



GREAT FUTURES START HERE.

Annual Parent Information/Handbook

The purpose of this information/handbook:

To optimize every child's experience at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County by engaging parents as partners in positive youth development.

Welcome to the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Elkhart County

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian,

Thank you for choosing to enroll your child in the Boys & Girls Club! We look forward to providing an exciting and dynamic after-school/summer program designed to enrich the social and academic development of your child. It is with a spirit of service and enthusiasm that we engage our members in high quality after school and summer programming.

Our mission is to inspire and empower all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, responsible, caring citizens. In addition, we understand that an important component of the service we provide is to create a safe environment that makes parents feel confident and comfortable that their children are well cared for in a fun and nurturing atmosphere.

Our organization seeks to exceed your expectations of our program in every way. Parents are encouraged to learn more about our programs and take time to know the staff members at your child's site. In working together as partners, we will be better able to make a lasting, positive impact on your child.

Sincerely,

Andrew Fitzpatrick

Andrew Fitzpatrick
Executive Vice President, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Elkhart County

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Welcome

We are excited about your involvement with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County! We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing our program and the opportunity to work with you and your family. In order for our staff to better serve you, it is important that you understand a few things about our Club, facilities, and programs.

In order for your child to become a member at one of our Boys & Girls Clubs you will need to complete the Member Registration/Parent Information Packet and return the forms to the Boys & Girls Club you choose to attend with the Membership Application and fee. Membership dues, in limited cases, may be transferable but not-refundable.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County has adopted standards of care. At a minimum, these standards include staff ratios, staff trainings, health and safety standards and mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing these standards. To achieve this goal, it is important to note that these may be subject to change at any time. When changes are made, a parent memo will be sent out and parents will be asked to sign and follow the new process, policy, or procedure. With all programs, participation space is limited due to capacity regulations and safe staff to member ratios. Field trips have a capacity for participants to ensure all members are safe when in and out of our buildings.

Basic Information

Summer Operations: June 12th - July 21st

(Closed on Tuesday July 4th)

Monday – Friday
10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Early Bird
6:00 am – 10:00 am

School Year Operations:

Monday – Friday
3:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Teens:
3:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Fall and Spring Break
10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Early Bird
6:00 am – 10:00 am

Club Locations

Goshen

306 Crescent St.
P.O. Box 614
Goshen, IN 46526
574-533-4793

Nappanee

107 E. Marion St.
Nappanee, IN 46550
574-773-5200

Middlebury

56805 Northridge Dr.
Middlebury, IN 46540
574-825-0873

Elkhart – Osolo

24975 Co Rd 6,
Elkhart, IN 46514
574-262-5590

Membership Fee(s) and Payments

Summer/School Year –

\$15 (If child is a new member)

Free (Active members)

Annual Fee due on Member anniversary date

Early Bird

\$40.00 for the 1st child.

\$25.00 for the 2nd child.

\$15.00 for a 3rd child and any additional children.

Note: Limited Scholarships are available for school year & summer programs.

- Income restrictions apply.
- If no payment is received, your child's spot will be forfeited and will be given to the next child on the waiting list.
- Checks should be made payable to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County.

(Please note if your check does not clear our bank you will be charged a \$35 fee.
This fee and all other fees must be paid before your child may return.)

Rules for Accepting Payments

Payment Option: In Person Cash or Checks

This option is for Parents to make payment(s) with a check or cash. The check must include what the payment is for, include your child's name(s), site name, and the purpose of the payment (i.e. "membership dues"). This information is needed to help us track your account information more efficiently. The initial Membership Dues must be paid at the time you turn in the completed Membership Application/Information Packet. This must be made in person to verify all information regarding your child(ren) is accurate.

