



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF GREATER VERGENNES

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF GREATER VERGENNES

The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Vergennes began its services in 1999. The Club operates in downtown Vergennes. We invite all young people in grades 4 through 12 to come to the club. They are welcomed by caring and competent staff and volunteers. We offer dinner each day, homework assistance, recreation, arts and STEM enrichment activities based on monthly themes.

We currently serve 104 members. We provide a “safe home” for about thirty to fifty members on a rotating/overlapping schedule during the course of a week. Members pay an annual fee of \$10.00. They sign in and sign out each visit. None are locked into a set schedule with us; we are a ‘drop-in’ facility.

During the school year we are open from **2:30 pm to 6:00 pm** Monday through Friday. Vacation and summer schedules differ.

Do come to see us in action and add your energies supporting the youth of our community!

Contact information: Boys & Girls Club of Greater Vergennes

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WELCOME

We are pleased you wish to join our group of volunteers of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Vergennes. Volunteering time and energy for the benefit of others is one of the great cultural activities our American society has nurtured. If you already have a plan for your participation sharing your talents we'd like to hear about it. Perhaps you wish to add your energy to a simple ongoing need the Club already has identified. However you find your place with us, we welcome you!

We are excited that you will be volunteering with our members and are delighted you have chosen the Boys & Girls Clubs as your way to reach out and work with your community. You are a valuable and integral part of the success of the Boys & Girls Clubs and we hope that you find it both exciting and a rewarding opportunity. Remember that the Volunteer Coordinator, Club Staff, and Club

Director are all here to help provide guidance and assistance as you transition into your volunteer roles. This handbook will provide you with the knowledge you need to begin to empower our members. Please review the Volunteer Handbook, and the Volunteer Code of Conduct, sign the last page of both documents, and return it to the Volunteer Coordinator. If I can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Janet Gibbs
Volunteer Coordinator

Board of Directors

Jeff Fritz	Board Chair
Scott Hardy	Vice Chair
Susan Burdick	Secretary
Shanon Atkins	Treasurer
Annie Hopper	
Matt Birong	
Dave Small	
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CORE BELIEFS

Our Mission:

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

Our Core Program Areas:

Character & Leadership Development

Education & Career Development

Health & Life Skills

The Arts

Sports, Fitness & Recreation

Key Elements for Positive Youth Development:

Safe, positive environment

Fun and a sense of belonging

Supportive Relationships

Opportunities and Expectations

Recognition

“Fun with a Purpose”

This slogan best describes the Boys & Girls Clubs. Young people are attracted to the Clubs because of “fun” and opportunities they enjoy during their after-school experience. The education opportunities, athletic programs, social recreation or simply the chance to be with friends in a safe atmosphere; all of these things add to the success of the Boys & Girls Clubs. Volunteering with Boys & Girls Clubs should prove to be both rewarding and fun. Working together as a team to improve the lives of children is what we are all about.

This manual presents volunteer policies and practices in effect at the Boys & Girls clubs. Every effort has been made to establish policies that are fair and generally acceptable to our organization. This manual does not cover all situations and conditions that may occur, but is an attempt to include the important aspect of volunteering with the Boys & Girls Club, and it should be read carefully and kept for reference. You may be reassured that Boys & Girls Clubs are interested in you as an individual and as a volunteer!

Volunteer Application, and Orientation

Upon contact, potential volunteers will be asked to complete an application providing factual information. The form will request these details: Name, (including first, middle and last) Address, telephone number(s), the kind of volunteer work desired, days and hour's available and personal references. The applicant will also be asked to sign a release of information granting the Boys & Girls Clubs to conduct general and criminal background checks. All information will remain confidential.

After completing the application process, each volunteer will attend a volunteer orientation that will introduce potential volunteers to the Boys & Girls Clubs.

The orientation will include the following:

- ◆ An interpretation of the Clubs daily services & general practices.
- ◆ A tour of the facilities.
- ◆ Mission and goals of the Club.
- ◆ Programs and services provided to Club members and the benefits they offer.
- ◆ Role of volunteers in the Club. .

Professionally and ethically, the Boys & Girls Clubs volunteer program must screen each candidate. Because of the close nature of the relationship between volunteers and youth an in-depth criminal background check will be conducted for each potential volunteer. A candidate's refusal to sign a release for this investigation will result in rejection of the application. For more information about the Boys & Girls Clubs criminal background check, contact the Executive Director.

