



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

PARENT ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

www.bgcnwga.org

Revised January 2024

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1. General Information

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia takes great pleasure in welcoming you and your children to the Club! A great deal of effort has been made to plan a fun, safe and constructive environment for youth at each of our convenient locations listed below.

West Rome Unit

100 Gadson Street
Rome, Georgia 30165
Membership Line: (706) 234-0594
Fax: (706) 234-1640
Unit Director: Audrey Montgomery
amontgomery@bgcnwga.org

South Rome Unit

211 East Main Street
Rome, Georgia 30161
Youth Membership Line (706) 234-4565
Teen Membership Line (706) 234-4863
Fax: (706) 234-1640
Unit Director: Ishmael Woods
iwoods@bgcnwga.org

Cedartown Unit

321 East Queen Street
Cedartown, Georgia 30125
Membership Line: (770) 749-0869
Fax: (770) 749-0969
Interim Unit Director: Melanie Rogers
mrogers@bgcnwga.org

A. What is a Boys & Girls Club?

The Boys & Girls Club is a community-based Youth Development Organization that provides young people with programs and services designed to build character and achieve their full potential.

B. Mission Statement

To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

C. Who Can Join?

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia serves children between the ages of 5-18 and makes no discrimination in admission based on race, sex, religion, creed, or national origin. Four-year old children who will be turning five in the current school semester are allowed to join on a probationary basis. A child must be at least five years of age on or before May 31st to enroll in the Summer Program or enrollment may occur upon their fifth birthday.

D. Club Programs

Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia has a lineup of tested and proven nationally recognized programs that address today's most pressing youth issues, teaching young people the skills they need to succeed in life.

More than 25 national programs are available in the areas of education, the environment, health, the arts, careers, alcohol/drug and pregnancy prevention, gang prevention, leadership development and athletics.

Our Programs are categorized in the following FIVE CORE PROGRAM AREAS:

1. **Character and Leadership Development** – Helping youth become responsible caring citizens and acquire skills for participating in the democratic process is the main thrust of these programs. They also develop leadership skills and are provided opportunities for planning, decision-making, contributing to Club and community, and celebrating our national heritage.
2. **Education and Career Development** - encouraging youth to create aspirations for the future and providing them with opportunities for career exploration and educational enhancement.
3. **Health & Life Skills** – facilitating the achievement and maintenance of a healthy, active lifestyle. Programs address resisting violence, drug abuse and premature sexual activity.
4. **The Arts** – Enhancing self-expression, developing multicultural appreciation and gaining creative skills through knowledge of the visual and performing arts.
5. **Sports, Fitness & Recreation** – developing fitness, use of leisure time, reduction of stress, appreciation for the environment and social skills.

E. Club Hours

- **After School Program:** Monday through Friday 2:00pm – 6:00pm
- **School Holidays & Summer:** Monday through Friday 7:30am - 5:30pm

* Registration for the Summer Program begins in late April/early May with a mandatory parent orientation as notated on the Summer Program Schedule.

*For the safety of your children, parents/ guardians **must** come into the building in the mornings to sign-in members, pay fees, sign permission forms, etc. Children must be checked out in the afternoon by an adult listed on their membership application as a contact. No child will be allowed to leave the building on his/ her own to walk to a car waiting in the parking lot. Parents/ guardians who choose to disregard this rule will be **subject to revocation** of membership.

F. Club Closings

- **STAFF TRAINING:** The Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia periodically conducts mandatory staff training during the year. Dates for these training courses will be posted two weeks prior to these trainings if the Club will be closed.
- **HOLIDAYS:** The Club will be closed on the following holidays. You will need to make other arrangements for your children on these days:
 - New Year's Day
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
 - Memorial Day
 - Juneteenth Independence Day
 - Independence Day
 - Labor Day
 - Thanksgiving (2 days)
 - Christmas (2 days)

*If a holiday falls on a weekend, the Club will be closed on the Friday before or Monday after; to be posted two weeks in advance.

- **INCLEMENT WEATHER:** If Clubs are closed due to bad weather, parents will be notified using our Emergency Operations Alert system that parents must sign up for in advance at their specific Club.

G. Staff

Staff members include full-time and part-time youth development professionals. The staff/child ratio is 1:15 at the Clubs and 1:8 on field trips. Staff members are carefully screened and selected for their abilities to creatively supervise and control specific program areas. Staff are expected to show a genuine concern for youth and their development. Ongoing staff training is mandatory.