- Cash may be accepted on site for membership fees.
- Checks must be made payable to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County. **(Please note if your check does not clear our bank, you will be charged a \$35 insufficient funds fee. This fee and all others must be paid before your child may return.)**
- If payment is not received, your child's membership will be canceled, and his/her place will be filled with the next child on our waiting list.
- Our staff gives receipts for all payment transactions.
- While each Club site does track payments made, we do not issue payment summaries (outside from receipts upon payment) with our tax ID number. We ask that you keep record of your receipts for your own tax purposes.
- All payments must include the child's first & last name in the memo section and be made payable to the **Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County.**

Please note **ALL FIELD TRIP PAYMENTS** must be made in **CASH ONLY** at your child's Club site by the deadline included in the membership packet and/or listed on the Field Trip Permission Slip.

All members must wear a club shirt when on any field trip.

Late Pick-up/Early Drop-off Policy

We understand that problems arise from time to time that could prevent you from picking up your child on time. In that event, please call the Club as soon as you know you may be late and identify who will be picking up your child. If the program staff has not heard from you by closing time, the person(s) listed on your authorized pick-up list will be contacted to pick up your child immediately. In the event that we are unable to contact you or your emergency contacts after closing time, the police or Department of Child Services may be contacted. Please discuss any questions about the late pick-up policy with your Club site's Unit Director.

The Day Program closes at 7:00 p.m. for grades 1-6, and at 8:00p.m. for teen programs (members in grades 7-12) . Summer Programs close at 6:00 p.m. for all grade levels. Those parents whose children remain after the Club closes must pay late fees as follows:

Up to 10 minutes late	\$5.00 Fee
10 – 20 minutes late	\$10.00 Fee
More than 20 minutes late	\$15.00 Fee

One verbal warning will be provided to parents; fees will be assessed for any late pick-ups after that point. It is critical that parents ensure we have correct phone, address and emergency contact information updated.

Our Mission Statement

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

3 Priority Areas of Development

- 1) Character & Citizenship Success**
- 2) Academic Success**
- 3) Healthy Lifestyles**

Our Five Core Programming Areas

The following core-programming areas are designed to make an impact on a child's overall well-being. These five areas include:

Character & Leadership Development

These attributes empower a positive self-image, while developing, supporting, and influencing the Club and Community.

Education & Career Development

Enables youth to become proficient in basic educational principles and apply learning to everyday situations while embracing technology to achieve success in a career.

Fine Arts

Develop creativity and cultural awareness through experience, and develop knowledge through an appreciation of visual arts, crafts, performing arts, and creative writing.

Health & Life Skills

Develops youth capacity to engage in positive behaviors that nurture their own well-being, set personal goals, and live successfully as self-sufficient adults.

Sports, Fitness, & Recreation

These activities develop physical education, positive use of leisure time, skills for stress management, appreciation for the environment, and social skills.

Formula for Impact

- A safe, positive environment
- Fun
- Supportive relationships
- Opportunities and expectations
- Recognition for club members

Staffing for Success

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County has provided programs for youth in our area since 1956. The most critical component of our programs' success is founded on providing educated, well-trained staff who are dedicated to our mission.

All staff members must successfully complete the following requirements:

- Annual training in youth development and safety
- Pre-employment and annual criminal background check, driver's record check and drug-screening
- CPR and First Aid Certification for all staff

Our locations are regularly assessed by internal monitoring and site visits from qualified professionals. Staff members are evaluated annually to ensure that they meet quality standards. It is our expectation that staff members represent the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County in a positive and professional manner at all times. We are confident in our staff members and their ability to serve as role models and implement excellent programs for youth.

Who We Are

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County is part of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America national charter. We are the largest and most effective youth development organization in the world with more than 6,000 Clubs and four million members. As an organization, we strive to provide our members with the following Youth Development Outcomes: Positive Self Identity, Competencies (educational, employment, social, emotional, & cultural), Community & Civic Involvement, and Health & Well Being.

Our Youth Development Strategy

All of our programs have been created with a goal of providing young people with the skills they need to succeed. We help develop youth for success; this is called our Youth Development Strategy:

Competence

Young people feel proud and confident when they acquire new skills and know they can do something and do it well. This happens naturally through participation in programs, but it can be enhanced through a conscious effort to help develop skills and to recognize members formally and informally for their achievements.

