



## Boys & Girls Club of Greater Billerica 50+ Years



PARENT HANDBOOK / 2024-2025

On behalf of the Staff and Board of Directors of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Billerica, we welcome you to our Club.

The philosophy of our program is to provide a professionally supervised environment for our members to grow physically, socially, and emotionally through a wide variety of planned activities and experiences.

The goals of these programs are to provide opportunities for:

- self-expression
- personal growth
- participation in physical activities and learning experiences
- academic support
- developing life skills, self-confidence and sense of belonging
- character and leadership development

We provide a safe haven filled with hope and opportunity, ongoing relationships with caring adults, and life-enhancing programs.

Our Club culture is created by staff, members, and parents/guardians. The following Club Community Values reflect the importance of RESPECT to create a positive, safe Club culture:

RESPECT – Yourself and Each Other

RESPECT – Staff and Visitors

RESPECT – The Club and Property

This handbook provides information about our programs, expectations and opportunities. If you have further questions, please contact the Club by email or phone, or stop by anytime. We hope you will become involved at the Club and look forward to making the Club experience as enriching as possible for your family!

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## 2024–2025 CLUB SCHEDULES

	Ages	Hours	Notes
Drop-In Program Hours	10-12	Mon. to Fri. 2–6 p.m.	Club hours are adjusted on Billerica Public School half days/early releases.
	10–18	Mon. to Fri. 6-7:30 p.m. if enrolled in an evening program	
Teen Center	13-18	Mon. to Fri. 2–7:30 p.m.	
Fun Club	5-12	<i>School dismissal</i> - 6 p.m.	
School Vacation Hours	5–12	8 a.m.– 4 p.m.	
Summer Camp Hours	8–13 (Grades 2-8)	9 a.m.– 4 p.m.	See annual calendar for dates on final page.
	<i>Extended hours available for Camp from 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. at an additional cost.</i>		
Club Hours	Monday - Thursday: 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.  Friday: 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.  Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.		Please use the front entrance across from the skatepark to enter the facility.

MAIN OFFICE:  
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Billerica  
19 Campbell Road  
Billerica, MA 01821

978-667-2193

Below are direct phone lines for each department:

Makerspace	105
Athletics	111
Front Desk	0
Education	112
Teen Center	117
Games Room	107
Aquatics	109
Childcare Billing/Enrollment	103
Childcare Director	104
Chief Financial Officer	102
Chief Executive Officer	110

**Chief Executive Officer**

Meg Gambale, [mgambale@billericabgc.com](mailto:mgambale@billericabgc.com)

**Unit Director**

Dickie Ackroyd, [Rackroyd@billericabgc.com](mailto:Rackroyd@billericabgc.com)

**Teen Director**

Vanessa Dichiara, [Vanessa@billericabgc.com](mailto:Vanessa@billericabgc.com)

**Steam and Makerspace Director**

Bobby Ackroyd, [Bobby@billericabgcc.com](mailto:Bobby@billericabgcc.com)

**Front Desk & Meal Supervisor**

Melissa Alexander, [MAlexander@billericabgc.com](mailto:MAlexander@billericabgc.com)

**Athletic Director**, Tim Davidian, [Tdavidian@billericabgc.com](mailto:Tdavidian@billericabgc.com)

**Aquatics Director**, Nikita Kirik, [Nkirik@billericabgc.com](mailto:Nkirik@billericabgc.com)

**Chief Financial Officer**, David Bruce, [Dbruce@billericabgc.com](mailto:Dbruce@billericabgc.com)

**Childcare Director**, Danielle Barbrie, [Dbarbrie@billericabgc.com](mailto:Dbarbrie@billericabgc.com)

**Director of Billing and Enrollment**, Kelly Lawler, [klawler@billericabgc.com](mailto:klawler@billericabgc.com)



## BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The Behavioral Management System for the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Billerica provides the support necessary to help members to be successful. All Club staff are trained in positive discipline, proactive approaches to youth development and effective interventions. The behavior management system is aimed at helping members have fun, be successful, feel engaged, build strong relationships with staff and peers, feel safe and feel like they belong in the Club.

