

# Welcome to the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley!

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

We are excited to have your child join as a member of the Club! We look forward to a positive and fun experience with him/her as a Club member. We strive to serve families by providing quality programming for children ages 6-18. Our program offers the opportunity for children to enjoy a safe and warm, child-oriented experience. This handbook contains information regarding your child's participation in our programs. It is very important that you read this handbook as it will answer many of the questions you may have about the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley.

Our Club has expectations every member **must** follow to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all members. There may be other rules for specific programs or situations as needed.

**Violation of any of the Club rules whether on Club property, off site in a Club sponsored program, or in a Club vehicle will be addressed.**

**Contact Information:** Effective communication with Club members and their families is critical to the success of any child/youth's experience.

**Contact us at:**

*Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley*

P.O. Box 1477  
Russellville, AR 72801  
**(479) 968-7819**

Dardanelle, AR 72834  
**(479) 229-2982**

**Senior Unit Coordinator:** Cartha Canada - [ccanada@bgclubsarv.org](mailto:ccanada@bgclubsarv.org)

**Dardanelle Unit Director:** Max Chronister - [mchronister@bgclubsarv.org](mailto:mchronister@bgclubsarv.org)

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Chief Executive Officer: Misty Givens [mgivens@bgclubsarv.org](mailto:mgivens@bgclubsarv.org)

**Follow us on Facebook:**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley

## Parent Handbook

### **DISCLAIMER**

The Parent Handbook is for the convenience of parents, legal guardians, and Club members. The Handbook is intended to serve as a guide to help parents come to know Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley (BGCARV) programs and opportunities as well as to set forth expectations and agreements.

The Handbook will answer many questions you may have about programs, discipline, Club expectations, safety, locations, and other topics. No set of expectations or guidelines can cover every conceivable situation that might arise at a Club. The expectations, policies and procedures set forth in this Handbook are intended to apply under normal circumstances. However, we recognize that from time to time, there may be circumstances that require immediate or nonstandard responses.

This Handbook does not limit the authority of Boys & Girls Clubs of Arkansas River Valley to deviate from the scripted procedures set forth in this Handbook, and to handle individual circumstances as they arise in the manner deemed most appropriate by BGCARV taking into consideration the best interests of BGCARV, its employees, Club members or overall organizational community.

The policies may be revised or updated, at any time during the year. All families will be advised of changes via email.

### **5 Core Programs**

To ensure all of our members have great futures and to achieve three of our priority outcomes - academic success, good character and leadership, and living healthy lifestyles, we follow our Formula For Impact (FFI). The FFI combines youth that need us most with an outcome driven Club experience, which includes providing high-yield learning activities and targeted programs, actively encouraging young people to attend more frequently, and employing the Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development: A Safe, Positive Environment; Fun; Supportive Relationships; Opportunities and Expectations; and Recognition.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

#### **Parents/Guardians May Expect:**

- Their children to be cared for in a safe supportive environment.
- To visit with the Club/Program Director about concerns related to their child or the program.
- To be informed about their child's behavior.
- To be informed about program activities and upcoming events.

## Parent Handbook

### **The Club Expects That Parents Will:**

- Keep child's records up-to-date; including changes to address and phone numbers.
- Pick up children on time.
- Follow Club policy.
- Contact the Club/Program Director regarding issues or concerns relating to their child.
- Our main source of communication is email and Facebook, please read emails and follow our Facebook page "The Boys and Girls Club of the Arkansas River Valley"
- Respect and treat staff with courtesy at all times.
- Attend parent meetings and MANDATORY orientations.

### **Children May Expect:**

- Clear communicated rules and expectations that create a safe, structured, and supportive environment.
- To use all program equipment, materials, and facilities on an equal basis.
- To receive respectful treatment.
- To have discipline that is fair.
- To receive nurturing care from staff members who are actively involved with them.

### **Core Program Areas**

Boys and Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley provide many different programs for youth who have a variety of interests and needs. These are the Core Areas:

#### **Character and Leadership Development**

The Character and Leadership Development program area empowers members to support and influence their Club and community, sustain meaningful relationships with others, develop positive self-image, and respect their own cultural identities as well as those of others.

#### **Education and Career Development**

The Education and Career Development program area enables members to become proficient in basic educational disciplines. It applies learning to everyday situations and embraces technology to achieve success in school and in a career.

#### **Health and Life Skills**

The Health and Life Skills program area enables members to engage in positive behaviors that nurture their own well-being, set personal goals, and live successfully as self-sufficient adults.

#### **The Arts**

The Arts program area enables youth to develop their creativity and cultural awareness through knowledge and appreciation of the visual arts, crafts, photography, performing arts, and creative writing.