Usefulness

Young people know the satisfaction of doing something of value for others. It is important to seek out opportunities for young people of all ages to do something useful for others, whether it is helping at the Club or participating in community service.

Belonging

Young people know they are welcome at the Club and feel they fit in and are accepted. This occurs naturally in the Boys & Girls Clubs. It is enhanced through warm greetings from staff members when young people arrive at the Club, the use of small group programs, recognition programs, and anything else that helps to make young people feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.

Power and Influence

Young people know their opinions are heard and valued and that they can influence decisions. This can be enhanced through participation in youth councils, discussion groups, interest surveys, and other opportunities to contribute to the development of Club programs and rules.

Membership Requirements

The Club is open to all children in grades 1st- 12th. Membership applications can be completed by a parent or guardian at any of our locations. Parents are asked to complete the application and pay the annual membership fee of \$15.00 in person before membership can begin. Refer to the membership fee section of this handbook.



Behavioral Policy

Our goal at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County is to provide a safe environment for all of our members.

It is our hope that that every member treats the Club, staff, equipment, and other members with Respect. It becomes necessary, however, to deal with inappropriate behavior quickly, professionally, and with compassion.

Below is a list of inappropriate behaviors and their possible consequences.

- Minor Incidents**
- Screaming/Yelling
 - Running in the lobby, games room, stairwells, etc.
 - Being in an unsupervised area
 - Rough Housing
 - Name Calling / Teasing / Drama

- Possible Consequences:**
- Warning / Activity Time Out
 - Parents to be Notified
 - Suspension from Program
 - Other Character Building Options

- Major Incidents**
- Disrespecting staff members and volunteers
 - Bullying/Intimidating
 - Leaving the property without permission
 - Failure to follow directions on field trips

- Possible Consequences:**
- Notify Parents
 - Suspension from program
 - Loss of Field Trips
 - Termination from Program
 - Other Character Building Options

- Severe Incidents**
- Intent to Harm (Fighting, Punching, Biting, Spitting, etc.)
 - Threatening Staff or Members
 - Stealing or Vandalizing
 - Disturbing Drivers (coming out of seat-belt, fighting in van, throwing items out of van, etc.)
 - Inappropriate cell phone/social media use

- Possible Consequences:**
- Notify Parents
 - Suspension from program
 - Loss of Field Trips
 - Termination from program
 - Other Character Building Options

I have read and understand the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County, Goshen Club’s policies on behavior. Continuous inappropriate behaviors may result in my child being removed from the program for a period of time. All behavioral infractions will be documented and any suspensions or terminations from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County program will be reviewed by the Area Director.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Child/Member Signature

CODE OF CONDUCT

OUR MISSION: *To inspire and empower all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, & responsible citizens.*

PURPOSE: The purpose of our Code of Conduct is to help guarantee that all members of the Boys & Girls Club act in a manner that promotes outstanding ethics to themselves, one another, and to staff/volunteers. Promoting these values also helps to ensure that the Boys & Girls Club is a fun and safe atmosphere for all Club members.

LIFE SKILLS: Practicing and upholding these principals daily in the Club will also help our members develop these necessary life-skills;

- Resiliency
- Courage
- Pride
- Initiative
- Cooperation
- Caring
- Common Sense
- Flexibility
- Patience
- Problem Solving
- Craftsmanship
- Communication/Active Listening

Recognizing that it is not possible to address all ethical situations that may arise, the following principals are intended as a guide to help all members make good judgements and decisions on behalf of the Boys & Girls Club and our mission.

Principals of Positive Behavior

- **INTEGRITY:** *To act according to what is right, even **when no one is looking.***

– I pledge to do my best to uphold always choosing right when faced with the decision between right and wrong, even when it is difficult.

- **EXCELLENCE:** *To excel, to put effort into doing your **personal best.***

–I will strive to be the best version of myself possible. This includes having a positive attitude in all areas of the club, and when in the community with the Club.