A child's membership is based on his/her behavior as well as the behavior of the parent/guardian. Members and their families are expected to adhere to all rules, policies, and expectations set by the Club. When a member violates a policy, efforts will be made to work with the member and their family to rectify the behavior and have the experience be a learning opportunity for the member. However, if a child's behavior or other family representative's behavior endangers the overall safety, security of the Club, staff or other members, the child's membership may be revoked. A member's behavior outside of the Club or in school may also influence membership status.

As much as we would like to serve everyone, there are some youth for whom BGCGB is not an appropriate fit. Club leadership will assess whether the Club has the appropriate staff expertise and resources to provide a safe, fun and inclusive environment for each member.



## RULES & EXPECTATIONS

At the Club, we want all members to have fun, be safe, feel included, and be successful. In order for this to occur, members must remember to respect themselves, fellow Club members, our staff, property and visitors. Below are the rules and expectations that members must follow in order to help us maintain a positive Club culture.

Parents/Guardians: You can help us by reinforcing these messages at home.

**Be a positive Club member:** Be kind, encourage others, listen to others, follow staff directions and have fun!

**Be respectful:** Use positive and respectful language; keep your hands, feet, and property to yourself. Taking pictures and video is only allowed under the direct supervision of staff. Pictures or videos are strictly forbidden from being taken in bathrooms or locker rooms.

**Be responsible:** All members are expected to clean up after themselves and help keep the Club clean.

**Participate in activities:** Try your best and support others in all activities. Members are strongly encouraged to spend time daily in the education spaces.

**Dress appropriately:** Clothing promoting drugs, sex, innuendos, and/or violence are not allowed in the Club.

**Keep the Club safe:** No fighting, inappropriate physical contact, stealing, inappropriate sexual conduct, possession of weapons, drugs, alcohol, or associated equipment (lighters, rolling paper, etc.) The Club is a drug free and smoke free environment.

**There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying,** teasing, taunting, picking on or ganging up on others physically, verbally or by electronic/video means. This behavior will not be tolerated and may result in time off or permanent removal from the Club. (Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.)

**Stay in supervised areas ONLY and with assigned group.** Follow the specific expectations in each program area.

**Keep all valuables and personal property** at home. *The Club is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.* If something is found it MUST be turned in to the front desk or an adult staff. Keeping found items will be considered stealing.

## PROCEDURES & POLICIES

## **Orientation Period**

To ensure the Club is able to provide adequate support, all new Drop in and Fun Club memberships begin with a 3-month Orientation Period. The Orientation Period is designed to provide time for your child to get to know our Club, and for our staff to get to know your child. If you or the Club leadership determine we're unable to provide the level of support needed to ensure your child's success at the Club, we will refund the Club membership fee, and provide a list of resources outside our Club network. During the Orientation Period, we plan to be in touch with you to share how your child is doing, and we'd love to hear feedback from you as well, based on your understanding of your child's experience.

## **Membership Agreement**

A child's membership is based on their behavior as well as the behavior of the parent/guardian. In receiving this handbook, their parent agrees to the following:

I understand that members and their families are expected to adhere to all rules, policies, and regulations set by the Club.

I further understand that if my child's behavior or other family representative's behavior endangers the overall safety, security, and supervision of themselves and/or others, that they may be dismissed from the Club upon review by staff and the directors."

## **Arrival**

Please follow the Club's Hours of Operation. Doors will open at 2 PM on school days and other hours as noted previously.

- When dropped off by the bus or family, members must come directly into the Club and use their card to sign into the building.

## **Dismissal**

Parents and guardians can pick up their children any time by visiting the front desk. The Front Desk Staff will contact the program area your child is in and will have their sent to the front desk. To ensure everyone's safety, we require that parents stay in the lobby until their child arrives. Also, if a child is being picked up by someone other than a guardian, the parent must notify the Club in advance and that person will be asked for their photo ID and a copy will be kept on site.

Members of the Drop-In Program can arrive or depart the Club at any time during operating hours. However, we discourage members from leaving before the end of the program day so that they fully benefit from all that is offered. Those picking up a child must wait in the lobby while the child is dismissed from the program area. A photo ID may be required for unrecognized adults dismissing a child under 12. *Please note: members who choose to leave the building will not be granted re-entry for the rest of the program day.*

Please discuss a dismissal plan with your child.

