



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF CHAMPION VALLEY

www.bgcchampvalley.org

PARENT-MEMBER HANDBOOK

Revised 8.8.18

Approved by the Board 8.8.18



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OF CHAMPION VALLEY

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Weimar Club

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**Congratulations on becoming a part of the
Boys and Girls Clubs of Champion Valley
and welcome to our family!**

Dear Parent:

Your participation and involvement in what we do at our Club is absolutely crucial and strongly encouraged. Please communicate with us. Let us know what your child is saying about the Club. Are they happy? Are they unhappy? If so, why? What area do they need help in? What would you as a parent like to see us do more or less of?

Please take time to read this handbook.

Let us know if you have any questions. Then sit down with your child and go over our policies and expectations. We've found that when expectations are understood and acknowledged, and they are more often met and followed by Club members. Thank you for your support!

Our Mission

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

Core Beliefs

Boys & Girls Clubs provide youth with...

- ❖ A safe place to learn, grow, and have fun
- ❖ Ongoing relationships and interaction with other youth from diverse backgrounds and culture
- ❖ A caring, professionally-trained youth development staff
- ❖ Life-enhancing programs to nurture their talents, discover their needs, and broaden their minds
- ❖ Character development experiences
- ❖ Hope & opportunity

Club Hours

Our three locations are normally open after-school from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. Our Clubs close at 6:30 p.m. for ages 6 to 12. (Children cannot be dropped off at the club after 6:30 p.m.)

The Club is normally open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on days when school is not in session (i.e., school holidays, Spring Break) and during our summer session. The exceptions to this are Club-recognized holidays on which the Boys & Girls Club will be closed and include New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, the Christmas season. Other times of Club closure are for preparation cleaning and planning during the Christmas Break for Spring Session, the end of the school year for Summer Session, and at the end of Summer Program for Fall Session. The Club reserves the right to change its hours and days of operation based on need and/or economic circumstances. If such changes occur, parents/guardians will be notified in advance. Additionally, there may be days when it is necessary to close the Club due to unforeseen circumstances such as emergency repairs, inclement weather, etc. Again, when such instances arise, we will do our best to post this information and/or notify school officials to assist in getting information out to parents so as to mitigate any inconvenience this may cause.

Please be sure to pick-up your child by the posted closing times. The Boys & Girls Club reserves the right to contact the appropriate authorities for assistance when members are not picked up by a reasonable time and after all emergency contact alternatives have been exhausted. Multiple late pick-ups could result in a suspension from the Club.

Penalty Fees

If you are late picking up your child, after the posted closing time, there will a late fee assessed for your child. The penalty fee assessed will be \$5.00 per minute, per child. . This is to be paid at the time of pick-up or prior to your child returning to the club.

Membership

Membership is open to all youth between the ages of 6 and 18. A membership form must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian each school session, and summer session. Our membership fees are set by the Board of Directors for each school session, for the summer, and is not pro-rated for partial year memberships. Membership fees are posted on the Club's website.

Once paid, the membership fee is NOT REFUNDABLE. All fees must be paid in full by the end of the session or the child will not be allowed to return the next session. Our goal is to always keep costs associated with Boys & Girls Club membership as low as possible, as to not exclude anyone. Membership fees are subject to change.

The information you provide us on the membership application is **CRITICAL**.

We ask that every effort be made to present contact information that is both current as well as accurate. **It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify us of any changes to your telephone numbers (Home, work, cell emergency contacts, etc.) and/or address information as soon as such changes occur. Nothing is more frustrating to you, as a parent/guardian, and to the staff, than trying to get a hold of you in an emergency and not having the right contact information when we need it most!**

Orientations are available upon request to all new members and their parents/guardians. Please take every opportunity to see and hear what your Boys & Girls Club is all about, and learn how you can become involved and give back to the Club to make it a better place for all of our children.

Membership in the Boys & Girls Club is a privilege, not a right. The Boys & Girls Club reserves the right to refuse membership to any child at any time.