2. Membership Policies

A. Club Membership

The membership process begins when a parent or guardian of a child completes and signs a membership application and pays the \$25.00 membership fee which is good from the date of application until that same date in the following year.

B. Code of Conduct

The Clubs don't have a lot of rules that get in the way of having a good time. However, it is necessary for Club members to understand what is expected of them. Members are expected to follow our Code of Conduct.

- Members must **ALWAYS** follow the instructions of the staff, failure to do so will result in suitable consequences.
- Members must be respectful to the staff and other members.
- *NO* one under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be allowed in the Clubs or at any Club activities. We enforce a *ZERO* tolerance policy.
- Weapons or look-a-like weapons will *NOT* be allowed on Club property or at any Club activity. We enforce a *ZERO* tolerance policy.
- *NO* gang representation allowed in the Club.
- Anyone who does not attend school cannot come to the Club that day.
- Anyone suspended from the Club must report to the staff member who suspended them before they are allowed to re-enter. Anyone who is continually suspended from the Club must report to the Unit/Program Director(s) and may be permanently banned from the Club.
- There will be no fighting, wrestling, or bullying. Please keep your hands to yourself!
- Everyone is expected to use proper language. Improper language will not be allowed in or around the Clubs.
- There will be *NO* wild playing, screaming, or yelling in or around the Clubs.
- Gambling/betting of any kind is not allowed.
- Please do not run anywhere except for in the designated areas.
- Do not play in the restrooms. Boys are not allowed in the girls' restroom and girls are not allowed in the boys' restroom.
- All games are played under the "I'm next" system.
- There will be *NO* eating or drinking anywhere in the Clubs except in the designated area.
- Phone calls are not allowed for any reason. Parents are free to call at any time.
- Do not sit or stand on tables, desks, or pool tables.
- Please do not hang on the nets or rims in the gym area.
- Shoes *MUST* always be worn. Sandals and flip-flops are not acceptable footwear.
- Youth must be members to enter the Clubs or Club transportation. **No entry will be granted without a membership and a completed application.**
- Members must not leave ANY PROGRAM AREA OR THE FACILITY without a Staff member.
- Leave personal belongings at home. The Clubs will *NOT* be responsible if they are lost or damaged.
- All Club members must be picked up **by the designated closing time** or face Club fines.
- All members are expected to present themselves with dignity, wash, and dress neatly, as well as clean up his or her surroundings. The Director reserves the right to contact a parent/guardian if a child is dressed inappropriately.

C. Program Fees

- **Membership** (for ages 5-12)
 - *Annual Fee*
 - Regular: **\$25**

- **After School Program** (for ages 5-11)
 - *Weekly Fee*
 - Regular: **\$25**
 - Income Eligible: **\$10**

- **School Holiday** (for ages 5-11)
 - *Weeklong Breaks (4+ days)*
 - Regular: **\$50**
 - Income Eligible: **\$20.00**

- **Summer Program** (for ages 5-11)
 - Regular: **\$50**
 - Income Eligible: **\$20.00**

- **Field Trips**
 - Pricing varies based on voluntary sign-up.

- **Late Fees-** \$1.00 per minute for every minute after closing.
 - Late fees **for past due monthly/ weekly payments.** Membership may be revoked if late fees and payments are not kept up to date.

D. Field Trip Policy

Field trips are optional and require up-front cash payments. The staff/child ratio for field trips is 1:8. Therefore, for the safety of our members, not all children will be able to participate in the field trips – spots are given on a first-come, first-served basis. Before any member participates in a field trip, he/she must have a signed permission-slip that gives parent or guardian consent and a Club shirt. **Phone calls will not be accepted as consent.**

For trips which include swimming activities please be mindful that Staff are there to supervise, but they are not lifeguards. If you desire your child to wear a flotation device, please notify the Club in writing.

E. Leaving the Club

The Boys & Girls Clubs is a drop-in (open door) facility and cannot legally require a member to stay at the Club. The decision to leave must exist between parent and child and be communicated with Club staff in advance. Teens 13-18 may leave our facilities at certain times, but we require a letter on file from a parent or guardian granting this permission.

F. Discipline Procedure

When behavior problems or conflicts arise, the process we use to modify the behavior is:

- ◆ Warning/Verbal Counseling
- ◆ Time-Out
- ◆ Extended Time/ Service to the Club
- ◆ Staff, member, and parent conference
- ◆ Suspension from the Club may be imposed for serious infractions or repeated offenses.
- ◆ Revocation of membership.

