



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE TWIN CITIES

HOPE AND HEALING.



COVID-19 IMPACT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

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Executive Summary

The future prosperity of our young people and the communities Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities (BGCTC) serves depends on our organization's ability to mobilize now to ensure that all young people have meaningful opportunities to succeed in school and life. The mission of BGCTC is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. Clubs provide a fun, safe and constructive environment for kids and teens during out-of-school hours. They offer programs and services to help young people succeed in school, develop leadership skills, maintain healthy lifestyles, and build career aspirations for the future.

High poverty levels and academic achievement gaps existed in the Twin Cities community pre-COVID and have grown exponentially in the last six months. The COVID-19 pandemic, layered with the horrific death of George Floyd and the resounding call for justice and an examination of how systemic racism has and continues to affect people of color in our country, has magnified inequities with an overwhelming impact. BGCTC recognizes the deep pain and feelings of fatigue over injustices Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities face every day and we remain committed to fighting against racism and inequities wherever and however they exist.

As we begin to reopen our Clubs, there is nothing more important than the safety and well-being of our youth and families. Clubs are a safe space, and we remain committed to championing inclusivity, equity, and opportunity for our young people. Now, more than ever, we have a responsibility to do better by our young people, to speak up for them, and provide them a platform where their voices can be heard and be part of the much-needed systemic change in our nation. Today, and every day, we stand in peace and unity with the communities we serve.

Increased Supports to Youth and Families



Boys & Girls Clubs Twin Cities has a responsibility during this time to continue strengthening supports for our families as they face ongoing, intensified challenges with school closures, work disruptions, and potential illness and health concerns. We continue to connect with each one of our families to make sure they have the supports they need while also working in small virtual and in-person teams to strengthen and enhance curriculum, lesson plans, and general Club operations. We continue to work very closely with technical partners to ensure appropriate and equitable access to connectivity, to support our members academics through virtual learning and also provide supplemental relationships and social-emotional support through virtual delivery of BGCTC programs. We also continue to work with food distributors, grocers and restaurants to provide strengthened food support.

Despite the fact that we've had to make changes to how we operate on a daily basis and need to continue practicing social distancing until further notice, BGCTC staff members continue to work closely with our families and one another to develop enhanced program models that ensure best practices and action plans to support our young people, families, and our community. This also better equips our organization for the anticipated greater need that will present itself once we are able to fully reopen all Club locations.

Thank You to our COVID-19 Community Response Partners!

- A1 Landscaping
- Asian Foods/Sysco
- Aspen Waste
- Best Buy Foundation
- Bobby & Steve's Autoworld
- Capital Maintenance
- Concrete Coating
- Cub Foods
- Ecolab
- Fixed Assets
- Fountain of Life Church – Minneapolis
- Grandma's Bakery
- Harminder Mashiana
- Harry & Jan Sweere Foundation
- Harvard Maintenance
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters
- Jerry & Diane Carlson
- Jim and Sue Franklin
- The Joel & Teresa Pfister Foundation
- Kellogg's
- Kowalski's Markets
- MATTERbox Snack Packs
- McNeely Foundation
- The Minneapolis Foundation
- Minnesota Timberwolves Head Coach Ryan Saunders and wife Hayley
- Minnesota Vikings and the Wilf Family
- Otto Bremer Trust
- Papa John's Pizza
- Polaris Industries
- Pratt Industries & Minnesota Corrugated Box, Inc.
- Reinhart Foodservice
- Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation
- Sonance Foundation
- Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation
- T-Mobile
- Teamsters Local 320
- Teamsters Local 471
- Union Pacific Foundation
- US Foods

Increased Supports to Youth and Families

BGCTC's COVID-19 response efforts include:

- *Family wellness check-ins.* BGCTC staff members continue to connect with each of our families to make sure they have the supports they need during this difficult time. These calls focus on immediate needs related to shelter, food, technology needs, and medical care.
- *Connection to and distribution of food.* BGCTC has been working diligently with food distributors, grocers, and restaurants to provide weekly meal packages (10,000+ meals) for our families and connect families to additional nutrition resources.
- *Delivery of youth development programs as a distance learning model.* This includes K-12 academic support, ensuring digital connectivity and distribution of education materials and supplies to youth and families.
- *Southside Village Food Pantry.* BGCTC converted our Southside Village Club into a pop-up free food and supplies pantry serving families lacking access to grocery stores and transportation. The food pantry served 2,700 shoppers from June 1 to August 7.
- *Two BGCTC Club sites (Mt. Airy & Jerry Gamble)* reopened for a summer session July 6 – August 14 with small-group, full-day in-person youth programming for grades K-5 members identified as high need for focused academic support.
- *Five BGCTC Club sites (Jerry Gamble, Southside Village, Mt. Airy, East Side, and Al Lenzmeier West Side)* reopened September 14 with small-group, full day in-person youth programming for both teen members and grades K-8 members identified as high need for focused academic support. This is an expansion of Club program hours, as our typical schedule is after school hours during the school year, with full day programming on school release days and during the summer.



