

GREAT FUTURES START HERE.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

PARENT HANDBOOK

Boerne	830-431-0004
Comfort	830-995-2540
Fredericksburg	830-997-9833

Executive Director	830-997-8241
--------------------	--------------

www.bgcatxhc.org

Ver. 08/24

**PARENT HANDBOOK
TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Welcome to the Club	3
Program Description	3-4
Parental Involvement	4-5
Summer Program	5
Medical Issues – Accident Procedures	5-6
General Policies	6-9
Technology Guidelines – Internet Safety And Video Surveillance	10 11-12
Management Staff	12-13

WELCOME TO THE CLUB

Welcome to the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Texas Hill Country. We are here to help your child develop the academic and social skills they will need to create satisfying lives as adults. Your local Club is mission-driven to empower children to reach their full potential as responsible, caring, and productive citizens.

Our goal is to create for youth:

- A positive self-identity
- Educational, employment, social, emotional, and cultural competence
- Community and civic involvement
- A life-long commitment to a healthy lifestyle

The Club offers a wide range of activities that gives members of all ages an opportunity to try new things and discover new talents. It is a pleasure to be able to serve your family. Please take a few minutes to read this handbook as it may answer many of your questions. Feel free to call us if you have any further questions.

We want your child to feel comfortable in the Club. IF FOR ANY REASON YOUR CHILD DOES NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE ABOUT RETURNING TO THE CLUB, PLEASE LET US KNOW! It is not unusual for children to first view the Club as a foreign place outside their comfort zone and it may take a few days to get over the anxiety of experiencing this new environment.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Boys & Girls Clubs of America have been around in one form or another since 1906. Over 4.8 million young people are served at approximately 4,000 Clubs in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and on U.S. military bases around the world.

ACTIVITIES

Sessions are designed to combine fun and adventure with age-appropriate programs in the areas of health & life skills, character & leadership development, education & career development, the arts, and sports-fitness-recreation. Members are constantly on the go, and will have fun while learning and fulfilling the Club's goal of youth development.

Members are required to participate in programs while at the Club.

STAFF

The Club Director will provide program direction and assist other Staff. All adult Staff Members are First Aid and CPR certified within 90 days of being hired. All key Staff Members have a degree or equivalent to a degree in experience and will guide the group and assist each member with their needs.

FIELD TRIPS/TRANSPORTATION

Transportation for field trips will be provided by the Boys & Girls Club. Parents give the Club permission to transport their child/children when they sign the Member Application at registration. However, parents will be notified of each trip, destination, and return time and will sign a permission slip for the Member to attend any field trip.

RELEASE OF MEDIA MATERIAL - PERMISSION TO PHOTOGRAPH

BGC staff will be taking pictures throughout the year. Pictures are often used in BGC program brochures, Facebook, end of the year slide shows, bulletin boards on site and other promotional materials. This also includes the use of Members' drawings or artwork. Parents who do not wish their child's photograph or work

used for promotional materials, should note that on the registration forms as well as inform the Staff verbally.

SNACKS

Snacks are provided at no charge. Alternatively, Members may bring their own snacks.

However, no outside food in opened or unsealed containers is permitted.

WHAT TO WEAR

Members should dress according to the school dress code since they will be coming straight from school. Dress to be active and to participate in programs. We ask that Members wear sneakers for safety reasons. Plan for sun, but be ready for rain. Clothing with vulgar language or images of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or sexually suggestive depictions is not acceptable.

LOST AND FOUND

All items brought or worn to the Club should be labeled with Member's name. Staff will do their best to help Members look after their belongings, but the **Club is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken articles**. Any items found will be kept at the site for **one month** and sent to a charitable organization if not claimed.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

BULLETIN BOARD AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Club posts monthly newsletters, Member birthdays, community programs, special messages, artwork, and photographs on bulletin boards in the Club Lobby (or front desk area). All announcements, Members' daily schedule and other important information are placed on the counter for parents to read and/or take home.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Please take the time to talk with the Club Director and Club Staff about your child's daily activities. Find out what is going on during the day and keep the communication lines open for your child's best interest. If you'd like to share a particular talent, have access to needed supplies or resources, or have suggestions, please let the Staff know.