*If a Parent Conference is requested, it must take place before the child can return to the Club.

G. Sickness

No child will be allowed to remain at the Club if he/she is sick or there is a reasonable assumption of illness. Parents should use the utmost discretion in this matter. Parents must arrange for children to be picked up from the Club if he/she is ill immediately. It is at the Director's discretion to determine illness. Any suspected transferable infestations or contagious conditions will necessitate parent/guardian contact and immediate removal of the member from Club premises. Proof of treatment from a health care facility is required before the child is allowed back into the Clubs.

During the After School Program, if your child does not attend school for any reason, he/she may not attend the Clubs. **No school = No Clubs!**

H. Medication

Boys & Girls Clubs staff and volunteers (including board members) are NOT allowed, by policy, to dispense, store and/or oversee medication of any kind, including all non-prescription medications.

If your child must take medication, please take note of the following:

- ◆ Medication must be in a clearly labeled (child's first & last name) container that the child can open. Don't forget asthma inhalers!
- ◆ Your child must administer his/her own medication. (Staff cannot handle medication.)

I. Allergies

If your child has any allergies, including but not limited to food, please note this information on the membership application and that must be communicated to the Unit Director.

J. Snack/Lunch

Most locations have snack machines and coke machines that cost from \$1.00 to \$2.00, but they may only be accessed when the staff give permission, based on the Club activities.

K. Transportation

Transportation from your child's school to the Clubs may be provided. Please check with your Unit Director or Membership Clerk for details about transportation. If you wish for your child to be transported to the Clubs daily from his/her school, please provide written permission.

L. Personal Items

The Clubs are not responsible for lost or stolen items; **PLEASE DO NOT SEND PERSONAL ITEMS TO THE CLUBS WITH YOUR CHILD.** This includes cell phones, Gameboys, CD players, balls, dolls, etc. Please do not send any more than \$2 cash with your child unless otherwise specified.

M. Internet Rules for Appropriate Use

The Boys & Girls Club of Northwest Georgia is pleased to offer Club members access to the internet. To gain access to the internet, all Club members must obtain written parental permission. Should a parent prefer that a student not have internet access, computers are available for traditional purposes such as word processing.

Club members are responsible for appropriate behavior on the computers. It is expected that users will comply with Club standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of computers is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. Computer files will be treated like school lockers. Staff may review communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that Club members are using the system responsibly. **Club members are advised never to access or send anything that they would not want their parents or staff to see.**

Member Internet Guidelines

These are the guidelines to follow to prevent the loss of internet privileges:

1. Sign in and sign out on the form provided.
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 install software, shareware, or freeware.
5. Do not violate copyright laws.
6. Do not view, send, or display profane, abusive, or impolite language, photos, pictures, or graphics.
7. Do not share any personal passwords with another person.
8. Keep within allocated memory and delete material which takes up excessive storage space.
9. Do not copy another's work or trespass in another's folders, work, or files.
10. Notify any adult immediately if, by accident, you encounter materials that violate the rules of appropriate use.
11. Be prepared to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if the rules of appropriate use are violated.

FORM A
BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

INTERNET PARENT PERMISSION & USER AGREEMENT

As a parent or guardian of a member at the Boys & Girls Club of Northwest Georgia, I have read and understand the attached information regarding the appropriate use of computers at the Club, and I understand that this agreement will be kept on file at the Club. *Please fill out all three sections of this document.*

Section A

Please check only one:

_____ My child can use the internet while at the Club as outlined in the rules of appropriate use.

_____ I would prefer that my child NOT use the internet while at the Club.

Section B

I understand that, from time to time, the Club may wish to publish examples of member projects, photographs of members and other work on an internet-accessible World Wide Web server.

Please check only one:

_____ My child's work and photographs can be published on the internet.

_____ I prefer that my child's work and photographs not be published on the internet.

Section C

As a user of the Club computer network, my child and I agree to comply with the above stated rules and use the network in a constructive manner. In addition, I understand that all precautions will be taken to ensure my child is protected from inadvertently connecting to an inappropriate site. In the event that an incident does occur, my child will report the incident immediately to the technology instructor.

Member Name: _____

Member Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

FORM B
BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

MEMBER'S INTERNET USAGE

1. I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parent's work address/telephone number or the name and location of my school.
2. I will tell the Education Center Staff person 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 personal.
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 Education Center Staff person 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.