*The Drop-In after-school program is not licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care or any other state agency.*

Fun Club programs are licensed by EEC and adhere to a more structured dismissal policy. Please see Fun Club Check-Out Procedure in the Fun Club Parent Handbook.

## **Late Pick-up Policy**



Club members ages 12 and under must be picked up promptly by 6 p.m. unless registered for an Evening Program or other Club sponsored event. If a Club member is registered for a Night Program, he/she must be picked up promptly at the end of the program in order to avoid any associated fees.

- During the summer, pick up is at 4:30 p.m. unless they are registered for extended Camp hours.
- During vacation days or no school days, members must be picked up by 4 p.m.
- Families will be charged \$1 per minute after a ten-minute courtesy period for a late pick up. In addition, certain fees or loss of Club membership may occur as a result of continuous late pick up.

### **Lost & Found**

Lost items will be kept in the lobby until the end of each month, at which time all items will be donated to charity.

### **Snow Policy**

The Club will follow Billerica Public Schools in determining when the facility will be closed. If the Club is going to close early due to weather, the staff will contact all families of members who were supposed to stay to ensure that they are dismissed safely. Facebook and Email contact will be implemented to notify families of closings and schedule modifications.

### **Meal Program**

The Club partners with the Child and Adult Care Food Program, CACFP, and the Billerica Public Schools to offer daily meals every day. CACFP is a federal program that provided financial support for us to be able to provide nutritious meals. This is open to all members, ages 10-18, at no cost.

If members chose to bring their own food, they will be asked not share it. We have many Club members with different allergies and require that all peanut and tree nut products be left at home. If members have items containing peanuts or tree nuts, we will ask them to put their snack away and offer them an alternative snack.

### **Cell Phone Policy**

The use of cell phones at the Club will be restricted during specific program time and for different age groups. Phones should not be used to take any pictures at the Club or on Club related trips unless with permission and supervision of staff. Phones should not be brought in the locker rooms or bathrooms. Posting pictures, videos or information about the Club, other members or staff on social media is not allowed. If a member is caught violating this policy, there will be consequences, up to and including, time off from the Club or termination of membership. We ask that parents help reinforce this policy with their children.

### **Valuables at Club**

We encourage members to keep all valuables at home. The Club is not responsible for items that are lost, stolen or damaged.

### **Security Cameras**

We have security cameras in public areas in the exterior and interior of the Club to enhance Club safety and security. Access to recordings is limited to Club Leadership and Law enforcement when requested and approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

## Visitors Policy

All Visitors **MUST** check in at the front desk to ensure everyone's safety. Those picking up a child must wait in the lobby while the child is dismissed from the program area. A photo ID may be required for unrecognized adults dismissing a child under 12. Visitors who have been approved to participate in a program area must sign in and wear a visitor's tag at all times. For community or family events, all visitors must sign in at the front desk and stay in the event's designated area(s). At no time are any visitors allowed to be with members without the supervision and approval of Club staff.

## Member Health and Safety

If your child stays home from school sick, or is sent home from school, *they will not be able to attend the Club that day*. Sick children should stay home until there is no fever for 24 hours or until cleared by a doctor.

## Nut Aware Policy

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Billerica is a nut aware building. Due to the number of members with allergies, we require that you **DO NOT** allow your child to bring in foods with peanuts or tree nuts. Members who are allergic to peanuts can have a reaction from breathing it in and/or touching surfaces where the peanuts were present. In an effort to keep everyone safe please **DO NOT** send members in with foods that contain peanuts or nuts.

## Transportation

The Boys & Girls Club offers limited transportation through Bedford Charter Company. The bus picks up at the **Marshall and Locke Middle Schools**. Members must be registered for this program. For more information contact Vanessa Diciara, [Vanessa@billericabgc.com](mailto:Vanessa@billericabgc.com)

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### Inclusion and Diversity

Inclusion at BGCGB is focused on creating a sense of belonging. BGCGB strives to create and sustain an environment that supports and values all members of our community. Our inclusive philosophy reflects our goal to provide an enriching afterschool and summer camp experience for young people of varied abilities and identities. Our inclusive practices and policies are designed to create a safe, welcoming, fun, and enriching environment for those with disabilities of all kinds, behavioral and social-emotional challenges, and young people who encounter other systemic barriers that may impede their equitable participation in afterschool programs.