Transportation

Transportation from schools to our Clubs may be provided through the School District. Certain requirements must be met at the schools to ride the buses to our Clubs. Please check with your school office for these requirements. Transportation to planned activities and functions may also be provided by the Club in our Club van or mini-bus. Permission to ride in Club vehicles is decided by the parent/guardian on the membership application.

Supervision

The Club's staff is trained as Youth Development Professionals. Trained volunteers often support our staff. A staff member and/or trained volunteer will oversee each of our designated program areas. Please take the time to remind your child of the need to follow Club rules and directions **AT ALL TIMES** whether said directions are given by a staff member or a volunteer. All individuals that come in contact with our Club members, whether staff or volunteer, must undergo background checks before serving in our Clubs.

Check-in/Check-out Policy for Club

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Champion Valley requires all members to sign-in at the arrival and sign-out when leaving the facility. Your child may not leave the facility until a parent/guardian arrives to sign the member out. In order for a child to leave without parents signing him/her out of the facility, they must have a parental consent signed and on file for each session.

***It is important to remember that
The Boys & Girls Club is NOT a Daycare Facility
and is not governed by licensure as a childcare facility.***

Dress Code

Youth should dress comfortably and wear clothes that allow them to participate in typical Boys & Girls Club activities and programs. We will expect the following. . .

Footwear: Shoes and socks must be worn at all times. Flip-flops, sandals, crocs, heeled shoes and cleats are not allowed, nor are any other open-toed shoes for safety reasons. Club members may not be allowed to participate in certain activities or go outside if open-toes shoes are worn. The best advice is to wear tennis/walking shoes every day.

Clothing: Inappropriate clothing of any kind is NOT allowed in the Club. NO sagging pants, oversized clothing, scarves, bandannas, earrings in any body part but the ears, or brads anywhere on the body. Members wearing clothes that are too short, too tight or too revealing in any way or clothes with questionable or distasteful advertising will be asked to change or parents called and request that the club member leave immediately. This judgments will be left solely to the discretion of the Club management.

Field Trips

At times, the Boys & Girls Club may provide a variety of opportunities for our members to participate in activities off Club property that support our core beliefs and programs. Each excursion requires signed permission slip and any necessary fees prior to departing. Member and parents are reminded that all of our Club rules are to be followed and general Club expectations for appropriate behavior. Failure to follow rules will prompt an immediate call to a parent/guardian, advising them to pick-up that member from the field trip at their own cost. ***A parent/ guardian MUST be available by telephone at all times during any Club sponsored field trip in case a staff needs to contact the parent/guardian in regard to an emergency or a behavioral incident.***

During the **summer session** a parent will sign a general permission slip for all local activities. Parents will be notified via posting and/or internet notification anytime the children leave the club.

Code of Conduct

One of the Club's core beliefs is to provide a safe place to learn and grow. Following are some simple expectations for Club members. . .

YOU SHOULD

Respect yourself

Play fairly and be honest.

Applaud the efforts of others.

Avoid inappropriate language.

Dress appropriately at all times.

Running is reserved for athletics.

Say only good things about others.

Always keep your hands to yourself.

Listen during appropriate times and assemblies.

Be respectful of other members and their property.

Tobacco, drugs, alcohol and weapons are prohibited.

Participate only in program areas open to your assigned group.

Take care of your Boys & Girls Club facility, grounds and equipment.

These can be summed up in 3 easy expectations:

Respect yourself, respect others, and respect Club property.

Bullying Policy

We are committed to creating a Club setting where everyone is treated with dignity. To make this possible, we recognize that one of our most important responsibilities is to create and sustain a safe environment so our members can enjoy participating in our program. To achieve this goal, we must acknowledge that bullying can occur within our clubs.