14,487

*total family wellness
check-ins conducted
March 18 - August 7*



167,640

*total meals served
April 1 - August 7*



2,181

*total virtual
experiences March
18 - August 7*

Standing for Equity and Social Justice

In addition to COVID-19, our communities have also recently experienced the horrific death of George Floyd, and the resounding call for justice and an examination of how systemic racism has and continues to affect people of color in our country. The future of our nation rests in the hands of our young kids and teens – young people who are watching the news and their social media feeds, overhearing their parents' conversations, worrying for their world, and looking for mentoring and support. The work we do at the Clubs is part of the change that is needed in our country. BGCTC has always been at the forefront of change, and we are committed to providing our young people a platform where their voices can be heard and be part of the solution.

BGCTC is committed to inclusivity, equity, and opportunity for ALL youth, as well as championing policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, and equitable organization. Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people –including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development and implementation of youth programs; the fair financial and supervisory support of staff; and the leadership of the organization.

BGCTC is leading national social justice 'Call to Action' supporting Boys & Girls Clubs of America in developing a comprehensive Social Justice Framework. On August 5, this initiative scaled up to a national, multi-city Teen Empowerment Town Hall that tackled timely issues of social and racial justice impacting teens in America today. Following opening remarks from Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) CEO Jim Clark, teens engaged in lively discussions on topics including police reform, criminal justice reform and grassroots activism.

Also in August, BGCTC hired Abiba Lecky as the organization's first Teen Advocacy Liaison to bring social justice and racial equity advocacy work to all Clubs in Saint Paul, Minneapolis, and Richfield. This role is part of BGCTC's intentional support for resilience and lifting youth voice to advance a community movement toward a new and better normal with racial justice and equity for all.

During the week of September 8, BGCTC's teen staff and members hosted a number of pop-up events designed to launch the organization's new Social Justice initiative. The events brought Club teens together from north Minneapolis, south Minneapolis, and St. Paul to connect them with partner organizations with strong ties in each community. These pop-ups also created opportunities for youth performers to explore their experiences as BIPOC teens and for young people to meet with representatives from other Twin Cities organizations.



Advancing Food Security: Southside Village Pop-up Pantry

With many retailers already closed due to COVID, property damage resulting from unrest in the weeks following the tragic death of George Floyd left many Minneapolis residents with reduced access to fresh and healthy food. Stores and retailers closest to 38th and Chicago – the site of George Floyd’s death – were most heavily impacted, and the surrounding neighborhoods struggled with a lack of nutritious food options in the weeks that followed.

On June 1, BGCTC converted our Southside Village Club into a pop-up free food and supplies pantry serving families who were disproportionately impacted by the confluence of traumatic events and lacked access to grocery stores and transportation. The Club – located at 39th and Chicago – opened its doors each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11am to 4pm. Volunteers assisted each family in selecting essential food staples, personal care, and childcare products. Until its closure on August 7, the Southside Village pantry served up to 100 families per day.



2,700

*shoppers served
June 1 - August 7*



401

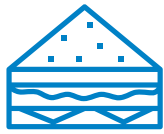
*total volunteers
June 1 - August 7*



Advancing Food Security: Family Meal Kits and Weekend Family Meal Program

Family Meal Kits

Beginning April 1, BGCTC offered free weekly meal packages to Club families to address the increased food insecurities kids and families faced with work disruptions and school closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This expanded meal program – Family Meal Kits – provided boxes of pre-sorted meal components that were distributed at eight Club locations each Wednesday. From April 1 until the program's end on August 7, BGCTC distributed a total of 167,640 meals.



1,529

*meals served in Clubs
per week prior to
closures*



600+

*families served per
week April 1 - August 7*



9,000+

*meals served per week
April 1 - August 7*



Weekend Family Meal Program

Based on feedback from our Club families, there are limited food security nutrition resources at the present time in the communities we serve. While there was an initial outpouring of community donations to BGCTC and other short-term food distribution efforts in the Southside neighborhood, donations are beginning to trail off at a time when the needs of families are intensified beyond the burden of COVID-related impact. Starting September 18, in response to this intensified need, BGCTC will launch a new Weekend Family Meal Program that will provide weekend food security - 128 meals per family to 400 families through December 27.

Virtual Learning

BGCTC launched a virtual learning platform on April 16. The first weeks of this new programming channel via Google Classroom focused on welcoming and engaging youth and families, orientation to virtual learning opportunities and communicating virtual learning expectations, along with providing daily academic support. Additionally, education packets and education supplies were distributed to families weekly along with the Family Meal Kits.



