



## Boys & Girls Club Membership Information 2026

**Our mission:** To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to become productive, responsible, and caring citizens in our community.

**Our vision:** To provide the best support and programming for young people in the Denison and surrounding communities; we will have optimized use of current facilities and created satellite locations all aimed at growing and reaching more kids.

The Boys & Girls Club of Denison (The Club) is a youth development program designed to provide a safe and positive place for area youth. We are open Monday through Friday after school and on non-school days. Children must be picked up by 6:00 pm. If you are going to be late please make other arrangements so your child is picked up on time. There is a \$10 late pickup charge if you pick up your child after 6pm. This amount increases every 30 minutes. Please communicate in all instances where being late may occur.

On school days we are open from school dismissal until 6pm. During the summer, most school holidays, and days Denison schools close due to inclement weather we open at 7:30am and close at 6pm. These times are subject to change with or without prior notice. On Early Release Days, we will have a supervisor at the School Sites as well as the Main Site for programming. Parents will be notified when all Club members are brought to the Main Campus from School Sites. When picking up a Club member from any site, the person retrieving the child must be on his/her pick up list. Those that are not on the list must have written notification in advance of pick up. Every pick up should have also signed out for notification. Be sure to sign your child/children out each day of pick up.

***This is a Boys & Girls Club.*** It belongs to the children that attend, their parents, and the community in general. As staff we are the stewards of the Club. Our job is to strive to insure that each member has a positive experience at the Club. We encourage parents to provide us with input to improve the Club. There ARE active committees for Programming and Fundraising that parents may serve on. Ask staff for more information.

### **Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices**

Cell phones, electronic games, and any other kind of personal electronic devices are **not permitted** for use at the Club **during** programming hours. These devices are banned because they are disruptive during programs and are too easily stolen. If a device is brought to the Club, it will be asked to be put away during those program times. NO club member that is 12 and under are allowed cell phone usage. There will be specific times for cell phone use by Teen programming or during free play time. If you need to contact your child in an emergency call the Club number (903-465-9008) and we will have your child come to the phone. If they need to call you in an emergency we will allow your child to call if it is an actual emergency. Keep in mind if your child uses the phone during club program time or inappropriately they will be asked to put it up for the remainder of the day and possibly not allowed to bring it back. The Club understands that as parents, we work each day and have lots of responsibilities. We attempt to reduce phone calls to you as parents as much as possible. As a Club, we are not responsible for these devices or any other tech devices at any time. It is the responsibility of the Club member if devices are entered into the Club.

### **Your Child's PIN Number**

We request that you include your child's school pin number on their membership application. We pledge to keep that number safe. Having the number helps us determine grades for our members and if we are having a positive impact. This is important because many of our programs are funded by grants that require us to gather and report this information. No child is ever identified in these reports. The data is collected and reported as a group. If your child is currently enrolled in one of these grant funded programs we will require the PIN number to keep them enrolled in these subsidized programs.

### **Open Door Policy**

The Club has an open door policy. We do not know on a daily basis how many members will be attending the Club. All members are **required** to sign-in on our attendance computer upon entering the building. Members are also **required** to sign out when they leave. It is important that your child be knowledgeable of his/her number each day to make this process easier. Children without numbers will not be denied access to the club but some activities will be limited.

Junior Members, ages 5 through 12, are **not allowed** to leave the Club without an adult. If they choose to do so they will be reprimanded and their parents notified. You need to realize that we are not a daycare. We have no way of physically detaining a child that chooses to leave the Club.

Senior Members, 13 and older; that choose to leave the Club, without an adult or Club staff, may do so with parent signature on the Membership Application. They are encouraged to return within one hour and they are **required** to check in and out with staff. If Club Senior Members leave the Club, they are permitted to only leave ONE time and return ONE time. Members who abuse this privilege or engage in negative activities during this time will lose this privilege. At no time may Club members congregate outside of the Boys & Girls Club building.

It is the parent's decision to determine if their child is mature enough to attend the Club.

### **Transportation**

We provide on-site Campus programs at Mayes, Terrell, and Hyde Park and B-Mac. Students at B-Mac should go to the "B" gym for programming. We also transport from the High School, Lamar, and Houston to the Main Campus.