BGCGB is committed to encouraging and welcoming diversity throughout our Clubs and organization. BGCGB does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, or disability. Furthermore, BGCGB works intentionally to create an inclusive and positive environment for members of varied gender identities and sexual orientations and anyone marginalized by societal and cultural norms.

Whenever possible, BGCGB makes reasonable accommodations to enable members to participate in the Club. Staff work to create welcoming and safe spaces with clear structures, routines, and expectations. While all members are held accountable for their behavior and conduct, we recognize members require different levels of support to meet the Club's expectations. Working together with families, schools, and other providers, our staff are committed to helping our members be successful. When our capacity to maintain a safe environment doesn't meet the needs of a member, BGCGB will support families to find

alternative programs to better meet their needs. Due to Club policies and limited resources, the Club does not extend membership to individuals who, at the time of application, are:

- Unable to express needs at age-appropriate or near age-appropriate level (member is unable to explain why they're upset, etc.)
- Requiring assistance of staff while toileting or dressing
- Requiring one-to-one support and/or monitoring in program areas or on field trips

The following behaviors do not necessarily warrant separation from the Club based on one occurrence, but a recurrence of the behavior may result in suspending or terminating membership for a specified amount of time:

- Fighting/physical aggression towards members or staff
- Self-harm behaviors (head-banging, hitting self, picking skin, etc.)
- "Running" (leaving the building without permission, going to unsupervised areas in the Club, straying from the group in the Club or while on field trips)
- Threatening statements/verbal aggressions towards members or staff
- Stealing from members or staff
- Using sexualized language or gestures
- Improper use of technology/social media
- Bullying, teasing, taunting, picking on, or ganging up on other members physically, verbally, or by electronic/video means.

Behaviors that will automatically result in suspension and/or termination of membership at the discretion of the Executive Director:

- Possessing weapons, drugs, alcohol, or associated equipment
- Fighting/physical aggression that causes significant harm to members or staff
- Sexual assault, attempted sexual assault, or sexual harassment
- Making violent/harmful threats toward others

## TEEN PROGRAMMING

The Teen Center is open to youth ages 13-18. We offer a range of activities and programs that focus on three core areas: Academic and Life Success, Character and Community, and Healthy Development to assist youth in becoming well-rounded individuals. Our goal is to provide enriching programs that give teens the opportunity to flourish as positive leaders, excel academically, and gain exposure to several career and vocational options to prepare them for life after the Club.

The Teen Center also seeks to serve the academic needs and interests of our members through comprehensive educational programming. The variety of programming will increase educational opportunities, enhance scholastic achievement, promote leadership and civic engagement and encourage cultural and social awareness. Inspiring youth to maximize their abilities and assist in their development as lifelong learners serves as a foundation for all educational programming.

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Various family engagement events take place during the year, including Family Swims and Club member performances. We also offer various parent workshops throughout the year. The Club will also host nights in which parents can come and play with members to experience what their children do every day. Members of all ages are invited to bring a parent or other family adult to participate.

### **Athletic Teams**

Our Club offers diverse athletic opportunities, such as swim team to basketball. The goal of the competitive leagues is to teach members healthy habits and physical fitness, teamwork, good sportsmanship and to have fun. We encourage parents to attend games at the Club and welcome parent involvement in celebrations. We request that parents role model our commitment to good sportsmanship and cheer for their own team but not against the visiting team. Behavior agreements will be required for any member participating in a competitive league.

### **Volunteering**

There may be opportunities to donate your time as a Club parent or guardian; hours are flexible. Participating in baked good drives, helping to plan fundraising events, or taking part in a Club spring clean-up project are just a few examples.

### **Fundraising**

In an effort, to keep the cost of membership low for children and teens, the Club relies heavily on fundraising to keep our doors open and our programming effective. The Club is always in need of parents willing to share their story of the Club's impact on their family or child. If you are interested in being an advocate for the Club, or helping to raise funds for an upcoming event or campaign, such as the golf tournament or Hall of Fame, please contact the Chief Executive Officer.

### **Events**

The club hosts several events throughout the program year to bring families and the community together. We invite you to be a part of our community, meet the staff and see first-hand the difference our Club is making in the life of your child.