- **HONESTY:** *The act of telling the **truth.***

– I will communicate directly, respectfully, honestly, and openly with all staff members and other club members. I will be honest in all regards to the Club.

- **DIVERSITY:** *The quality or state of having many **different kinds, types, ideas, cultures, religions, or races.***

–I will support and value diversity. I will support an environment that embraces all similarities and differences that all people bring to this organization. Whether that be Club members, staff, or volunteers.

- **RESPECT:** *To treat others, and yourself with care and courtesy.*

– I will respect myself, others, and Boy & Girls Club property.

- **RESPONSIBILITY:** *To take ownership of one's own decisions, actions, or words.*

– I will take responsibility for my actions, for my decisions, and my words both when at the Club and when in the community with the Club.

I have read the above and promise to do my best to comply with the characteristics outlined (*Integrity, Honesty, Diversity, Respect, and Responsibility.*)

As a Member of the Boys & Girls Club of Elkhart County I pledge to uphold the principals stated in our Code of Conduct.

Parent Signature

Date:

X _____

____/____/____

Member Signature

Date:

X _____

____/____/____

Member Expectations

1. Have fun!
2. Participate in programs and activities.
3. Follow the directions of all staff.
4. Be courteous and respectful in your words and actions.
5. Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
6. Be kind and call other members by their name.
7. Take care of the equipment and Club building.
8. Stay in supervised areas of the Club.
9. Walk please, running only in the gym.
10. Dress appropriately at all times.

Dress Code

Members should dress appropriately for active play. Athletic shoes are required for gym and outdoor play; open-toed shoes are not permitted in the gym. In order to participate in the gym, the club member must be wearing tennis shoes. Members are asked to dress in a way that demonstrates respect for self and others. Skirts and shorts must be at finger-tip length. Undergarments must be covered at all times. Sagging is inappropriate and will not be allowed. Staff will enforce the dress code and will let parents know of dress code concerns. Hat and hoods are allowed outside only and/or with Unit Director approval.

Medication

Boys & Girls Club staff members may not store or administer any medication at any time. If your child takes any prescription or non-prescription medications, it is the parent's responsibility to make sure that child takes their medicine. Please see Unit Director with any concerns. Parents and/or emergency contact must be available and will be expected to immediately pick up their child if there is a medical concern.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, we will observe the same closure days as schools. In the event that school is released early due to weather concerns, we cannot guarantee that transportation service will be available. Clubs will close at 6pm when weather conditions are a concern. Be sure to check Social Media, Boys & Girls Club website (www.bgcelkhartcounty.org) or call the Club, on inclement weather days to find out more information. When there is a heat advisory, or other weather conditions, we reserve the right to cancel field trips.

Parent Expectations

Just as our members must observe specific rules in the Club, so too must all adults who enter our facilities. Profanity and/or inappropriate language will not be tolerated. As role models, we expect that all adults entering our Clubs respect our rules. We ask parent complaints are handled in writing and directly with the Unit Director. Please ask for and fill out the appropriate form.

Parent Involvement & Visitation

We encourage parents to get involved in all aspects of their children's lives. Parents are welcome to visit the Club at any time, but to enter into our programs to observe or participate they must fill out a volunteer application. If you also wish to interact with your child during program hours, you will be asked to complete a volunteer application. Both of the statements above will require a background check. All adults who interact with any child during program hours must observe this policy. This is designed to protect all children.

Parent Concerns or Suggestion:

We strive to exceed every parent's expectation of our program by providing quality and structure in a safe and caring environment for your child(ren). If you have a concern or suggestion to improve our programs, please speak with the Director. If you feel your concerns were not appropriately addressed, please call the Administrative Office at 574-534-5933.

Member Expectations for Program Participation

The Boys & Girls Club positively impacts its members by offering a set schedule of fun & educational programming for all members. Participation is varied daily programming is expected by all members. Submission of this application allows your child to participate in our Daily Core Programs and suggested specialized programs. Additional release forms may be provided for specialized programs: (please ask the staff for further explanation of any of our programs and scheduled dates).