To clarify the definition of bullying and to help prevent it from occurring, we have outlined the following information:

- Both boys and girls can be bullies. We, as an organization, will not tolerate an attitude of “boys will be boys” or girls will be girls” to excuse social cruelty or physical harm.
- Bullying can be direct or indirect, blatant or subtle. It involves an imbalance of power and repeated and intentional actions.
- Bullying is any behavior considered physical aggression, social aggression, verbal aggression, written aggression, intimidation, sexual harassment, or racial/ethnic harassment.
- Bullying is cutting someone off from essential relationships.
- Bullying includes isolating the target by making this person feel rejected by his or her community.
- Bullying is malicious gossip and rumor spreading.

Bullying often occurs outside of the physical grounds of the Club, yet these actions impact the safety of our members as though they occur on Club sites. Any bullying behavior demonstrated at the Club or outside of the Club that affects our Club community, will be addressed by the Club Director.

Examples of bullying outside the Club could be (but are not limited to) the following:

- Electronic communications that include physical threats and/or malicious gossip and slander.
- Hit lists or polls via e-mail or other methods of communication naming specific members and/or staff.
- Sending humiliating photographs to others.
- Stealing passwords and misrepresenting oneself.
- Changing other people's personal profiles.
- Hazing, or any ritual that degrades, humiliates, threatens or physically hurts another person as a pretext for joining a team or other formal or informal group.

As an organization, we will take any report of bullying seriously. Bullying will be responded to through a variety of consequences and intervention up to and including suspension from the Club or contacting Law Enforcement, depending on the frequency and severity of behavior. Any member who is suspended will not be permitted to return to the Club, without a parent/member re-entry meeting with the Club Director.

Some situations, including less severe first offenses, may be handled by the Club through member conferences, mediation or other interventions without a phone call home. If more serious bullying behavior has occurred, possible consequences could be suspension or expulsion from participation in all Club activities. Membership is a privilege, not a right. Subsequent consequences could include Club suspension. If any of these consequences become a likely outcome, we will notify you. If your child is the target of bullying:

- Notify the Club Director so that the incident can be documented.
- The incident will be addressed as quickly as possible, but please allow us 48 business hours to respond. If you do not hear from us by that time, please feel free to call the Club Director to follow up.

Please understand that we want all our members to feel safe, valued and respected in our Clubs. These situations are hard for everyone- parents, Club staff and members alike, but it is in these moments when we truly show what we stand for as a community. Working together, we can do our best to ensure that our Club is a safe and positive environment where great futures can start for every child.

Cell Phone Policy

Mobile technology is not appropriate and can be a disruption to the Club program. Not only is it difficult to monitor, but the devices/cell phones can be lost or stolen.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Champion Valley decided that the use of mobile technology devices can be used at the Club Directors discretion. This ensures that the technology is accessed only in a supervised setting at the Club.

Cell Phone Discipline Management Plan

- **First offense** – cell phone will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day or upon Club member's departure.
- **Second offense** – cell phone will be confiscated and a disciplinary incident report will be submitted. The cell phone will be returned after parental signature of the incident report..
- **Third offense** - cell phone will be confiscated and a suspension will occur. Parent and member should meet with the Club Director upon return.

Phone Calls

Our Club phones are **primarily** for Club business. Members should use Club phones or receive calls in emergencies only. Club lines need to remain open in the event of an emergency. Please make any necessary arrangements before your child comes to the Club so that you do not have to call the Club, and your child does not have to call you. Incoming calls to Club members are discouraged, but a message can be taken by the front desk person and given to members at an appropriate time. Members are allowed to call for a ride near the end of the day, if it is necessary. Please discuss this with your child. Also, long-distance calls to parents will ONLY be allowed in emergency situations. We cannot afford the expense of long-distance calls to a cell phone that are not a local call. Members are allowed to bring cell phones into the Club, but they must NOT be taken out or used during the Club hours without the consent of the Club Director.