PROBLEMS AT HOME

Any problems your child may have at home will probably affect his or her behavior at the Club. Please keep us informed of such problems, so that we can be sensitive to your child's needs. We would like to work as a team with your family. This will enable us to provide the best environment for your child's growth and development. Please report any physical or emotional problems experienced as a result of the programs or activities immediately to the Club Director to better inform them as to the condition of the child.

The Club is a drug/alcohol free zone and anyone who violates this policy will be dealt with sternly. The staff of BGCTXHC are mandated to report suspicions or allegations of child abuse or neglect.

EVALUATIONS

You may be asked to fill out questionnaires or surveys during the year. We appreciate your assistance with this process as it helps us identify areas where we are doing well and areas that need improvement. Your child may also be asked to participate in surveys, online evaluations, and other data gathering efforts to help track the progress of each child and the effectiveness of the Club's programs.

VISITING THE PROGRAM

We welcome you to visit the Club. You may visit and inspect the Boys & Girls Club during normal operating hours without advance notice. All visitors must check in at the Front Desk and can only be in the club escorted

by staff members. Siblings are welcome when accompanying the parent/guardian. The Boys & Girls Club prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any Member, parent, or guardian who exercises this right. However, any parent/guardian whom the Club staff determines may pose a risk to any Member or individual at the Club will be asked to leave immediately. The registering parent may request in writing that another parent not be given access or inspection privileges. Such a request will be honored to the extent administratively feasible and may require legal documentation. Friends of Club Members' are allowed to visit the Club on a one day only Free Pass.

VOLUNTEERING

Parents are encouraged to volunteer on a part-time or regular basis. There are several opportunities to work with youth, help with administrative tasks, special events, fundraising, and marketing efforts. There is a one page application and a background check required before working with the youth. If you are interested, please contact the Front Desk or the Club Director.

SUMMER PROGRAM

WHAT TO BRING EACH DAY/SUMMER PROGRAM

We suggest Members bring a backpack to hold their gear. Please label items sent with Members.

- Members are required to wear sneakers and socks (No flip-flops, boots, sandals, or crocs)
- Do not wear shoes with wheels (Wheelies)
- Bring lunch with beverage if it is not provided at that site (see Lunch below)
- Bring swimming suit, towel and flip flops (on swimming pool days)
- Bring water bottle (plastic disposable kind), or reusable one, labeled with Member's name
- Extra set of clothing to keep in their back pack (you never know)

The Club will inform Parents when special events are planned so that the Member may wear/bring appropriate clothing for field trips, i.e., swimming, walking, Fiesta Texas.

Do not send valuables, for example: money, toys, or electronics. Staff will hold these items and return them to parents at the end of the day. **The Boys & Girls Club is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items. The Club Director has discretion as to what items are to be taken.**

LUNCH-SUMMER

Some of our locations provide lunches for all or parts of summer. However, if your child is attending one that does not or they are going on a field trip and required to bring a lunch, please be sure to send a full, nutritious lunch.

Nutritious lunch example:

- One serving of a dairy product (yogurt, cheese, milk)
- One serving of a protein food (meat, fish, poultry, egg, beans, nuts)
- One serving of a carbohydrate (bread, crackers, or other alternate)
- Two servings of fruit, vegetable, or juice (must contain 50% real fruit juice)

PLEASE DO NOT SEND SODAS OR CANDY!!

MEDICAL ISSUES/ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

PRACTICES CONCERNING AN ILL MEMBER

1. If a Member feels ill and cannot participate in the program, he/she will be given a quiet place to rest and parents will be notified.

2. Members who have a fever or any contagious illness will not be allowed to remain at Boys & Girls Club. Parents will be asked to pick up the child.

3. Notice will be sent to parents if there is an instance of a communicable disease at the site.

The following are some symptoms that may require exclusion from our program:

- Fever of 100°F or higher
- Diarrhea
- Skin rashes/lesions
- Eye discharge or “Pink Eye”
- Unexplained lethargy and dizziness
- Lice or nits
- Covid positive or onset of possible symptoms

If a Member has any of the above symptoms, they may not be allowed to enter the Club. If they develop these symptoms during the day, we will contact the parent or guardian to pick up the Member from the Club.

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT POLICY

All medication should be administered by parents or guardian.

Boys & Girls Club Staff are not authorized to administer or dispense any medication. Should a member bring medicine to the Club, please ensure it remains in its original container and is clearly labeled with Member’s name. This policy applies to all prescription and non-prescription medication.

