriate; physical and/or verbal abuse or threat to any staff/volunteer/member will be subject to removal and possible exclusion from the facility (at the discretion of the Executive Director).

Dress Code

Youth should dress comfortably and wear clothes that allow them to participate in typical Boys & Girls Club activities and programs. We will expect the following...

Footwear: Shoes and socks must be worn at all times. Flip-flops, sandals and cleats are discouraged, as are any other open-toed shoes for safety reasons. Club members may not be allowed to participate in certain activities if open-toed shoes are worn. The best advice is to wear tennis/walking shoes every day.

Clothing: Inappropriate clothing of any kind is NOT allowed in the Club. Members wearing clothes that are too short, too tight or too revealing, or clothes with questionable or distasteful advertising, will be asked to change or leave immediately. This judgment will be left solely to the discretion of the Club staff. No "sagging" pants are allowed. No visible tattoos or body piercing is allowed. Girls may wear earrings that are a size that is safe and appropriate for Club activities.

Field Trips

Boys & Girls Club provides a variety of opportunities for our members to participate in activities off Club property that support our core beliefs and programs. Each excursion requires a parent or guardian to sign their child up to attend. The signed membership application grants permission to Boys & Girls Club to transport your child on field trips. Most sign-ups are taken on a first-come, first-served basis (meaning eligible members signed up to participate by a parent or guardian). Members and parents and guardians are reminded that all of our Club rules extend to field trips. Members who fail to follow our rules and general Club expectations for appropriate behavior will prompt an immediate call to a parent or guardian to remove that member from the field trip at their own cost. *A parent or guardian MUST be available by telephone at all times during any Club sponsored field trip in the event that the staff needs to contact you.*

Discipline Policy

Boys & Girls Club 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. Parents or guardians will be called to remove any member who has failed to curb his or her disruptive behavior and/or is behaving in an aggressive or violent manor that creates a dangerous situation for themselves, fellow members, staff or visitors.

Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Verbal Counseling
- Time-out
- Suspension from Program Area
- Loss of Club Privileges (I.C.S. = In Club Suspension)
- Suspension (one day to two weeks)
- Indefinite suspension (until the situation can be resolved or the parent or guardian is consulted)
- Expulsion (i.e., permanent suspension)
- Contacting the proper authorities

When a member is suspended it is his or her responsibility to let you (the parent or guardian) know. A phone call may be made to you if time allows. Please understand that it is very difficult for the staff to interrupt programming to call you and speak at great length about behavior that has already occurred and led to your child's suspension. We will, however, complete a written suspension report that we will give to you, when you pick up your child. In some cases, a suspension report will be mailed to you if the situation dictates such a need.

** Please note that any time a law is broken in or around Boys & Girls Club of Washington County or it is suspected that a Club member or guest has broken the law and fled to the Club to avoid the authorities, the police will be notified immediately. The Club is NOT a haven or refuge for those committing illegal acts or fleeing the authorities.*

Discipline Policy continued

Members are expected to respond to discipline without incident. Failure to do so will almost always increase any action taken in time or severity. Staff members are trained and fully expected, by policy, to maintain full control of any situation that occurs in their program area and will NOT tolerate anything that threatens that control, in appearance and/or manner. Also, please understand that sometimes the story that gets home is not always complete or accurate. Children sometimes tend to explain an incident in a manner that will not implicate them or cast blame their way. In addition, staff members, though well trained and experienced, are human, so please call the Club if you have any questions at all concerning disciplinary measures or any other Club activity. Your support and involvement as the parent or guardian is vital to our success as youth development professionals.

Bullying Policy

Boys & Girls Club of Washington County prohibits bullying as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint is a violation of BGCWC policy.

Bullying occurs when a student or a group of Club members engages in written or verbal expression or physical conduct that:

1. Will have the effect of physically harming a Club member, damaging a Club member's property, or placing a member in reasonable fear of harm to the Club member's person or damage to the Club member's property; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the action or threat creates an intimidation, threatening, or abusive Club environment for a Club member.