### **Membership Dues**

For the 2020-21 school years the membership dues are: \$30 National Membership Dues for year ; school months - \$35 per week for free/reduced lunches, summer \$70 per week. We require payment by Friday for the following week. Failure to pay in advance will cause your child's membership to be suspended and you will incur a weekly \$10 late payment fee. We will administer those late fees where applicable. Children with overdue dues are not allowed to participate in sports or field trips. If you have a past due balance we require a payment plan that will insure past due amounts are repaid. We have bills to pay too and depend on these dues to help cover our expenses.

If you cannot afford these dues please let us know. We do not wish to exclude any child because the family cannot afford to pay membership dues. We are also welcome to try and help all Club members needing the opportunity to grow in our programming.

## Summer Food Service

The Boys & Girls Club is traditionally a sponsor site for the US Department of Agriculture Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). This program is administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture. We provide breakfast (7:30am – 9:00am) and lunch (11:30am – 1pm) through the SFSP and our afternoon snack (3:00pm – 3:30pm) is funded by the Club. Meals will be provided to all children without charge and are the same for all children regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, and there will be no discrimination in the course of the meal service. Children do not need to be members of the Club to attend meal services.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write or call immediately to:

USDA

Director, Office of Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-9410, (800)795-3272 or (202)720-6382 (TTY)

If you have a complaint about the food served or service at the Club you should immediately direct your feedback to the Club's Chief Professional Officer Ron Nixon. If Mr. Nixon is not available please direct your comments to the Front Desk staff person on duty or Program Director. They will forward your comments to Mr. Nixon and he will respond to your concerns.

## Membership Cards

Members need to use their membership # and keep it with them every day. They will need their card/# to access the computer lab, check out equipment, and participate in other programs. Members without a # will not be denied access to the Club but they will be limited in their activities. In the event a card is lost we will replace the card and the \$1 cost will be added to your bill.

## Lost and Found

The Club has a lost and found box. Any items found that may be of value will be located in the lost and found box and can be claimed by parents. The Club is **NOT** responsible for lost or stolen items. Children should not bring valuables (especially electronics) and treasured items unless the child is prepared to keep track of their items. Found items will be cleaned out the last day of each month and given to local organizations.

## Health and Medication Policy

We will treat cuts, scratches, bumps, and minor ailments. If your child requests treatment of a cut or scratch we will clean the wound, apply an antibiotic/pain reliever and bandages as needed. If your child requests an ice pack we will provide them with one after evaluation by our staff.

The Club staff is permitted to administer "some over the counter" basic care items, such as sunscreen, insect repellent, etc. These items must be furnished by the parent/guardian. **Under no circumstances are members allowed to carry any medications, prescriptions or over the counter drugs, on their person while at the Club.** Required items must be given to Club staff. The Club is not responsible for reactions or improper use of sunscreen, insect repellent, etc. or any item that is "borrowed" from other members. Parents/guardians of any member requiring emergency health care will be notified immediately.

Any child who reflects a fever, rash, vomiting, or any symptoms of illness will be sent home. This important to keep from the spread of illness and to improve the health of the child who is ill as quickly as possible.

To comply with health regulations, and in fairness to all members, parent/guardians are asked to keep a member home anytime the child:

- Has a fever
- Has a rash
- Has sore or runny eyes
- Has a contagious illness
- Head lice
- Any other evidence of illness

Members demonstrating acute symptoms of a contagious illness must be picked up immediately by the parent/guardian or designated adult.

## **Phone and Technology**

Members may ask to use our phone but they will only be allowed to make necessary phone calls. There is no charge to place a call, however, use of the front desk phone will only be allowed in necessary cases deemed by Staff or Front Desk personnel. Again, we recognize that parents are working and important matters that need to be attended to and refrain as much as possible to have phone calls made. If a member is using the phone excessively then staff will restrict their use. Messages may be left at the Club for members. Cell phones are restricted at the Club for any club members under the age of 12. Teens may with restrictions which includes any club programming time. Only during teen time or time with observation from staff.

Before a member will be allowed to use Club technology equipment or their personal device, both the member and his/her parent/guardian will need to read and sign the Technology Acceptable Use policy and return it to the Club. Under the Technology Acceptable Use policy, the following relevant principles shall apply:

**Club devices** shall include any and all Club-owned existing and/or emerging technologies and devices that can take photographs, play, and record audio or video, input text, upload and download content and/or media and transmit or receive messages or images.