Date: _____

Member Signature: _____

Parents/Guardian: _____

*Rules 1-6 are adapted from the brochure "Child Safety on the Information Highway" by Safekids.com

FORM C
BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

CODE OF CONDUCT

- Members must ***ALWAYS*** follow the instructions of the Staff. Failure to do so will result in suitable consequences.
- Members must be respectful to the staff and other members.
- *NO* one under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be allowed in the Club or at any Club activities. We enforce a *ZERO* tolerance policy.
- Weapons or look-a-like weapons will *NOT* be allowed on Club property or at any Club activity. We enforce a *ZERO* tolerance policy.
- *NO* gang representation allowed in the Club.
- Anyone who does not attend school cannot come to the Club that day.
- Anyone suspended from the Club must report to the staff member who suspended them before they are allowed to re-enter. Anyone who is continually suspended from the Club must report to the Unit/Program Director(s) and may be permanently banned from the Club.
- There will be no fighting, wrestling, or bullying. Please keep your hands to yourself at all times.
- Everyone is expected to use proper language. Improper language will not be allowed in or around the Club.
- There will be *NO* wild playing, screaming, or yelling in or around the Club.
- Gambling of any kind is not allowed.
- Please do not run anywhere except for in the designated areas.
- Do not play in the restrooms. Boys are not allowed in the girls' restroom and girls are not allowed in the boys' restroom.
- All games are played under the "I'm next" system.
- There will be *NO* eating or drinking anywhere in the Club except in the designated area.
- Phone calls are not allowed for any reason. Parents are free to call at any time.
- Do not sit or stand on tables, desks, or pool tables.
- Please do not hang on nets or rims in the gym area.
- Shoes *MUST* always be worn. Sandals and flip-flops are not acceptable footwear.
- Members must have an active membership to enter the Club or use Club transportation. ***No entry will be granted without membership.***
- You must not leave ANY PROGRAM AREA OR THE FACILITY without a Staff member.
- Leave personal belongings at home. The Club will *NOT* be responsible if they are lost or damaged.
- All Club members ***by closing time*** or face Club fines- \$1.00/minute late.
- All members are expected to present themselves with dignity, wash, and dress neatly, as well as clean up his or her surroundings. The Director reserves the right to contact a parent/guardian if a child is dressed inappropriately.

As a member of the Boys & Girls Clubs, members promise to follow the Code of Conduct. If a member breaks the rules of this code, members understand that they will face the consequences for their actions.

Member Signature: _____

I promise to support my child in following the Club's Code of Conduct. I understand that violation of the code may result in time-out, loss of privileges, suspension, and/or loss of membership.

Parent Signature: _____

FORM D
BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

OPEN DOOR POLICY

The Boys & Girls Club cannot legally require a member to stay at the Club. The understanding about leaving must exist between the parent and child.

The Boys & Girls Club is a "drop in" facility and therefore is not responsible if a member leaves the facilities and grounds, although we do our best to keep this from happening.

No, my child can never leave the Boys & Girls Club facility without my permission.

Yes, my child has permission to leave the facility unsupervised.

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

FORM E
BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

PERMISSION TO TRANSPORT

I give my child(ren) _____ permission to be transported daily, for the purposes of participating in the Afterschool Program, from _____ Elementary School to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia _____ Unit located at _____ in _____, Georgia during the 20__ - 20__ School Year.

Please select one of the following options:

- I will be picking up my child(ren) before the Club's close of business at _____ PM on:
 - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and/ or Friday.

- I give the Club permission to release my child(ren) from the Clubs on the designated days below. My child will either walk home or be picked up and transported home on:
 - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

I fully understand that once my child steps off the Club's vehicle and/or leaves the Boys & Girls Clubs property, the Boys & Girls Clubs is no longer responsible for the welfare of my child. I hereby release The Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia, its staff members, board members and officers from any liability, injury, damage and/or loss arising out of or associated with the above. I understand that there may be certain risks associated with my child's participation. I assume all risk and I am fully responsibility for whatever may occur. Additionally, I give employees of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia permission to obtain appropriate medical care for my child if an emergency should occur.

Print-Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Number: _____

FORM G
BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA
PARENT ORIENTATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Member's Name: _____

Date: _____

I, the parent/guardian, have:

- Completed my child's membership application
- Attended orientation & given an ***Orientation Handbook***
- Completed all necessary forms
- Taken a tour of the Club (*optional*)

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____