### **Sports, Fitness and Recreation**

The Sports, Fitness and Recreation program area encourages fitness, healthy lifestyles, and positive use of leisure time, skills for stress management, appreciation for the environment, and positive social skills.

### **Membership Information**

Membership is open for all youth ages 6-18. A child is considered a member after the required online registration is completed and any applicable membership fee has been paid. Required online registration includes a membership application and the acceptance of the parent/member handbook. Your child must sign in and out with staff when leaving.

### **Open Door Policy**

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley is a drop-in facility and has an open door policy that states:

- Members are required to attend the Club 3 days a week and may be dismissed if attendance requirements are not consistently met.

- Members must stay on the property or in the building with staff unless they are walking home for the day

### **Hours of Operation**

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley will be open after school 3:00pm - 6:00pm. There are also options for the summer months as well. Please visit the website for program availability or call the office. Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley will follow the Russellville/Dardanelle Public School calendar and will close on days that the school is closed. A club calendar will be made available for parents, please pay close attention to the Club calendar.

### **Inclement Weather**

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley will be closed if Russellville/Dardanelle Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather. On a day school is in session, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley may be closed if unsafe weather conditions are forecasted during after school program hours and could pose a threat to members and/or staff. Notifications will be sent out on Facebook and myClubHub if this occurs.

### **Transportation**

Staff will walk members from Oakland Heights Elementary. Most Russellville schools provide bus transportation to the Club. Dardanelle K-5 schools will provide bus transportation to the Dardanelle Club. Please check with your child's school for more information. Pickup from the Club is the responsibility of members and their parents.

## **DROP OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

Parents, Guardians and/or authorized individuals are NOT permitted to escort a club member past the designated check-in station. Members, from school-based clubs or dismissed from the school bus, must enter the building and check in at the designated check-in station, where the information will be recorded in our membership management system. After signing in, members will go to the designated area to join their group. Members will remain with their group until pick up.

## **Food/drinks**

Children may receive a free after school meal and afternoon snack every day at the Club. Meals are served until 3:45pm and include milk. A daily snack is provided at around 4:00pm also. Youth are encouraged to bring a water bottle, but water fountains are always available.

## **Field Trips**

Summer programs include various off-site field trips. Signed permission form and applicable fees must be returned by the deadline noted on the permission form in order for a member to be eligible to attend the field trip. Members may have trip privileges revoked by staff at any time due to behavioral issues.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers are a vital part of our program. Prior to being approved, volunteers must submit a completed application and background check. They receive orientation, training and are paired with staff to assist where needed.

## **Technology/Computer Usage**

Use of Club computers and the internet is a privilege. Members are expected to adhere to program rules and instructions when using Club equipment. If technology is used inappropriately, this privilege may be taken away.

## **Health Policy**

It is important that parents cooperate with Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley Health Policy. **Illness** - If your child becomes ill at the Club, all attempts will be made to notify you. Please do not bring your child to the Club if they become ill before leaving home. Children who do not attend school or leave school early due to illness should not be brought to the Club. This is especially important if their illness is infectious or contagious. Members who come to the Club sick will be sent home. Examples of specific illnesses/conditions where a member may be denied access to the Club include: Fever, Skin Rashes, Any Contagious Illness, Active Head Lice, Ringworm.

### **Use of Medication**

Medicine must be kept at the Club in a secure area – members are not allowed to keep their own medications, except in certain, medically necessary circumstances. The Club cannot administer any medication to any member, except in life-threatening situations. Members requiring medication during Club hours must self-administer medicine in the presence of a staff member. To accomplish this, a member must be able to read the instructions for the medication as well as dispense and take the correct dose. Further, the member must have previously taken at least one dose of the medicine away from the Club to help ensure members will not have unexpected reactions to medicine at the Club. Club Staff must be thoroughly apprised of any possible reactions to and the storage needs of the medicine.

### **Emergency and Accident Procedures**

An emergency constitutes an injury of a child requiring a doctor's care or any situation requiring emergency vehicles on the premises. In the event of a medical emergency involving a child, staff will: stay with the child, send someone to call 911, call the parent or guardian, notify the CEO, accompany the child to the hospital if a parent/guardian is unavailable, provided there are adequate staff members to remain on site, remain with the child until parent/guardian arrives, complete an Incident Report form.

### **In the event of a minor injury involving a child, the staff will**

Administer first aid as necessary, have the child rest until he/she is able and ready to resume participation, inform the parent at pick up about the injury and any treatment administered.

### **Chronic Illness, Dietary Restrictions & Special Needs**

Parents are encouraged to inform Club staff of all relevant information so that we may work together to meet the needs of your child(ren) to the best of our ability. Parents whose children have been diagnosed with special needs are encouraged to share home and school setting needs with staff so that we can attempt to mirror successful strategies when possible during our program time and work to see if this program will be a positive fit for the child.