Personal Belongings

Personal toys, video games, i-pods, cameras and any other personal belongings will need to be left in their cubby at the front counter. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Outside Contact/Conflict of Interest

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County strongly discourages staff members from forming any relationships with parents or families outside of our program. It is our policy that staff members do not baby-sit, provide transportation, or have any contact with youth or parents outside of the Boys & Girls Club program times. This includes contact on social media. Please respect the professional boundaries of staff members.

Electronics

All members are responsible for personal belongings. Any toys, MP3 players, game systems, and valuables should be left at home. Any such items will be held by the staff and returned to the parent upon leaving the Club. It is your responsibility to check the Lost & Found for any missing items. The Lost & Found is emptied monthly and items left behind will be donated to charity

Cellular Phones

We require that cell phones be turned off and placed in members' cubbies at the front counter (exceptions may exist for teens – for details speak with your site's director). If a child's cell phone interrupts programming, the phone will be retained by staff and returned to the child's parent upon pick-up. We are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones or other personal belongings. Disciplinary actions including suspension, will apply for frequent violations of this policy. Exceptions can be made at Unit Directors discretion.

Movie Policy

It is our policy that Boys & Girls Club members watch movies that are only "G" or "PG" rated. For "PG13" rated movies the Unit Director must approve and release forms will be required.

Transportation

Please contact community schools insuring your child gets onto the correct bus for the Boys & Girls Club. High school students will walk to the Boys & Girls Club. In addition to a completed membership form, members must have a transportation permission slip signed by a parent or guardian to ride the bus or van. Members who are transported to the Club are expected to participate in the programs. (Our transportation is provided so that members will participate.)

Release of Children Policy

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County locations are not licensed childcare facilities but are classified as youth recreation facilities. Our impact is based on providing structured educational and recreational programming to encourage youth development in our facilities. Because of our mission we stress the importance of regular program participation by all members. To have the greatest impact, our staff encourages on-going Club attendance during the maximum hours of operation. Since our Unit sites are classified as youth recreation facilities we observe an open door policy. Although we want the youth active in our programs as much as possible, our staff do not maintain the right to grant “permission” for children to leave the facility, nor do our staff take the authority to insist or enforce them to stay.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County is not responsible for children if they choose to leave the Unit at any time. Parents are responsible to ensure Club arrival and departure times and that procedures are discussed, understood, and enforced with their children at all times. To help us monitor outcomes the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County Locations maintain a sign-in, sign-out list. We also maintain daily attendance and participation records by requiring our members to scan in and out daily using our current software tracking system. It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure their child is keeping up with their membership and signing in/scanning in each time they come into the Unit location, as well as each time they leave the Unit location.

Our staff value parental involvement in what we do to help the development and maintain safety of their youth so Parents are expected to come into the Club location to pick up their children while their children are checking out. We will not accept calls to send children outside nor do we approve of pulling a child from scheduled programming to wait for a parent at the front of the Club. All Club locations have an open door policy so parents must be sure to work out arrival and departure plans with their children. If you have any special requests regarding our check-in/check-out process, please bring them to the attention of the Unit Director.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

The Boys & Girls Club Open Door Policy is a defining hallmark of the Club’s operating philosophy. True to Boys & Girls Club tradition, it provides the openness to draw in the children who need us most. When and how a child leaves the Club is a matter for parents to work out with their child as we do not monitor who leaves the building. If a parent notifies us that a small child might have a tendency to wander out of the building, we attempt to alert staff to be on the lookout on a case-by-case basis. As the children grow older, we continue to work with parents to hold their children accountable for their actions including when they leave our building after they have been instructed by the parent not to. We will go to great lengths to protect our children from harm while they are with us. But to enable the openness to attract what in many cases are disenfranchised children, we need to be able to rely on parents to monitor when, how, and with whom a child leaves the Club and to safeguard them elsewhere.

Wish List Items/We Need Support

We always welcome parent involvement through the donation of time or resources. Below is a list of items that we are always in need of at our Club sites. We truly appreciate anything that parents can contribute. Your donations will certainly enhance our programs and make a difference to the children we serve.