**Personally owned devices** shall include any and all member-owned existing and/or emerging technologies and devices that can take photographs, play and record audio or video, input text, upload and download content and/or media and transmit or receive messages or images.

**Club purposes** shall include program activities, career development, communication with experts and/or Club peer members, homework, and Club activities. Members are expected to act responsibly and thoughtfully when using technology resources. Members bear the burden of responsibility to inquire with staff when they are unsure of the permissibility of a particular use of technology prior to engaging in its use.

**Authorized use:** Club devices and personally owned devices are permitted for use during approved Club times for Club purposes and in approved locations only. The Club expressly prohibits the use of Club devices or personally owned devices in locker rooms, restrooms, and other areas where there is an expectation of privacy. Club member use of phones may only be in cafeteria area during designated times for teenagers only.

**Appropriate use:** Members may not use any technology to harass, threaten, demean, humiliate, intimidate, embarrass, or annoy their peers or others in their community. Any inappropriate use of a Club or personally owned device, as determined by Club staff, can lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to confiscation of the device, immediate suspension from the Club, termination of membership or other disciplinary actions determined to be appropriate to the Club's existing disciplinary policies including, if applicable, referral to local law enforcement.

**Monitoring and inspection:** Boys & Girls Clubs (local name) reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, and review any personally owned device that is brought to the Club. Parents/guardians will be notified before such an inspection takes place and may be present, at their choice, during the inspection.

Parents/guardians may refuse to allow such inspections. If so, the member may be barred from bringing personally owned devices to the Club in the future.

**Loss and damage:** Members are responsible for keeping devices with them at all times. Staff are not responsible for the security and condition of the member's personal device. Furthermore, the Club is not liable for the loss, damage, misuse, or theft of any personally owned device brought to the Club.

Any inappropriate or unauthorized use of a Club or personally owned device, as determined by Club staff, can lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to confiscation of the device, immediate suspension from the Club, termination of membership or other disciplinary actions determined to be appropriate to the Club's existing disciplinary policies, including, if applicable, referral to local law enforcement.

Members must be aware of the appropriateness of communications when using Club or personally owned devices. Inappropriate communication is prohibited in any public or private messages, as well as material posted online. Inappropriate communication includes but is not limited to the following:

- Obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language or images typed, posted, or spoken by members;
- Information that could cause damage to an individual or the Club community or create the danger of disruption of the Club environment;
- Personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks;
  - Harassment (persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person) or stalking of others;
- Knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization; or
- Communication that promotes the destruction of property, including the acquisition or creation of weapons or other destructive devices.

If a member is told to stop sending communications, that member must cease the activity immediately.

**Cyberbullying:** Members may not utilize any technology to harass, threaten, demean, humiliate, intimidate, embarrass, or annoy their peers or others in their community. This behavior is cyberbullying, which is defined as bullying that takes place using emerging technologies and devices. Any cyberbullying that is determined to disrupt the safety and/or well-being of the Club, Club members, Club staff or community is subject to disciplinary action.

Examples of cyberbullying include, but are not limited to:

- Harassing, threatening or hurtful text messages, emails, or comments on social media.
- Rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites.
- Embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Members may not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the Club's network, or to any other computer system through the Club's network. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or accessing another person's files. Members may not use the Club's network to engage in any illegal act, including, but not limited to, arranging for the purchase or sale of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs; engaging in criminal activity; or threatening the safety of another person. Members may not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses.

**Monitoring and inspection:** Boys & Girls Club of Denison reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, and review files stored on Club-owned devices or networks. In addition, Boys & Girls Club of Denison reserves the right to inspect and/or review personally owned devices that are brought to the Club.

Parents/guardians will be notified before such an inspection takes place and may be present, at their choice, during the inspection. Parents/guardians may refuse to allow such inspections, but the member may be barred from bringing personally owned devices to the Club in the future.

**Internet access:** Personally owned devices used at the Club must access the internet via the Club's content-filtered wireless network and are not permitted to directly connect to the internet through a phone network or other content service provider. Boys & Girls Club of Denison reserves the right to monitor

communication and internet traffic, and to manage, open or close access to specific online websites, portals, networks, or other services. Members must follow Club procedures to access the Club's internet service.

**Loss and damage:** Members are responsible for keeping the personal device with them at all times. Staff are not responsible for the security and/or condition of the member's personal device. Furthermore, the Club shall not be liable for the loss, damage, misuse, or theft of any personally owned device brought to the Club.