### **Phones and Personal Property**

Personal electronics may be used in the Club with staff permission, but excluded during certain programs. However, members must refrain from taking pictures/videos of other members. Members may not engage in using social media in a negative manner or in any inappropriate fashion. The Boys & Girls Club phone will be made available for children to use in the event of emergency or when guardian notification is necessary. Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley is not responsible for the lost, stolen, or damaged personal property brought to the Club. We strongly encourage members not to bring items of monetary or sentimental value to our facility.

### **Technology/Computer Usage**

Use of Club computers and the internet is a privilege. Members are expected to sign a technology agreement to adhere to program rules and instructions when using Club equipment. If technology is used inappropriately, this privilege may be taken away.

### **Member Code of Conduct**

Discipline Policy The member code of conduct is effective during the following times and in the following places:

1. Club facilities including School-based Clubs.
2. Off site at any Club activity, function or event and while traveling to and from such events
3. Club vehicles provided for members' transportation by the Clubs

Membership in the Club is a privilege, and the focus of our programs is impacting our members' lives in a positive manner. Members of Boys & Girls Clubs have high standards for their behavior. Acceptable behavior is defined by the following:

- Respect for themselves
- Respect for others
- Respect for staff
- Respect for Boys & Girls Clubs & Property

While our primary focus in working with members is to acknowledge positive behavior, at times consequences are necessary. As often as possible, Club staff will attempt to use the following methods before resorting to a more formal disciplinary procedure:

- Reminding members that certain behavior is inappropriate and using redirection to positive activities.
- Using preventive management techniques and encouraging self-discipline
- Stressing positive behaviors.
- Providing an enriching environment to diminish disruptive behavior.
- Offering a selection of interesting activities and giving choices.
- Changing environments (i.e. removal from program) before behaviors escalate.
- Facilitating the settlement of disputes versus intervening.
- Letting children experience the consequences of their actions when appropriate.
- Establishing mutual respect.

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We ask parents/guardians to please let us know if anything exceptional or unusual is happening at home or in other aspects of the child's life. Having this information will help us when working with your child(ren). Occasionally, misbehavior is so severe, repetitive or the code of conduct has been violated that additional steps must be taken. In these cases, a progressive discipline policy will be implemented. When this occurs, the Club Staff will select an appropriate level of discipline.

### **Those levels include the following:**

- Verbal Redirection - Club staff will ask the member to choose a different behavior and give them logical consequences for failure to comply. (i.e. apology, sitting out for a period of time, leaving the area, etc.)
- Think Time - Required time away from the group to reflect on how positive choices could have changed outcomes, also time to refocus and regain self-control.
- Written Warning - Member's behavior is formally documented and parents/guardians are notified of the member's behavior. Written warnings are given to ensure parents/guardians know that continued behavioral issues may result in future suspension.
- Suspension - Member is removed from Club programs for 1 or more days. The Club may also include certain requirements for a member to return to the Club.

**Clubs will not release any Club documentation or reports. All Club documentation or reports remain the property of Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley.**

**Suspension/Termination of Membership** - May result in response to continued inappropriate behavior. The Club Director and any member of the Senior Management Team are the only staff persons authorized to suspend members. The Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer are the only staff authorized to terminate membership. (Parents will be notified by phone call and/or conference when the child is picked up) Actions that may result in suspension and/or termination are listed below but are not limited to:

- Violent behavior that may endanger other Club members or staff
- Striking a staff member in any way
- Excessive or abusive language
- Not complying with the Club expectations
- Bringing a weapon into the Club or onto Club property
- Fighting
- Theft
- Vandalism or abuse to building property or equipment
- Bullying or harassing of another member (we define bullying as a repeated behavior that places one person in power over another including verbal or physical threats and/or actions.)
- Excessive arguing
- Anything in the form of sexual misconduct
- Bringing illegal drugs/alcohol into the Club
- Attending the Club while under the influence of an illegal drug and/or alcohol



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- Excessive continual suspensions could lead to termination of membership

Any level of disciplinary action may occur on the first offense or any subsequent offense depending upon the nature of the situation and the age/maturity of the member involved. Each member shall be informed of the offense and shall be afforded an opportunity to explain his/her behavior before disciplinary action is taken.

Please discuss these policies with your child:

- Club members are respectful to staff, volunteers, visitors, parents and other members.
- Club members play fairly and are honest.
- Club members applaud the efforts of others.
- Club members resolve disagreements in a positive manner.
- Club members take care of Club equipment.
- Club members do not use inappropriate language or gestures.
- Club members always dress appropriately.
- Club members know the importance of listening during Club meetings and while instructions are being given.
- Club members run ONLY in designated areas.
- Club members adhere to the code of conduct.
- All cell phones must be turned off and kept out of sight while members are in the Club program.