Examples of bullying may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading or ostracism.

If bullying occurs, the Club will take appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with its Discipline Policy.

Phone Calls

Our phones are for Club business only. Members should use phones or receive calls in emergencies only. Our lines need to remain open in the event of an emergency. Please make any necessary arrangements before your child comes to the Club so that you do not have to call the Club and your child does not have to call you.

Cell phones are not allowed to be used while in the Club. Permission must be obtained from staff for members to utilize their personal cell phones.

Personal Belongings

All personal belongings brought into the Club by a youth are the responsibility of that youth. Boys & Girls Club of Washington County is NOT responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items. Please discourage your child from bringing anything to the Club that is not completely necessary, especially money. Necessary items, such as backpacks and jackets should be clearly marked with the member's name. The Boys & Girls Club of Washington County reserves the right to search any personal items for any reason.

Items that are not collected from our lost-and-found in a timely fashion will be donated to a local charity.

Complaint/Grievance Procedures for Parents or Guardians

Boys & Girls Club of Washington County strives to have the best possible environment for its members and realizes there will be times when members or their parents or guardians have complaints. It is our desire to address all complaints quickly and fairly. When such situations arise, parents are encouraged to make a formal complaint or grievance and should do so through the following steps:

1. Fill out a Complaint Report form.
2. Give the form to the Director of Operations & Programs and discuss and resolve the issue at hand.
3. If you are not satisfied with the initial discussion/resolution then call the Executive Director's Office at 979-277-9383.
4. After exhausting all avenues of resolution and you are not satisfied with the way your complaint has been handled, you will be given an opportunity to submit a written complaint and it will be made available to the Board President. The Board President will review the complaint and take the necessary steps to resolve the issue.

Medication

Boys & Girls Club of Washington County is **NOT** allowed, by policy, to dispense, store and/or oversee medication of any kind, including all non-prescription medications. If it is necessary for a child to take prescribed medication, a release form **MUST** be signed by the parent or guardian before such medicine can be dispensed.

Accidents

The Boys & Girls Club of Washington County strives to maintain a safe and secure environment. There is an assumed risk in many of our core programs, including, but not limited to sports. Please feel safe in knowing that our trained staff are attentive to providing the safest environment possible. The completed membership application authorizes the Club staff to seek medical treatment for a member, if necessary, and that any associated costs for such care are the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

The Boys & Girls Club does NOT provide medical insurance for members. In the event of a serious injury the staff will call 911 immediately and then call the parent or guardian or alternative emergency contacts. This is one more reason why updated contact information is your responsibility and crucial to your child's wellbeing.

Infestation or Contagious Conditions

Any and all suspected transferable infestations or transmittable contagious conditions will be addressed fully in the following manner and without exception.

1. Parents will be contacted for immediate removal of the member from Club facilities.
2. Proof of treatment from a health care facility is required before the child will be allowed back into the Club.

Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of the Club experience. We welcome volunteers who wish to share their time and/or talents. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer, please stop by the Club to pick-up a volunteer application. Background checks are required of all volunteers prior to being able to work with our members.

Programming

Boys & Girls Club of Washington County expects to be the best youth development organization in Washington County. Our staff are trained youth development professionals who are hired for their engaging, energetic and enthusiastic skills. We want our members to come to the Club each day attracted by the programs and the staff who lead them.

Programs at the Boys & Girls Club fall under five core areas – Character & Leadership Development, Education & Career Development, Health & Life Skills, The Arts, and Sports, Fitness & Recreation.

Contacting Us

Please do not hesitate to speak to the Director of Operations & Programs whenever you have a question or a concern. We hope you will always start by contacting the staff when issues arise; after all, they are the ones who know your child the best. If the need arises, however, and you feel that an issue or complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at the staff level, please know that parents or guardians may always contact the Executive Director of the organization. The telephone number is 979-277-9383.

Thank You for joining!

GREAT FUTURES START HERE.