Accidents

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Champion Valley strive to maintain a safe and secure environment. There is assumed risk in many of the programs, including, but not limited to sports. Please feel safe in knowing that the trained staff is attentive to providing the safest environment possible. The completed membership application authorizes the Club staff to seek medical treatment for a member, if necessary, and that any associated costs for such care are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

The Boys & Girls Club does NOT provide medical insurance for members. **In the event of a serious injury the staff will call 911 immediately and then call the parent/guardian or alternative emergency contacts. *This is one more reason why updated, contact information is your responsibility and crucial to your child's well-being.***

Food

The Boys & Girls Club understands and appreciates the need for a healthy diet among all of our members. It is our goal to encourage healthy eating habits that promote the well-being of our YOUTH. During the school session, members are offered a nutritious free snack when they arrive at the Club after school. Each Club has a designated area for eating. Members must keep food and drinks out of the areas where such items are prohibited (computers lab, game room, program rooms, etc.). We also have limitations on the number of items members can purchase from our Snack Bar, so no one buys in excess. Water is available at our Clubs. During the summer we serve free lunch in accordance with Summer Nutritious Food Service program through the USDA

Infestation or Contagious Conditions

Any and all suspected transferable infestation or transmittable contagious conditions will be addressed fully in the following manner and without exception:

1. Parents will be contacted for immediate removal of the member from Club facilities.
2. Proof of treatment from a health care facility and/or medical personnel is required before the child will be allowed back into the club.

Medication

The Boys & Girls Club is **NOT** allowed, by policy, to dispense, to store and/or to oversee medication of any kind, including all non-prescription medications.

Personal Belongings

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Champion Valley is NOT responsible for any lost, damaged or stolen personal items or belongings.

Please discourage your child from bringing anything to the Club that is not completely necessary. Necessary items, such as backpacks and jackets should be clearly marked with the member's name. Items that are not collected from our lost-and-found in a timely fashion will be donated to a local charity. Coats, books and other personal items must be placed in the designated area. Members must NEVER take or go through another member's belongings. If your child brings money for Snack Bar, make sure it is in a secure place, like inside a wallet or purse, inside a backpack or in a pants pocket. **Our Club is not responsible for any lost money.**

Programs

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Champion Valley strives to be the best youth development organization possible. We look for engaging, energetic and enthusiastic skills when hiring our staff members. Staff members are trained and kept advised of the changing trends throughout today's youth movement. In order to promote personal and professional growth, staff members attend workshops and seminars offered by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America when possible and receive periodic in-house training from management level staff. We want our members to come to the Club each day, attracted by the programs and the staff that lead them.

Programs at the Boys & Girls Club fall under **Five Core areas-**

- Character & Leaders Development
- Education & Career Development
- Health & Life Skills
- The Arts
- Sports, Fitness & Recreation

Parents: During the school session, our **Power Hour** program is taken very seriously. This is a time set aside for members to work on their homework. We know how much you, as a parent, want your child to finish, or at least get the majority of their homework completed here at our Club. That's our goal as well. However, too many times, we experience inappropriate horseplay, joking around, unnecessary talking, etc. that can lead to a disruptive atmosphere in the study rooms. All it takes is one or two members to distract and disrupt the efforts of all the others that are diligently trying to get their homework done.

Our staff will verbally warn members who misbehave to please STOP and to get to work. In these instances, staff will follow our **Four Step Discipline Guideline (page 10)**. Our Club policy is that the 3rd time a member is sent to Time Out, the member may be suspended for a 1 day, at the Club Director's discretion. Continued violations will result in parent consultations and/or longer suspensions.

While we always want to have fun at our Clubs, there is a time and place for everything. Homework does NOT have to be boring and painful. It is simply something that has to be done. So please talk to your child about giving us a good, concerted effort during Power Hour, so it can be a productive session for everyone in the study room. This is one program area that does have very high expectations...and expectations that will be enforced.

Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of the Boys & Girls Club experience. They are welcomed volunteers who wish to share their time and/or talents. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer at one of our Clubs, please stop by our club to pick-up a volunteer application. Background checks are required of all volunteers prior to being able to work with our youth members.