K-6 virtual modules include:

- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) activities including beginning check-in time and closing reflection time
- Movement games
- Healthy meal preparation demonstrations
- Daily challenges (e.g., 3 marker challenge coloring contest)
- Family game night



Teen virtual modules include:

- Weekly social-emotional support check-ins
- Virtual tutoring
- Social media engagement
- Financial education classes
- Career and job skills training
- Together Raising Awareness for Indian Life (T.R.A.I.L.) diabetes prevention
- Career Tech credit offered to Patrick Henry High School students as part of distance learning



BGCTC will continue to deliver virtual learning program modules in future weeks. The work we are doing now is not only maintaining but increasing engagement with our Club members and their families.



922

*Kids & Families
virtual experiences
March 18 - August 7*



1,259

*Teen Pathways
virtual experiences
March 18 - August 7*

Reopening our Clubs

As a new school year begins, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities (BGCTC) is working diligently to ensure supports are in place for Club youth and families to succeed despite the profound and ever-changing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and civil unrest. These significant events have magnified racial and economic inequities with overwhelming ramifications.

As Twin Cities school districts are choosing distance learning to start the school year, families need greater support from the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities. School shutdowns and distance learning create increased barriers and challenges for historically underserved populations, including access to remote learning, and the ability for parents/guardians to provide home support. BGCTC leadership and program staff have been diligently focused on planning to be flexible and responsive toward achieving racially and economically equitable outcomes in education and youth development.

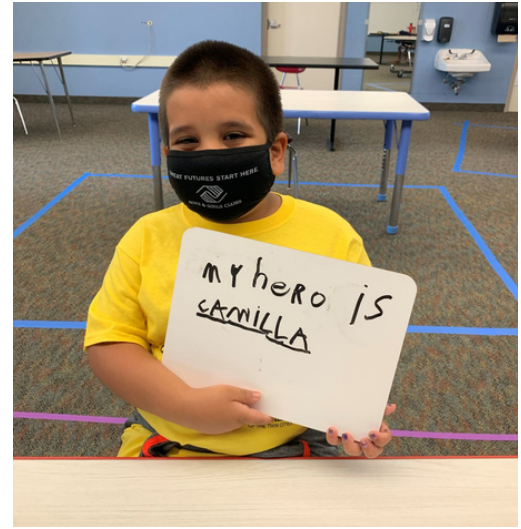
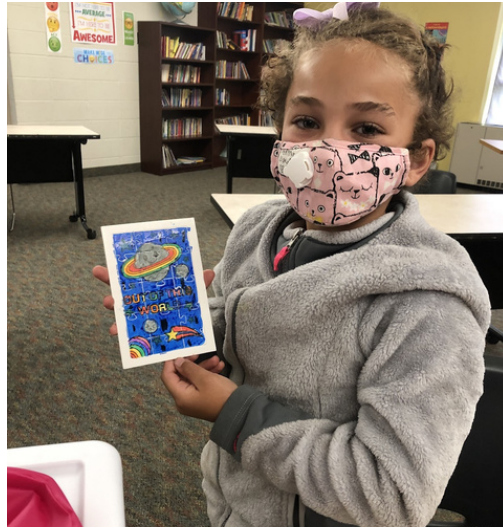
This summer, two BGCTC Clubs (Mt. Airy in Saint Paul and Jerry Gamble in Minneapolis, for K-5 Club members), as well as BGCTC's Voyageur Environmental Center, reopened with a full day small-group, in-person programming model with intentional focus on decreasing educational disparities. On September 14, to continue filling growing gaps, we reopened additional Clubs for full day small-group, in-person programming: Southside Village in Minneapolis and Al Lenzmeier West Side in Saint Paul for K-5 programming, and East Side in Saint Paul for teen programming.

Our wrap-around reopen plan involves a structured partnership with parents/guardians and teachers/schools as BGCTC takes on a more significant role in administering a high-quality Club and education experience. Virtual programming will continue, to expand our program reach and to support children and teens we cannot bring into the Clubs at this time due to COVID-19 safety capacity constraints. As COVID-19 safety allows, we will move forward to bring more young people back into the Clubs for in-person programming.

The future prosperity of our community depends on our ability to mobilize NOW to create meaningful, equitable opportunities for all youth and families. This fall, BGCTC will support hundreds of kids and families from underserved communities who face circumstances beyond their control—including a lack of access to technology, healthy food, and a safe place to learn and grow.