IN CASE OF AN ACCIDENT

- A Staff Member will carry out immediate First Aid and/or call an ambulance.
- A Staff Member will contact parents to come and take the Member if medical care is necessary
- In the event of an emergency and the parent or designated person cannot be reached, the Staff Member in charge will have the authority to transport the Member to a hospital via aid car.

GENERAL POLICIES

OPEN CAMPUS POLICY

Each Club has a check-in and out procedure with a dedicated staff member at the front desk to communicate closely with parents and document those entering and leaving Club spaces. However, because the Boys & Girls Club is considered a “Neighborhood Recreational Program,” by the State of Texas, it is exempt from childcare licensure thereby children participating in Club activities are free to join or leave the program at will. Authorized persons must provide a valid photo ID each time the Member is being picked up. Should there be any questions regarding this policy please contact the Executive Director at (830) 997-8241.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- ✓ Play fairly and be honest.
- ✓ Be respectful to Club staff.
- ✓ Remove hats before entering the building.
- ✓ Resolve disagreements in a positive way.
- ✓ Say only good things about other people.
- ✓ Be respectful to other Club members and their property.

- ✓ Avoid use of improper language.
- ✓ Applaud the efforts of other members.
- ✓ Listen during assemblies and special events.
- ✓ Show respect to the facility and equipment.
- ✓ Participate only in program areas open to your age group.
- ✓ Dress appropriately at all times.

There may be other rules for special events, but on a day-to-day basis, this is the code that we abide by. All Boys & Girls Clubs of the Texas Hill Country Members are expected to uphold it.

CONSEQUENCES

If Member's behavior is not acceptable, they will receive a verbal warning from Staff and discuss the importance of personal responsibilities & logical consequences.

❖ For continuous inappropriate behavior, the following can be expected:

- Write-up
- Possible removal from specific activity or field trip
- Meeting between Member, Club Director, Parent and Staff
- Removal from program
- Temporary suspension from the Club
- Expulsion

The Club Director has the sole discretion to immediately suspend a Member from the Club. Upon suspension, the parent/guardian will be asked to pick up the Member immediately.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Minor Offenses:

1st Offense*: Verbal Warning

2nd Offense*: Time Out (Can be in or out of program area depending on how disruptive the behavior is)

3rd Offense*: Write-up, sent to director

*Within one program period or one day.

- Parents will be notified of all write-ups. 3 write-ups of minor offenses will result in either in-club or out-of-club suspension.
- Examples of consequences for minor offenses include, but are not limited to:
 - Clean-up duty
 - Exclusion from a particular program area
 - Exclusion from field trips or other special activities
 - In-Club suspension (exclusion from all program areas and activities)
 - Out-of-Club temporary suspension

Major Offenses:

- All major offenses can constitute an automatic suspension without warning.
- Major offenses are:
 - Bullying

- Fighting or threats of violence
- Disrespecting Staff
- Inappropriate Language (i.e.: cursing, name-calling or other offensive or explicit language)
- Stealing
- Vandalism/Destruction of Property
- Inappropriate Touching/Inappropriate Sexual Behavior
- Gang Activity

Notes:

- ✓ Actual consequences are determined on a case-by case basis and are at the discretion of the Club Director.
- ✓ If a pattern of ongoing behavior (i.e.: continuous verbal warnings or time-outs) is noticed, consequences may be given with or without a write-up, and regardless of the severity of the offense.
- ✓ The length of a suspension (in or out-of-club) is determined by the severity of the offense and the number of previous offenses. In general, suspensions are 1-5 days.
- ✓ Repeated offenses can result in an indefinite expulsion from the Club.

DRESS CODE:

- The following types of clothing are prohibited:
- See-through or mesh clothing, unless worn over other apparel
- Garments that expose the midriff
- Halter tops and tank tops
- Biking or short shorts for youth above the age of 10
- Bare feet in the Club or on the van
- Garments or accessories that display emblems relating to abusive substances, sex and/or obscenities.
- Any apparel that celebrates gang-culture.
- Club Directors reserve the right to determine if certain other items of clothing are inappropriate for wear at the Club and/or during Club field trips or other special events.

PICK UP TIMES

The following are closing times for each Club:

- **Boerne Club-** Members must be picked up by **6:30 pm**
- **Comfort Club-** Members must be picked up by **6:30 pm**
- **Fredericksburg Club-** Members must be picked up by **6:30 pm**

LATE PICK UP POLICY

Members must be picked up no later than the closing time stated for each Club. After a youth has been left for over 30 minutes after closing time, local authorities may be contacted.