**Parental notification and responsibility:** While the Boys & Girls Clubs (local name) Technology Acceptable Use Policy restricts the access of inappropriate material, supervision of internet usage might not always be possible. Due to the wide range of material available on the internet, some material might not fit the particular values of members and/or their families. Because of this, it is not considered practical for Boys & Girls Clubs ((local name) to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the internet. If parents/guardians do not want members to access information beyond the scope of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy, they should instruct members not to access such materials.

**Digital citizenship:** Club members shall conduct themselves online in a manner that is aligned with the Boys & Girls Clubs (local name) Code of Conduct. The same rules and guidelines members are expected to follow offline (i.e., in the real world) shall also be followed when online. Should a member behave online in a manner that violates the Boys & Girls Club of Denison Code of Conduct, that member shall face the same discipline policy and actions they would if their behavior had happened within the physical Club environment.

**Club-owned-and-operated technology:** Members are expected to follow the same rules and guidelines when using Club-owned technology. Club technology and systems are the property of the Club, are intended to be used for Club purposes and are to be used during approved times with appropriate supervision. Club members shall never access or use Club technology or systems without prior approval.

**Digital citizenship and technology safety training:** All members who wish to use a Boys & Girls Clubs device or equipment will be required to successfully complete a BGCA-provided digital citizenship and technology safety training. This training is required for all members annually

## Member Information

**Club Rules** – our rules are really just common sense and mirror the rules children are expected to follow at school.

- The Golden Rule applies: Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.
- RESPECT YOURSELF RESPECT OTHERS RESPECT THE CLUB
- Asking for money from staff or other Club members is not allowed.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Members must stay in their assigned group.
- Members must check in and out from the Club, check in is at the front desk. (See open door policy.)
- Club members are allowed and encouraged to bring friends to the Club. Visitors are required to sign a guest form when they arrive and they must follow the same rules as Club Members. Visitors must be in at least the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and can only visit once before they must join.
- Eating and drinking is allowed in cafeteria area only. The drink machines are during specific times only. During Summer, no snack or drinks are allowed during Breakfast and Lunch hours.
- **Trading cards are prohibited at the Club.**
- **Borrowing, lending, or trading of any items including, but not limited to; money, game cards, toys is not permitted. Members should leave with the same items they brought.**
- Youth must be in designated areas only and under the supervision of an adult staff member or approved volunteer.
- We strongly encourage members do not wear flip-flops. They tend to break when a child is active and then the child is barefoot the rest of the day. Sneakers should be worn every day.

## **Discipline Policy**

We believe that discipline is not about punishment. It is about coaching and guiding young people to understand the value and benefits of behavior that meets their needs while not infringing upon others.

Discipline is a daily learning process for young people. Staff must provide a structured setting that never waivers or changes. Members must understand the rules and limits of their behavior to benefit from their Club experience.

Discipline is the proactive process of limiting the time for negative behavior through positive alternatives. Discipline is not about the consequences of poor behavior.

Club members must have reinforcement for their behavior. There is a greater chance that youth positive behavior will be repeated and developed into a lifetime pattern if adults recognize and appreciate this type of behavior.

If our focus is on the negative, with the absence of positive recognition, young people will misbehave just to secure the attention they desire. Club staff understands that many forms of negative behavior are simply the youngster's desire for attention and recognition. When negative behavior is not followed by immediate correction a young person will often feel the adults do not care and a guidance opportunity is missed. Our staff understands that in the relationship building effort between a young person and a staff member there will be friction and testing. This is just part of the process the youngster attempts during the discipline learning experience. Staff is fair, consistent, preventive, and take immediate action to correct a negative behavior or recognize a positive behavior.

We have high standards for our member's behavior. Acceptable behavior is defined by the following:

- Respect for themselves
- Respect for others
- Respect for their Club

Our members need to understand that there are both negative and positive consequences from their personal behavior.