Equal Opportunity

The Boys & Girls Clubs is an equal opportunity organization. The established policy of the organization is to affirm and dedicate itself to the primary principle of non-discrimination in all phases of its activities. Volunteer decisions, on all matters including recruitment and selection shall be made solely on merit, on a non-discriminatory basis. Neither shall the organization tolerate harassment of any form to its volunteers or staff. It is expected that all management and supervisory personnel will provide leadership in support of this policy.

Policy on Confidentiality

The official volunteer records will be kept in the office of the Executive Director and are confidential.

Volunteer Resignation

Volunteers may resign at any time; however, we ask that you give as much notice as possible, so that preparations can be made to fill the volunteer position.

Volunteer Dismissal

Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, it is necessary to dismiss a particular volunteer. This typically happens when the volunteer does not meet the Club's expectations. The volunteer will be called in for a meeting and given the opportunity to address the reasons for dismissal. The discussion will be kept on a professional level at all times. If it is determined that dismissal is necessary, the volunteer may be given the opportunity to resign. Grounds for discipline, dismissal, or legal action include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ The possession or use of illegal drugs/ alcohol during schedule work time or any Club activity. The Boys & Girls Clubs is a drug free environment, and all associated with the Boys & Girls Clubs are expected to maintain that standard;
- ◆ The possession of weapons on any Boys & Girls Clubs site;
- ◆ Immoral or indecent conduct; soliciting persons for immoral purposes;
- ◆ The use of foul or offensive language on any Club site;
- ◆ Physical altercation or any aggressive action. Disruptive conduct including: gambling, fighting, horseplay, coercion, intimidation or threats against club employees, volunteers or members.



Volunteer Responsibilities

The Boys & Girls Clubs has compiled the following guidelines for volunteers. It is imperative that these guidelines be followed carefully in order to prevent injury to you or the children in your care.

You are empowered to challenge inappropriate behavior:

- ◆ Cursing or general disrespect of Club, members, or staff
- ◆ Being too loud
- ◆ Destroying property or games
- ◆ Teasing or fighting with other members

- ◆ Avoid touching a child when either the child or you are angry.
- ◆ Children are energized by action, not plans, do something. Have fun! The more you interact with the children, the more they will interact with you.
- ◆ Stay focused on the task at hand. Members will attempt to distract you with request and demands, particularly while you are participating in an activity. Use positive reinforcements to reward good behavior.
- ◆ Do not enter the bathroom or bathroom stall with a child. If a child becomes ill or requests special attention, alert the Program Director.
- ◆ Limit physical contact with children. High fives, fist bumps, and side hugs are all appropriate forms of contact. They may want to hold your hand, and this is fine. Do not, however, ever attempt to lift or carry a child in order to prevent an undesirable action. If a child becomes physically unmanageable, contact a staff member.
- ◆ Do not use personal vehicles to transport members without authorization from the Executive Director.
- ◆ Strive to be a positive role model for young people by showing respect for others in relationships with staff, members, and parents.
- ◆ Above all, enjoy your experience at the Boys & Girls Clubs.

Volunteers will use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, anticipation of elimination of potential problems, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism.

Volunteers will abstain from using humiliating or frightening discipline techniques. Volunteers will not take disciplinary action other than verbal reprimands. Club members should be referred to a staff member, or Club director for discipline.

Dress Code

Volunteers should look the part of the leader at all times. You may wear comfortable clothes that are discreet and in good taste. This includes shorts and blue jeans with appropriate tops. Tops and bottoms that expose the midriff should not be worn on site.

Smoking

Smoking of tobacco is prohibited on Club Property.

Injuries

All injuries or accidents must be reported to the immediate supervisor and Executive Director at once.

Personal Belongings

The Club cannot be responsible for the loss or theft 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.

Media Relations

Only paid staff or other personnel as authorized by the Executive Director or Director of Operations shall provide information shall release written or verbal statements for publications regarding the Boys & Girls Clubs. Incoming media calls or visits should be automatically transferred to the paid staff person in charge. All inquires about the Club should be accepted graciously. Every attempt should be made to seek answers and forward them to the inquiring party.

Health

Be proactive about health! Handwashing is a must around food activities and following use of the bathroom. If you are not feeling well or coming down with a cold - Stay Home -- We can reschedule your time at the Club.



Job Descriptions

Volunteer job descriptions are not limited to the skills and tasks that are listed. Other volunteers projects requiring job descriptions can be created as needed.