- 1st Occurrence: Verbal Warning
 - Additional Occurrences*: \$10 charge each occurrence
- *Can lead to suspension from program

MEMBER PICK UP/UNSAFE CONDITION OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

The Boys & Girls Club respects the rights of parents/guardians to access their own child.

However, if the Staff feels a parent is in an unsafe condition to drive or otherwise leave with their child (such as under the influence of alcohol or drugs), the Staff may suggest that the parent or the Staff call the other parent/guardian, a friend or relative, or a cab. The Staff may also be compelled to notify the authorities to

report the incident.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES POLICY

Parents/Guardians of all Members in our program agree (via the registration form), to grant the Club permission to seek medical attention for the Member in the event of an emergency. **Parents are required to update the Club on any change of home, work, emergency, and medical phone numbers.**

The Club has guidelines for emergency situations. In case of an evacuation emergency such as fire, bomb threat, or gas leak, Members will be kept in the nearest safe area, and parents will be contacted as soon as possible to pick up their child. In case of confinement to the facility, parents or an emergency contact will be called immediately and informed of procedures.

INSURANCE

It is the responsibility of every individual, their parent(s), or legal guardian(s) to provide for their own accident and health coverage while they are participating in all Boys & Girls Club activities.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Boys & Girls Club is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. It is our policy to accept and promote all persons without regard to race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, marital status, or disability in accordance with Federal and State laws and regulations.

INCLUSION OF MEMBERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

The Boys & Girls Club welcomes Members with special needs into our program - when reasonable accommodations can be made. Families are asked to identify any health concerns or special needs their child/children may have when enrolling so that both the Club and the family can determine together what accommodation each Member may need to be successfully included. Decision whether to accept a child with special needs into the Club rests with the Club Director and the Executive Director.

FEES/NO REFUND POLICY

The Club charges membership and supply fees each year, the Club will **not** refund any fees should a child leave the Club – whether voluntarily or involuntarily from its program. As you'll note in this handbook, the Club may also assess administrative and penalty charges. These fees are intended to help resolve problems and reinforce adherence to the Clubs' policies. Please respect these policies.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

For safety purposes, the Club permits Members to possess cell phones. However, cell phones & other electronic devices may not be used or displayed from the time of the Member's arrival at the Club until the Club ceases that day's operation. Cell phones, MP3 players and other electronic devices deemed in use will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Repeated offenses will be dealt with in accordance with the Club behavioral guidance policy (below).

MOVIE POLICY

- For Teens, the Club will only show movies that are rated G, PG, or some PG-13
- For the elementary grades, the Club will only show G and PG movies
- Under no circumstances will an R-rated movie be shown at the Club.

TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES - INTERNET SAFETY

Boys & Girls Club is pleased to offer club members at some sites access to a computer network for electronic mail and the Internet. Should a parent prefer that a student not have e-mail and Internet access, use of computers is still possible for more traditional purposes such as word-processing and educational games. The Club has or has access to monitored computer lab equipment where many programs and learning opportunities will be offered to Members. In order for a Member to participate in activities in the computer lab, Parents & Members both must read and sign the Acceptable Use for Technology Policy Form during club sign up.

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

Guidelines

1. Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work.
2. Do not damage the computer or network in any way.
3. Do not interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software, shareware, or freeware.
4. Do not violate copyright laws.
5. Do not view, send, or display offensive messages or pictures.
6. Do not share your password with another person.
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 any adult immediately if, by accident, you encounter materials that violate the rules set out in the Acceptable Use of Technology Form.
10. BE PREPARED to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if these rules are violated.

Internet Safety Rules

1. I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school.
2. I will tell the Tech Center Instructor right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable or is inappropriate.
3. I will never agree to get together with someone I met online.
4. I will never send a person my picture or anything else.
5. I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. If I do, I will tell the Tech Center Instructor right away so that they can contact the service provider.
6. I will not give out my Internet password to anyone (even my best friends) other than my parents.
7. I will be a good online citizen and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law.

USE OF VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Texas Hill Country recognizes that maintaining the safety and security of Club members, staff, volunteers, and Club property is best implemented with a multifaceted approach. Modern technology, including video surveillance, can provide tools to maintain safety and security. While video surveillance does not replace appropriate supervision by Club personnel, it can provide an additional layer of protection.