### **Consequences Guidelines**

The following guidelines are the approved steps for our staff to use in daily program operations:  
ALL incidents are under a case by case basis and investigated accordingly:

#### **Informal Guidance**

This is the process of reinforcement of positive behavior and not accepting the negative behavior by Club members. Staff creates a program environment that helps youngsters be successful. Staff insures that they are proactive in preventing negative behavior to occur through the observation of behavioral and program operation clues. Part of our informal guidance methods may include giving a child a time out. The time out is limited based on issue at hand. NO child should sit out longer than a period of 5-10 minutes based on age. When our Informal Guidance methods are not effective with a specific Club member the following steps are used:

#### **One Day Loss of Privileges Warning**

Based on the judgment of the Program Director when a Club member is not meeting behavioral standards the Director will:

- Issue a warning that the membership may be suspended for one day.
- Youth will be informed that future negative behavior could result in losing their Club membership

- Staff completes a Guidance Report to document warning for future reference.
- A copy of the report is given to the parent or guardian.

### **One Day Suspension** *(balance of the program day and the next day)*

When the Program Director determines that a member's behavior does not meet our standards and the prior "Warning" had been provided, or the offense is serious, the Program Director will:

- Issue a One Day Suspension and secure the member's Boys & Girls Club card.
- Contact the member's parents to inform them their child has been dismissed from the Boys & Girls Club for the day, the actual negative behavior exhibited.
- Staff completes a Guidance Report to document the suspension.
- A copy of the report is given to the parent or guardian.

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

After a youth has been suspended for one day, any future negative behavior within a 30-day period will result in a One Week Suspension. The Program Director, with the approval of the Executive Director, will implement a "One Week Suspension" based on this frequency of negative behavior. The Program or Executive Director will:

- Issue a One Week Suspension and secure the member's Club card.
- Contact the member's parents to inform them their child has been dismissed from the Club for the one week, the actual negative behavior exhibited, and that the member may pick up their Boys & Girls Club card next week in the staff office.
- Staff completes a Guidance Report to document the suspension.
- Executive Director receives verbal report in addition to the Incident Report from the Program Director.
- A copy of the report is given to the parent or guardian.

### **Membership Revoked**

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

The Program Director must present findings to the Executive Director to document this type of action prior to any membership being revoked. During this process the Club member will be placed in a One Week Suspension. The member or parents may appeal this decision within thirty days after the date of the incident. This appeal must be made in writing to the Executive Director outlining the parent's plan to help their child change their behavior while attending the Club.

The Program Director will:

- Document their findings for the Executive Director to review.
- Complete a Guidance Report to attach to their findings.

### **Zero Tolerance for the Following Negative Behaviors**

The following negative behaviors will automatically result in a minimum one day suspension up to an indefinite suspension using these guidelines:

- Fighting
- Stealing
- Threatening the safety of a Boys & Girls Club member or staff member
- Damage to the Boys & Girls Club facility or equipment - Member is expected to reimburse the Club for any damage and will be billed. Suspension will continue until a payment plan is approved by the Executive Director.
- Depending on the severity of the incident the suspension can be elevated to any level including membership revocation.

## **Dress Code**

We follow the same guidelines as the Denison Independent School District regarding attire.

- No suggestive or revealing attire can be worn to the Club.
- Cubbies are provided for Club members to place their belongings. These areas are not secure.
- Non-prescription sunglasses are not permitted in the building.
- Students should wear clothing that does not create a disruption.
- Clothing with bare midriffs, see-through blouses, and strapless clothing are not allowed. Sundresses will be permitted if modestly cut.
- Items with provocative, offensive, violent, or drug-related pictures or slogans will not be permitted. Items advertising alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will not be permitted.
- T-shirts and sweatshirts must have sleeves.
- No hats, caps, bandanas, hoods, or wallet chains. Exception: Club members “may” wear hats on special hat days for programming.
- Members may wear shorts that are no more than three inches above the knee in length when weather is appropriate.
- Tennis shoes must be worn in the gym. NO FLIP-FLOPS or sandals except during an assembly. Flip-flops and sandals are also not allowed on the playground.

## **Club Cleaning**

All club members are asked to help keep their Club clean. They should participate in club clean up when requested. Several Jr. Staff may take part in Club clean-up in order to achieve Keystone points.

## **Parent Agreement**

**By signing the membership application you are acknowledging that:**

- The Club will do their best to provide safe, developmentally appropriate programs for your child.
- We are not a child-care facility.
- You are allowing your child to participate in Club activities, including indoors, outdoors, and on field trips away from the Club but in the greater Denison area. Trips outside of Grayson County will require permission. They must be signed in advance. Phone calls giving permission are not accepted.
- Photographs and videos of activities that may include your child may be used for public relations purposes.
- That you have read and understand this membership handbook and that any questions have been answered satisfactorily.

