



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
**OF PALM BEACH COUNTY**

**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**  
**2017**

**Mission Statement**

“To inspire and assist all young people, especially those who need us the most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens”.

## **HISTORY OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA**

Boys & Girls Clubs of America had its beginnings in 1860 with several women in Hartford, Connecticut. Believing that boys who roamed the streets should have a positive alternative, they organized the first Club. In 1906, several Boys Clubs decided to affiliate. The Federated Boys Clubs in Boston was formed with 53 member organizations. In 1931, the Boys Club Federation of America became Boys Clubs of America. In 1956, Boys Clubs of America celebrated its 50th anniversary and received a U.S. Congressional Charter. To recognize the fact that girls are a part of our cause, the national organization's name was changed to Boys & Girls Clubs of America in 1990. Accordingly, Congress amended and renewed our charter.

### **The Facts:**

- 3.7 million youth served
- 4,175 Club sites
- Locations in all 50 states
- Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands plus domestic and international military bases
- Some 50,000+ adult staff
- 230,000+ program volunteers

## **HISTORY OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY**

Founded in 1971, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County is a not-for-profit youth development organization dedicated to promoting the educational, vocational, health leadership and character of boys and girls in a safe, nurturing environment. The Clubs provide more than a safe, fun and constructive alternative to being home alone – they offer a variety of award-winning developmental programs to help youth build skills, self-esteem and values during critical periods of growth. The thirteen Boys & Girls Clubs throughout Palm Beach County serve more than 8,000 children ages 6-18.

Relying on the dedication of our personnel, both paid and volunteer, and the efficient use of facilities, the Boys & Girls Clubs provide quality programs with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth regardless of race, creed or socioeconomic background. To achieve this vision, the organization works to strengthen its diversity by actively involving local communities and other youth service agencies in providing needed services to youth.

Some of the reasons Clubs make an invaluable impact on the lives of children in our community are:

- It is open to all children
- It fosters a sense of belonging
- It is there for kids when they need it – Clubs are open during the critical times when youth are not in school – after school, summer, spring and winter holidays and school breaks
- It has a trained, professional staff
- It offers a varied program curriculum
- It makes a difference – In a recent survey\*, 80% of Club alumni felt good about knowing right from wrong and 79% said the Boys & Girls Clubs inspired self-confidence. \* Louis Harris & Associates

## **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Everyone connected with Clubs works together as a team to provide a positive place for kids. The needs of Club members are a priority for all that work here. Together, we all make a difference. As volunteers we hope that you sharpen your skills and enhance your talents during your involvement with the Club and its members.

### **ORIENTATION**

At the end of this orientation you should be able to clearly understand who your Club Director is, where you are to sign-in and out each day, what your responsibilities are, the reach of Clubs in our area, all opportunities available for volunteering, and answers to all of your questions. Please be sure to inform the individual providing your orientation if you do not feel comfortable or do not understand the information presented to you. All efforts will be made to communicate these expectations in the clearest manner possible so that a full understanding has been reached.

### **BGCA.NET**

This website is an intranet system for club professionals and volunteers throughout the Boys & Girls Club movement, primarily as a resource for sharing information and best practices. Detailed information regarding Boys & Girls Club programs and current initiatives can be found there. Contact our Volunteer Mentor Coordinator if you are interested in registration and access to explore the website at your own leisure (referred to as .net by Club professionals).

### **SPILETT LEADERSHIP UNIVERSITY (SLU)**

SLU is a free program, available through bgca.net. We ask that volunteers interested in becoming more invested in Clubs, or planning on a long term of service consider completing at least the CORE section of SLU. Links to register can be found on .net. You may also reach out to our Volunteer Mentor Coordinator to schedule time with our Director of Talent Development who can help you navigate the process. CORE takes approximately 20-30 minutes to complete and must be passed prior to taking other sections. SLU can be a good professional development tool, for learning more about the supervision and development of youth, but also for the workforce in general. Please inform your staff liaison if you have taken CORE or other elements in SLU.

### **ASSIGNMENT**

A volunteer will be assigned to a position by our Volunteer Mentor Coordinator once all application paperwork has been returned and orientation completed. Assignments may vary based on input from both the volunteer and Club Director.