Board Games
Construction Paper
Crayons
Markers
Pencils
Pens
Glue
Notebook Paper

Non-perishable snacks
Balls
Hula Hoops
Jump Ropes
First Aid Supplies
Reading Books
Coloring Books
Folders

Extra Information

Summer 2017 Field Trip Information

We are so thrilled to share another wonderful, fun filled summer with you and your family. Field trips are **subject to change**. All field trips are limited to availability and are on a **"first come, first serve"** basis.

For any questions regarding field trip schedules, pricing, cancellations, or rescheduling, please see the Unit Director, Youth Program Manager, Education Program Manager, or Teen Program Manager.

- It is our goal to ensure the highest quality customer service. Our summer field trips fill up fast. Field trips are intended to be viewed as a privilege and/or as an incentive to our program. Please understand that the Field Trips we offer are in place as an extra activity for members who are current with their membership dues and in line with our Code of Conduct to enjoy as an extra summer activity. Because SAFETY is our number one focus when it comes to Field Trips we must observe the following guidelines:
 - Due to safety regulations we need to limit the number of members that attend in order to represent a safe staff to member ratio.
 - We observe a "First Come, First Serve" process with our field trips so that it may be fair and within our means to provide staff and transportation for each field trip. We do not have the capability to develop a catered list to call each family for each field trip to give the option for them to go or pass up a trip. It is the parent's responsibility to review the field trip schedule for availability.
 - In the case that you cancel your child from a trip, or your child is late for a trip, or your child is not wearing their Summer Field Trip Shirt, or your child loses their privilege to a field trip by not following our Club Policies/Expectations/Code of Conduct and we cannot refund payment. Field trip fees cannot be transferred to another field trip.
 - If we cancel a field trip, we will give a refund. This is why we ask parents to observe the process of registering members at least one week in advance of a trip. We highly suggest that parents register their child as soon as possible to ensure he/she is able to secure a place on the trip.
 - We ask that you not bring a child to a field trip when he/she has lost their privilege to attend.
 - If you wish to bring an additional child to one of our field trips and be with our group, we require that you supervise he/she at all times and ensure they are not disruptive to our group and/or field trip processes. We encourage parent participation and volunteerism, so please make arrangements with us if you wish to attend a field trip and help. A Volunteer Application will need to be approved before volunteering takes place.
 - All field trips must be paid in full with a signed permission slip turned in with the payment.
 - Field Trip Registration to be completed by 5:15 p.m. daily. After 5:15 p.m., we close Field Trip Registration and we will re-open registration the following business day. We will not hold a spot by verbal agreement, nor will we accept permission slips without payment, or payments without permission slips.
 - All Field Trip Calendars are located at the Parent Information Desk and Field Trip Permission Slips are available upon request. As a reminder, field trip spaces are filled on a **"First Come, First Serve"** process.

- In order for us to provide the best customer service, we will post the number of openings we have for each field trip one week in advance. We will also post when a field trip is full and/or is closed for sign-ups.
- Thank you for understanding that we are conducting programs and activities in the facility, as well as on field trips throughout the week. We strive to put safety first, to ensure we are within a safe staff to member ratio.
- Field trips release forms includes Club to Club transportation, and the ability to walk to local parks and fields.

Please Note...

Some event changes are out of our control and our field trip calendar is subject to change. In the event of a change, we will notify you as soon as possible. All field trips will be limited to available transportation. Parents are required to complete field trip permission forms and any applicable payments must be made prior to the trip date.

Your child must be present at the Unit at least one hour before the field trip, or as indicated on permission slip, in order to ensure that he or she does not miss the bus. Generally, afternoon and all-day field trips will typically return to the Unit no later than 5:00pm.