**\*The Club is not responsible for personal items brought from home.**

### **Clothing**

- Coats, jackets, backpacks are to be kept with the member
- Clothing must be worn as intended (no tying up shirts, rolling down waistbands, etc.)
- Inappropriate clothing will not be tolerated (clothing must be school acceptable)
- Tennis shoes/closed toe shoes are encouraged for gym and outdoor play

### **Personal Items/Lost and Found**

- Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. A lost and found bin is located near the front of our lobby.

### **Weapons/Drugs**

**Weapons/Drugs are prohibited from The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley.**

- Members who bring any form of weapon/drug to the Club will be immediately suspended. If deemed necessary, the local Police Department will be notified.

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### **Equipment/Facilities**

- All equipment must be used as it is intended
- Members must not abuse Club equipment
- Members may not loiter in or around restrooms
- Members may not leave program areas without permission from staff
- Members may not enter rooms without staff present
- Food/drinks/candy must be consumed in the cafeteria only, and only during appropriate meal times.

### **Parent Behavior Information**

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley is committed to fostering a positive and enriching environment for both children and our staff members and will address inappropriate or unacceptable behaviors by parents on our premises. If a staff member suspects a parent of questionable behavior that threatens the safety of children or staff, they will contact the CEO, and/or local authorities.

Unacceptable Behaviors may include but are not limited to:

- Appearing intoxicated or smelling of alcohol
- Appearing impaired due to drug use or other issue
- Threatening or intimidating children, staff, or volunteers, whether physical or verbal
- Verbally/physically sexually harassing another person including staff, children or other adults

\*Note: Inappropriate parent behaviors may result in termination of a child's enrollment

### **One Day Suspension/Warning**

Based on the judgment of the Unit Director, when a Boys & Girls Club member is not meeting behavioral standards

The staff will:

- Issue a warning that if negative behavior continues, the member may be suspended for a minimum of one day
- Youth will be informed that future negative behavior could result in a longer suspension and/or loss of Boys & Girls Club membership
- Staff will complete a documented behavior report for future reference

### **One Day Suspension**

When the Unit Director determines that the member's behavior does not meet our standards and the prior warning has been provided

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The staff will:

- Issue a suspension of at least one day
- Complete a documented behavior report detailing the member's infractions and the date member may return to the Club
- When possible, contact a parent to notify them of the suspension. If contact is not immediately made, staff will speak with the parent when they arrive at the Club for pick up.

### **One Week Suspension-Continued Major Incident**

After a youth has been suspended for one day, any future negative behavior may result in a one week suspension. The Unit Director may implement a one week suspension if the member's negative behavior continues

The staff will:

- Issue a one week suspension
- Complete a documented behavior report detailing the member's infractions and the date member may return to the Club
- When possible, contact a parent to notify them of the suspension. If contact is not immediately made, staff will speak with the parent when they arrive at the Club for pick up.

### **One Month Suspension-Continued Major Incident**

After a youth has been suspended for one week, any future negative behavior may result in a one month suspension. The Unit Director will implement a one month suspension if the member's negative behavior continues.

The staff will issue a one month suspension, complete a written behavior report detailing the member's infractions and the date member may return to the Club, when possible, contact a parent to notify them of the suspension. If contact is not immediately made, staff will speak with the parent when they arrive at the Club for pick up.

### **Permanent Suspension**

Continued negative behavior that creates an unsafe program environment for fellow Boys & Girls Club members and/or staff may result in a youth's Boys and Girls Club membership being revoked.

The staff will:

- Permanently suspend the member from the Club
- Complete a documented behavior report detailing the member's infractions
- Parent will be required to meet with the Unit Director and/or Executive Director

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\*We reserve the right to dismiss or deny registration to anyone for any reason.

**If you have any questions regarding this Parent & Member Handbook, please let us know. We would be glad to assist in any questions you may have!**

### **PARENTAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK**

By signing below you acknowledge that you have received a handbook and understand the rules and policies of the Boy & Girls Club of the Arkansas River Valley and request that your child be admitted into membership.

Please detach this sheet from the handbook and take the handbook home with you so that you and your child can read the policies, and keep the book as a reference.

#### **Photographs/ Videos**

I agree to let BGCARV take photos/videos of my child. These photos/videos will be used in promotional materials and/or on social media. If you do not want your child's photo/video to be used it must be given to the Program Director in writing.

#### **Refunds**

All payments are final. Refunds are not available.

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_