Social Recreation/Volunteer

Skills	Tasks
Ability to answer general questions about the Boys & Girls Clubs. Ability to communicate with youth members and adults about upcoming activities inside and outside Clubs Basic computer skills	Assist in signing members in and out of Club Assist or lead group activities Disseminate information to parents and members as needed Monitor members and activities within the program area Participate in and initiate games with members

Arts Program Volunteer

Skills	Tasks
Interest in the arts including: art design, digital arts, theater, and other visual art outlets Ability to lead small groups in art projects Assist art instructor with projects	Interact with members Give positive reinforcements while members work on projects Lead activities as needed Assist in cleaning program area after each project

Technology Volunteer

Skills	Tasks
Interest in computer skills Ability to help members with technology and programs in small groups	Monitor computer usage Help members use internet safely

WHAT NOW?

If you have already attended a Boys & Girls Clubs volunteer orientation, then you are ready to begin volunteering! If you are not currently volunteering, please call Janet Gibbs at 802 475-2112 to set up your volunteer opportunity.

Here are some steps that will aid you in your first visit and thereafter. Please do not hesitate to ask questions to make yourself feel comfortable. Transitioning into the Boys & Girls Clubs volunteer experience is an exciting and enjoyable task with the help of the staff . Please use us as resources to make your experience meaningful to you.

Jump right in! Volunteering at the Boys & Girls Clubs is a very empowering experience. You have a chance to change lives each time you come in, so don't be afraid to help, ask questions, and interact with the kids.

Hints for Working with Boys & Girls Club Members

- ◆ Be Yourself! Warmth and friendliness foster volunteer- member relationships. Maintaining a sense of humor and comfort will help ensure your success with young people.
- ◆ Always be consistent with specific rules and practices maintained by the staff. Also, be familiar with school and classroom rules (i.e.: encourage the children to say please and thank you
- ◆ Maintain your position of responsibility and authority at all times. Do not let friendships or neighborly relations interfere with your role as a volunteer!
- ◆ Learn the children's and the staff-person's names! You are more likely to bond with them faster if you do!
- ◆ Be aware and sensitive to the unique gifts and needs of individual children. This is critical (and a little different) at all age levels.
- ◆ Encourage and praise the children when it is appropriate to do so! Your feedback is important to their growth and development!
- ◆ If problem solving with the children (i.e.: homework, problems with peers, conflict resolution issues) guide the children to work through the problem rather than giving them the answer right away.

Ways to Assist the Staff

- ◆ Assist with planned activities.
- ◆ Read stories with the children when they are done with homework.
- ◆ Check homework that the children have completed, and make sure they are completely done with the work they have brought home!
- ◆ Prepare the child for any daily program changes.
- ◆ Help the children understand and follow directions.
- ◆ Listen to the boys and girls read aloud to you!
- ◆ Share a hobby, talent or experience you have with them.
- ◆ Help with field trips, if necessary.
- ◆ Assist with parties and special events.

Registering your Volunteer Hours

We ask that you register on the United Way of Addison County's Website. This is a fast and easy way to keep track of your volunteer hours. We receive support from the United Way and if you are registered as a volunteer from the Boys & Girls Club it helps us to show we are worthy of their continuing support. In addition the United Way uses the data gathered through the registered volunteers to help in their area wide fundraising efforts.

Steps to Registering

1. Go to the United Way of Addison County website;

<https://www.unitedwayaddisoncounty.org/>

2. Click on the “ **Volunteer Center**” on the left side of the screen
3. Choose “**Volunteer Now**” from the drop down menu.
4. Click on the gold “ Sign Up” button on the top right of the screen.
5. You will be asked to create an account . You can sign up through Facebook or with your email.
6. Each time you volunteer at the Club you just need to log into your account. Click on the “**Track Hours**” button and fill in the date and number of hours worked. Those boxes are on the right side of the screen and have the little red asterisk next to them.
7. Each month the United Way does a drawing for a \$20 gift card for Middlebury Co-op and every one who has entered hours for the month is entered to win.

Thank you for taking the time to register and track your hours!

Volunteer Handbook Acknowledgement Form

- ◆ I hereby acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Boys & Girls Clubs Volunteer Handbook.
- ◆ I understand that this handbook is a general guide and that this handbook does not constitute a placement contract and does not create any contractual right for me.
- ◆ I understand that I will not be compensated monetarily for my volunteer service.
- ◆ I understand that the Boys & Girls Clubs reserves its right to amend or change this manual at any time, or at the Boys & Girls Clubs absolute discretion, terminate the use of this handbook
- ◆ I understand that I can contact the Executive Director or Volunteer Coordinator if I have any questions regarding the Volunteer Handbook.

SIGNED on this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Volunteer's signature _____