Field Trip Payments

To make the field trip planning and payment process as easy as possible; you will need to make your payment for field trips this summer one week in advance to ensure your child's attendance. **Trips are filled on a first come, first serve basis.** In the event of a cancellation, we will work with you to reschedule or provide a refund. **Please keep in mind we have a no refund policy for our field trips if you choose to cancel or your child loses their privilege due to behavior issues.** We do not accept permission slips without full payment. Field trips must be paid in cash.

What to Bring on Field Trips...

- **Light Clothes** - Due to the heat, on summer field trips please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately. It is also advised that your child wears a sun visor or hat on field trip days.
- **Sagging pants below normal waistline is prohibited.**
- **Athletic Shoes and Socks** - Children that don't have proper tennis shoes may be limited in their activities. Flip-flops are a safety risk and easy to tear. **Flip Flops should not be worn to our program and/or in the building for regular programming, but may be packed with swimwear to wear on swimming events.**
- **Swimming Trips - Swimsuit, Towel & Sunscreen** - Make sure you child has these essentials on field trip days that involve water. Please send a bag for your child's wet clothes as well. (If your child needs sunscreen please provide this and also insure that you apply sunscreen to your child prior to any outdoor field trips. We are not responsible for any skin damage that may occur.)
- **Spending Money** - On certain field trips, members will be at locations that have concession stands, gift shops or other extras. You might want to send along some spending money on those days. **The children will be responsible for holding their money and other items.**
- **Water Bottle** – We advise all parents to send Club Members with a water bottle. This will help make sure your child will have additional liquid on hot days. This is highly recommended.

****Please put your child's name on all of his or her belongings. Children will be responsible for their own possessions.*

Other Important Expectations to Remember

- The Boys & Girls Club does NOT operate as a daycare. Your child's enjoyment of our programs and opportunities will result from his/her full participation in activities and his/her commitment to follow our Code of Conduct/Club Rules. If he/she chooses not to participate or comply with the Code of Conduct/Club Rules, he/she may be suspended from the Club or from field trips and activities that are planned.
- Membership is available to youth ages 6-18, **with proof of age for all six-year-olds entering the program.**
- Members are required to check-in and out at the front desk each day as they arrive and as they leave.
- The Boys & Girls Club hours vary between summer and fall. Members are to be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. during the summer. During the fall, our Club closes at 7:00pm for Cadets and Juniors and 8:00pm for Teens. **Parents who are not able to pick up their child until after the times listed above on a regular basis may need to consider other child care options.** Reoccurring late fees may result in removal from program without refund. (*SEE SAFE CHILD AGREEMENT)
- Our goal is to maintain proper, open communication with our members' families. If at any time you have a question about your child's behavior or any other Club-related concerns, please contact the Unit Director or Individual Services Manager to set up a meeting. We must be able to reach you or a person you designate at all times regarding your child. Any issues regarding your child's safety or major behavioral issues need to be communicated within 24 hours.
- **The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County has a NO TOLERANCE policy on violence, threats or dangerous behavior. You will receive a phone call as soon as any such behavior is exhibited on a consistent basis. If we are unable to reach you, we reserve the right to contact the authorities to assist us with the problem. Our number one priority is to establish a fun and safe place in which all members can learn and grow.**
- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to request Club information regarding special events and/or activities.
- The Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County enforces a dress code to ensure children are wearing proper attire. Please refer to the Parent Handbook for more information or speak with a Unit Director.
- Cell phones need to be placed in cubbies at the front counter for all members in grades 1-5. Please refer to the Parent Handbook.
- Club arrival and departure times are enforced. Our Club's maintain daily attendance and participation records by scanning members in and out daily. **Parents are expected to come into the Club to pick up their children in the evenings.** We will not accept calls to send children outside or have them waiting. All Clubs have an open door policy so parents must be sure to work out arrival and departure plans with their children.
- Our programs conduct background checks using information that is obtained from the Department of Public Safety for all program employees and volunteers who work with children.

It is our goal to impact your child in a positive manner by truly being "*A Positive Place for Kids*". Many exciting opportunities await Boys & Girls Club members as they grow to become positive, effective leaders in their home, school, and community.

Sincerely,

Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County