Video surveillance, without or without audio recording capabilities, may be utilized in and around the Club facility, on Club property, and on Club transportation vehicles. Video surveillance shall be in accordance with all applicable laws pertaining to such use.

PLACEMENT AND NOTIFICATION

Video surveillance equipment may be installed in and around Club facilities, property, and vehicles. The system provides constant monitoring 24/7 (is activated and records when motion is detected).

Video surveillance equipment **will not be** used or installed in areas where Club Members, staff, and parents/guardians have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restrooms.

Video surveillance equipment may always be in operation, whether the Club is operational and whether the facilities or buildings are in use at all. The Club will determine the operation schedule of any video surveillance equipment in its discretion.

Video monitors shall not be in an area that enables public viewing.

The Club shall notify Club members, parents/guardians, staff, and the public that video surveillance systems are present by signs prominently displayed in appropriate locations throughout the facilities and grounds and provide any other notification or consent as required by applicable law.

ACCESS TO VIDEO IMAGES

The use of video surveillance equipment on Club grounds shall be supervised and controlled by the CEO and Club Site Directors. The actual recording equipment will be maintained in an area or room that is locked and secure to only be accessed by authorized personnel. Live video monitoring may randomly occur as needed.

Video data is recorded and stored digitally. Video recording data is considered confidential and secure. Access to live and video recorded data is **strictly limited** to the following authorized full-time Boys & Girls Club personnel: CEO and Club Site Directors. These authorized personnel are trained on the video surveillance policy and how video data should be used during any official investigation.

Video recording data may be used as evidence that a Club member, parent/guardian, staff member, volunteer, or other person has engaged in behavior that violates state or local law, policies, and/or Club rules. Video footage is subject to production by a valid subpoena or other court order.

UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS AND/OR DISCLOSURE

Confidentiality and privacy concerns limit the general public, including parents and relatives of Club members, from viewing video recording footage and/or data involving Club members, staff, and volunteers. Only the authorized personnel provided above can view and/or export video recording data. No unauthorized recordings are permitted of video recording data

through cell phones, portable devices, or any other means. Any Club personnel who become aware of unauthorized disclosure of video recording data from the Club and/or a potential privacy breach must immediately inform the CEO.

Club personnel and volunteers are prohibited from unauthorized use of, tampering with or otherwise interfering with video surveillance equipment. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action that may include, but are not limited to, written reprimand, suspension, demotion, or termination of employment.

Video recording data will remain the property of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Texas Hill Country and may be reproduced only in accordance with applicable law and board policy.

RETENTION OF DIGITAL IMAGES

Video recording data shall be kept for approximately two weeks, except for appropriate still shots or selected portions of the recorded data relating to any incidents under investigation by authorities. The latter shall be retained for one year after the incident or until such time as any legal matters pertaining to the recordings have been resolved. The stored media shall be kept on a secured computer.

In situations involving banned parents/guardians, former employers or volunteers, or visitors, stored still images may be shared with Club personnel and appropriate officials.

CLUB MEMBER PRIVACY

Video recording data will not to be used directly or indirectly to identify the activities of individual Club members except as viewed in relation to a specific event or suspected criminal activity; suspected violation of Club policy or rules; incidents where there is reasonable basis to believe a claim may be made against the Club for civil liability; or if otherwise compelled by law.

Authorized Club personnel may use a still shot or selected portions of recorded data to request law enforcement review for assessing the security risk of a specific individual or for investigating a potential crime on Club property. A copy of this policy will be shared with any Club member, parent/guardian, or staff member upon request.

MANAGEMENT STAFF

The entire Staff at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Texas Hill Country welcome open communication with parents & guardians. Please feel free to contact the Club with ANY concerns, questions, or feedback about the program or the needs of your child.

CLUB PHONE NUMBERS:

Boerne (830) 431-0004

Comfort (830) 995-2540

Fredericksburg (830) 997-9833

CLUB DIRECTORS:

Boerne: Emma Hix, Club Director
emmahix@bgcatxhc.org

Comfort: Cynthia Valadez, Club Director
cynthiavaladez@bgcatxhc.org

Fredericksburg: Oleksiy Skorobogatov, Club
Director alex.s@bgcatxhc.org

Executive Director/CEO: MALINDA PIKE (830) 997-8241
malindapike@bgcatxhc.org