### **ATTENDANCE**

The positions volunteers fill are important to our Club. Therefore, it is essential that volunteers be punctual and regular in attendance when committing to a schedule. Volunteers need to sign in and out each time they enter the Club. Volunteers should notify their Club Director or the Volunteer Mentor Coordinator as soon as possible of any planned or unexpected absence.

## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

All volunteers should be dressed and groomed in appropriate good taste. Don't over-dress. Jeans, sneakers, and sweatshirts or t-shirts are fine. Short shorts, halter tops, spaghetti straps and other revealing attire are not considered appropriate, nor any clothing that portrays logos, wording or images that are in conflict with messaging being delivered at the Club. Shoes must have soft soles. No high heels or open toed sandals can be worn. Volunteers are required to sign in at the Front desk each day they are in attendance. At this time, they will be issued a lanyard with a Volunteer Badge to be worn while they are on premises. At the end of each shift Volunteers are required to sign out at the front desk and return the Volunteer Badge.

## **DRUG-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

The Club is a drug – free workplace. The possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs and/or tobacco or alcohol is prohibited within our workplace environment. All volunteers are prohibited from entering the Club under the influence of illegal substances and/or alcohol or marijuana. Continuing service demands that Volunteers abide by this policy.

## **HARASSMENT-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

The Club will not tolerate any harassment relating to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability or other protected status. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. The Club will not tolerate any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or any other conduct of a sexual nature by a female or a male. Harassment of any nature is a serious offense. Harassment will result in discharge. Any volunteer staff member believing he/she has been a victim of harassment should immediately talk to the Volunteer/Mentor Coordinator. The Club will not tolerate harassment of our staff and members.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

The Club cannot be responsible for the loss of personal funds or belongings, nor is it covered by insurance for such loss. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each volunteer to adequately safeguard personal belongings.

## **SERVICE AS A VOLUNTEER**

Resignation is defined as a separation from the Club initiated by the volunteer. A few weeks' notice of intent to resign would be appreciated to help members cope with the transition. Every Club volunteer may end his/her service at any time. The Club may end service at any time as well.

## **SUPERVISION**

All concerns, problems, criticisms and suggestions should be brought to the attention of your Club Director or the Volunteer Mentor Coordinator. Please feel free to express yourself. Volunteers often offer a fresh perspective, so your suggestions are welcome! Resolving concerns as early as possible avoids stressful situations and hurt feelings. Please feel free to express your concerns, ideas, feedback.

## PHONE USAGE

Good business practice dictates that our office telephones are restricted to the business of the organization. Volunteers should inform their friends and relatives that they are to restrict personal calls except in the case of an emergency. It is understood that cell phones are part of our daily lives, however cell phones can distract from building relationships with members and fully participating in Club activities. We ask that volunteers not use cell phones while participating in Club activities.

## RELATIONSHIP WITH MEMBERS

Guidelines to follow:

- Smile & introduce yourself to the members
- Encourage the kids and acknowledge the positive things they do
- Be dependable
- Leave your personal problems at home
- Do not take members out of the Club area
- For the safety of members and volunteers it is essential that volunteers are never left alone with youth without the presence of a staff member
- Pass along any member concerns which you feel need further attention to the Club Director. Balance this with confidentiality. Do not repeat any information deemed confidential to any other member or adult.
- Do not accept money, goods or gifts from members (except items such as handmade crafts, notes and etc.). In addition, do not offer gifts to Club members either individually or as a group

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Members of the Club deserve the best possible examples of conduct, decorum and good citizenship. The behavior of volunteers sets the example for our youth to follow. It is expected that all volunteers will conduct themselves at all times in a manner reflecting Club mission and values.

Continuing Service at the Club requires that you have a clear understanding of what is expected as a Volunteer. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive or to cover every situation. Volunteers must adhere to the Club's standards of conduct.

The following actions are required to ensure a safety of our members and a positive club experience:

• Act Appropriately when in contact with youth	• Report at Designated Time and be Timely
• Be respectful of Others	• Be Truthful and Honest
• Care for Club property	• Engage in only legal conduct
• Use of Club facility and/or equipment only with permission	• Engage in lawful activities, games, etc.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received a copy of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County Volunteer Handbook, have been afforded the opportunity to ask questions regarding its content, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained within.

I understand that it is my responsibility to maintain current emergency and personal contact information, provide timely notice of absences, immediately communicate any concerns, and report any harassment in a timely manner.

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Signature of Applicant

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Printed Name of Applicant

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Date