Discipline Policy

The Boys & Girls Club strives to keep the consequences for unacceptable behavior clear, appropriate and timely. The safety of all members is of utmost importance to us. Our standards, along with the expectation that all members use good common sense, exist to ensure that your child and every other child at the Club can safely enjoy the Club's activities. Any member who disrupts programs or creates a dangerous situation will be disciplined appropriately. Members who do not follow rules can expect to lose privileges and face consequences. Parents will be called to pick-up any member who has failed to control his or his disruptive behavior and/or is behaving in an aggressive or violent manner that creates a dangerous situation for themselves, fellow members, staff or visitors.

When a member is suspended, the Club Director will advise the parent/guardian as to why they're being suspended. A phone call or conference between parent/guardian and Club Director must occur that day. The Club Director will complete a written suspension letter, and a copy will be given to the parent/guardian, for his/her signature, so the child can return after the suspension time period is over.

Four-Step Discipline Guideline

The Club has set-up a four-step plan as a guideline for determining appropriate discipline for a Club member. The goal is to use positive reinforcement when disciplining a child. However, there are times when speaking to the child or redirecting their attention is not enough. Please understand that our goal is to maintain a safe, positive environment for all Club members. We will adhere to the following:

1. **CONSULTATION** – Talk to the child and use positive reinforcement to get them back on task.
2. **VERBAL WARNING** – Counsel the child, explain that there are consequences for their behavior/actions.
3. **TIME-OUT** – 1 minute per each year of a child's age and removal from the program area. Before returning to any program the Club member must speak to the Club Director. Parents will be notified by phone at this point and asked to speak to his/her child in a way to assist and support Club staff and as a means of advisement that the child is misbehaving.

4. **SUSPENSION** – After the first three steps have been followed and the Club member continues to act in a disrespectful or disruptive manner, he/she will be asked to leave for the rest of the day. An official, written suspension letter will be drafted, the Club Director will call the parent to explain the situation, and the member will need to be picked up immediately. Suspension can range anywhere from one to three days to permanent suspension, depending on the severity of the action. A conference between the parent/guardian, the Club member and the Club Director will be necessary in order for the member to return to the Club.

Physical Aggression

Physical aggression will not be tolerated at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Champion Valley. Automatic suspension will be issued and will range from three days to permanent suspension, depending on the severity of the action. All parties involved will be questioned by the Club Director and/or Executive Director.

Disciplinary actions by Staff for physical aggression may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal counseling
- Time-out
- Removal from Program Area
- Loss of Club Privileges
- Suspension (three days to two weeks)
- Indefinite suspension (until the situation is resolved or the parent/guardian is consulted)
- Expulsion (i.e., permanent suspension)
- Contacting the proper authorities

****Please note that anytime a law is broken in or around the Boys & Girls Club or it is suspected that a Club members or guest has broken the law, the Police Department will be notified immediately.***

Members are expected to respond to discipline without incident. Failure to do so will almost always increase any action taken in time or severity. Staff members are trained and fully expected, by policy to maintain full control of any situation that occurs in their program area and will NOT tolerate anything that threatens that control, in appearance and /or manner.

Also, please note that incidents are documented so please call the Club if you have any questions at all concerning disciplinary measures or any other Club activity.

As Youth Development Professional, parent/guardian support and involvement is vital to our success.

Contacting Us

Please do not hesitate to let the Executive Director know whenever you have a question or a concern. We hope that a parent/guardian will always start by contacting the Club Director when issues arise; after all, they are the ones who know the children best. If the need arises, however, and you feel that an issue or complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved at the Club level, please know that parents/guardians may always contact first the Director of Marketing at the Weimar Office. Following the chain of command, the next point of contact would be the Executive Director, of the organization, also at our administrative office Weimar. The telephone number there is 979-725-8208.

***Thanks for joining the
Boys & Girls Clubs of Champion Valley!***