Looking Ahead



Every day, BGCTC's targeted approach to reduce academic, health, and economic disparities is activated through a comprehensive program model. We have a responsibility to our youth and to our community to deliver holistic programming that makes an impact — one that extends beyond the walls of the Club to shape exceptional adults ready to reach their full potential as healthy, productive, and compassionate citizens. We have invested in a transformational and inclusive program model that supports essential skill building and academic achievement from kindergarten through post-secondary. Providing access and opportunities go hand in hand with setting goals and having high expectations for every young person while ensuring every Club senior graduates on time with a plan for the future.



BGCTC is intentional in our community partnerships and collaborations to promote equity and create systems change. We also realize that a family-centered approach is critical to our work to create systemic change. As an organization, we have moved over incredible hurdles over the past six months. BGCTC staff pivoted, collaborated, and found new channels for delivering our work to ensure kids, teens, and families were at the center of focused efforts. Through the challenges, already strong Club relationships with the families have become even stronger.



As we look to 2021 and beyond, we know that we need to increase our resources and supports in building stronger and more equitable program opportunities for an expanding number of young people. We will continue to respond to the changing economic climate and resulting growth in education, health and income disparities by increasing accessibility to high quality experiences, activities, and resources so EVERY young person is on target to reach their full potential.

Together, We Are Stronger!

In the News

- [WCCO \(CBS Minnesota\) covers launch of Family Meal Kits program](#) (March 31, 2020)
- [FOX 9 covers launch of Family Meal Kits program](#) (March 31, 2020)
- [FOX 9 broadcasts video feature on Family Meal Kits program](#) (March 31, 2020)
- [FOX 9 Morning Buzz interviews BGCTC staff member](#) (April 23, 2020)
- [Star Tribune features BGCTC food distribution and pandemic response at Little Earth Club](#) (May 23, 2020)
- [National Geographic features photo of Patrick Henry Club youth at a Minneapolis protest](#) (May 31, 2020)
- [Star Tribune discusses Southside Village pantry and civil unrest in South Minneapolis](#) (June 2, 2020)
- [Boys & Girls Clubs of America highlights BGCTC COVID-19 response](#) (June 16, 2020)
- [FOX Sports North runs video feature on Southside Village pantry](#) (June 25, 2020)
- [KARE 11 shares update on BGCTC's plan for reopening Clubs](#) (August 24, 2020)
- [Star Tribune discusses the reopening of Twin Cities Clubs and teen social justice initiatives](#) (September 12, 2020)



How You Can Help

While social distancing measures are currently limiting volunteer engagement at the Clubs, please consider supporting BGCTC in the following ways:

- Donate non-perishable food items, hygiene and cleaning supplies, school supplies, games, and activities for Club kids
- Sew or donate masks for Club staff
- Promote our organization on social media to build awareness
- Share employment resources for families
- Write encouraging notes to our kids or Club staff

To make an in-kind donation of any of the items listed above within the coming weeks and months, please contact Molly Hemes at mhemes@bgc-tc.org to arrange a drop-off time at one of our Clubs.

Ways to Give

Your support helps ensure that BGCTC can provide ongoing supports for our youth and families as they continue to face these challenging times. Join us to support Great Futures for the young people we serve!

- Online: <https://boysandgirls.org/give/>
- By phone: Text OURKIDS to 243725
- By mail:

*Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities
690 Jackson St.
Saint Paul, MN 55130*

Visit our website for more giving options:
boysandgirls.org/ways-to-give

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[boysandgirls.org/subscribe](https://www.boysandgirls.org/subscribe)

Find our Clubs on Facebook!

Minneapolis Clubs

- [Jerry Gamble Club](#)
- [Olson Middle School Club](#)
- [Patrick Henry Club](#)
- [Southside Village Club](#)
- [Little Earth Club](#)

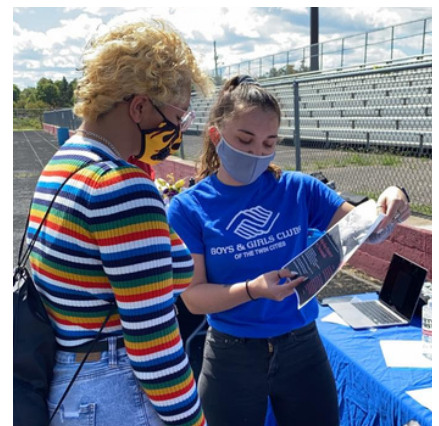
St. Paul Clubs

- [Mt. Airy Club](#)
- [East Side Club](#)
- [Al Lenzmeier West Side Club](#)

Richfield Clubs

- [Centennial Elementary Club](#)
- [Richfield Middle School Club](#)

[Voyageur Environmental Center](#)



Visit [boysandgirls.org/support](https://www.boysandgirls.org/support) to learn more about how we continue to support our communities.