**Your signature also acknowledges your understanding that:**

- Members 13 and older can utilize the open door policy and leave the Club once per day.
- Members 13 and older can watch movies rated PG-13 without additional notification from staff.
- Members 6 through 12 can watch movies rated PG without additional notification.
- All age members can access the Internet. All members are required to complete an Internet safety program before they may use the Internet.

## **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

The Internet allows members to access thousands of libraries and databases. Transmission of any materials in violation of any national or state regulations is prohibited. These include but are not limited to: copyright materials, threatening or obscene materials or material protected by Trade Secret. Access is a privilege and not a right. Inappropriate use will result in cancellation of these privileges. While it may be unlikely your child will access objectionable material the Club cannot guarantee that this won't happen.

## **Personal Internet Safety**

Do not reveal your home address, phone number, or images of yourself or those of your peers to anyone. If at any time you feel uncomfortable inform staff members.

## **Accidental Access**

Mistakes happen. If a member accidentally accesses an inappropriate site they must inform a staff member immediately. By doing this the member can avoid receiving a Guidance Report.

### **Informal Guidance Explained - FIVE TIPS FOR GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR**

**"How many times have I told you?" "Can't you see I'm trying to ...?" "You are a real troublemaker!" "That's enough - I've had it!"**

Guiding children to behave in appropriate ways is challenging for many adults. There are no quick, easy answers. Differing temperaments, personalities, needs, growth patterns, home environment, and family settings affect children's lives. The following five ideas should be part of your plan to guide children's behavior.

#### **1. PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR**

Both parents and caregivers who use positive reinforcement find it a "self-fulfilling prophecy." Children become what we expect of them. Be very specific about the compliments and praise you give. This lets the child know exactly what behavior, actions, and words you liked. For example, "I really like the cooperation I saw between June, Steve, and Siron in cleaning up the dress-ups." Or, "I really appreciate how well you listened to the directions for this activity. It helped things to run smoothly." Or, "I noticed how helpful you were to Terrence today outdoors. I know he appreciates that, and I do too." The child is then more likely to repeat the positive behavior. Caregivers can build a child's self-esteem in many other small ways. Share hugs, smiles, and kisses. Tell children they are important to you. Praise a child within the earshot of others. Give a child your undivided attention. For those children who seem to get your attention for their misbehavior only, try shifting the focus of your attention. Try writing down a list of the things you like or appreciate about that child. Give that child at least as much attention for his or her positive behavior as for misbehavior.

#### **2. EXPECT CHILDREN TO OBEY**

Be very clear about rules and expectations. Give children an option unless there is a question of personal safety or health, when there is destruction or aggression involved, or when, you as the adult, decide the situation calls for prompt action. Demonstrate your confidence by using short, clear, positive statements. Use a tone that says you expect compliance.

#### **3. MAINTAIN FAIRNESS AND CONSISTENCY**

Deal with challenges in a matter-of-fact, calm manner. Consider the child's age and "normal" behavior for this age range. Learn about developmental stages of children and their accompanying physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs. Communicate rules and their consequences in words that children understand. When a child breaks a rule, follow through with a fair, appropriate, and meaningful consequence right away. When you are fair and consistent in your response to misbehavior, the child's sense of security and knowledge of right from wrong will be reinforced.

#### **4. ALLOW THE EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS**

Allowing a child to express his or her feelings does not mean allowing such inappropriate expressions as hitting or hurting others. Sometimes, providing quiet time along with a favorite toy or blanket will help a child to relax and calm down. Some children express anger, resentment, and frustration by pounding with a hammer on a pegboard, punching an old pillow, kicking a soccer ball in the backyard, creating a picture, or using self-talk with their stuffed animals. Offer to take a walk with the child or to read a story together. These activities may help diffuse strong feelings of anger or frustration. It is important to provide a range of acceptable avenues for children to release these very strong, yet natural emotions.

#### 5. THINK AND PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Look past today's difficult moments. Your goal is for the child to achieve self-discipline. When problems do arise, step back from the scene if you can. Count to ten, or do whatever helps you maintain your composure and your perspective. Keep in mind the example you set through your own behavior. The way in which adults treat children and each other serves as a model for children. For example, the use of phrases like, "Thank you," "Please," or "Can I help you?" should be a part of everyone's routine behavior.