
Manual For Starting Boys & Girls Clubs In Public Housing

143584

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Prepared under grant No. 88-JS-CX-K002 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

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September, 1990

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and Boys & Girls Clubs of America have worked together to develop a manual which can be extremely valuable to citizens in communities all across the country who want to establish proven, cost-effective services for girls and boys in public housing. For too many years, young people who reside in public housing, and their families, have been overlooked. Access to positive youth development services provided on a consistent basis during their many leisure hours does not exist.

The development and continuing operation of Boys & Girls Clubs in public housing has proven to be a very positive and constructive step in helping girls and boys and their families to more successfully cope with and overcome the many problems which are frequently endemic to life in public housing.

America's young people are her future. Every boy and girl counts. For youngsters living in public housing, as well as those in other parts of our cities and towns, Boys & Girls Clubs make a significant difference in setting their course toward a future of promise and productivity.



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I. History and Overview

Mission and Program Philosophy of Boys & Girls Clubs of America

The Boys & Girls Club Movement is a nationwide affiliation of local, autonomous organizations and Boys & Girls Clubs of America working to help youth of all backgrounds, with special concern for those from disadvantaged circumstances, develop the qualities needed to become responsible citizens and leaders.

Based on a Youth Development Strategy (see page 21), Clubs are designed to provide girls and boys ages 6 to 18 with responsible adult guidance, thereby filling needs that frequently are not adequately met at home, in school or elsewhere in the community. By offering consistent, concerned leadership, Boys & Girls Clubs help these youngsters grow into mature, constructive adults, better able to benefit from and meet the responsibilities of life in our country.

The Movement is made up of Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the national organization, and 1,200 Club facilities operated by 600 locally governed Boys & Girls Club organizations. These Clubs are located throughout the United States and in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Collectively, Clubs serve more than 1.5 million boys and girls.

A total of 61,996 Board and program volunteers and 16,771 full and part-time staff members enable Clubs to provide youth development services on a daily basis. The total cost of operating the national organization and its affiliated Clubs exceeded \$230 million in 1989. The building assets of the entire Movement have a total replacement value of nearly \$750 million.

The Challenge of Establishing Boys & Girls Clubs in Public Housing

Following World War II, housing developments or "projects" were built to provide low-cost shelter for returning veterans as they resumed their civilian lives. The stay was expected to be brief, perhaps three to four years, for these original residents.

Today, the veterans are long gone, replaced by different public housing tenants, who have come to stay for generations.

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For the boys and girls, in particular, who live in large, impersonal housing developments, getting a good start in life is difficult. The bleak, often blighted surroundings separate them from the rest of the community. In some housing developments the high-density occupancy is believed to contribute to the sense of hopelessness, the feeling that there is no way up or out, that can seem almost impossible to overcome.

By serving as an external force that can break the cycle of depression and desperation—and in so doing, give girls and boys the prospect of a future they can look forward to—Boys & Girls Clubs have a tremendous impact in housing developments.

Such Clubs have a proven record of reducing vandalism and gang violence, stimulating youth employment and, most importantly, giving boys and girls in housing developments—and often their families—a sense of purpose and belonging. Clubs meet a need for organized and supervised recreation and provide opportunities to build friendships and pursue wholesome, constructive activities in the surrounding community.

Advantages of a Boys & Girls Club in Public Housing

The presence of B&GCA in public housing developments began in the mid 1950s. Recognizing a need for youth services in these areas, the New York City Housing Authority asked the organization to help them fill the gap.

Beginning then, Boys & Girls Clubs have multiplied with great and visible benefits to the general public, the housing development community and, most importantly, the young people in the Clubs.

From the 1960s through 1970s, federal assistance in the form of funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under the auspices of the Neighborhood Facilities Act, helped start a number of Boys Clubs/Boys & Girls Clubs in public housing facilities. The rationale for this support was twofold. First, the existence of Clubs in public housing substantially reduces vandalism. Second, Clubs free up housing authority staff for other responsibilities.

In housing developments, where youngsters have little that is worthwhile to occupy their time, damaging property becomes a common pastime. However, repairing broken windows and doors and other such damage is enormously expensive. Clubs in these settings provide cost-effective means to reduce damage due to vandalism.

A Boys & Girls Club based in a public housing facility also lightens the workload for the housing authority by reducing the number of complaints with which security and maintenance personnel have to deal. Unsupervised, young people frequently roam the grounds and streets of a housing development, engaging themselves in anti-social behavior. Once involved in the activities of a Boys & Girls Club, their time and energies are productively channeled.

It has become increasingly and clearly evident that having a Boys & Girls Club in a housing development has several built-in advantages:

- Under-utilized "community space" such as meetings rooms, unused apartments, or a separate community activities building can be fully used for the Boys & Girls Club program.
- There is *economic benefit* to locating a facility where the youngsters live. This eliminates the need to provide usually unavailable or expensive transportation to send children to other areas.
- *Membership dues* are kept *low* so that the poorest boys and girls can belong and participate.
- *Substantial In-kind services*, such as a (rent-free) facility, utilities and maintenance, can be provided by housing authorities.
- *Increased parental involvement in the activities of their children* is the frequent outcome when Club facilities & programs are so convenient.
- *Volunteer help* and part-time staff assistance can often be found among residents of public housing developments.

Most importantly, operating a Club in a housing development is basic to the mission of all Boys & Girls Clubs—to serve those young people in greatest need.

Now, a new chapter in the collaboration between HUD and B&GCA has begun—a concerted effort to establish many more Club units in public housing complexes. To that end, in October of 1986, the Secretary of HUD sent a letter to all local public housing executive directors, urging them to help Boys & Girls Clubs establish on-site units. B&GCA, the Secretary observed, has a long history of helping young people who are “growing up in disadvantaged, even hostile environments.”

At the same time, B&GCA President Jeremiah Milbank, writing to local Boys & Girls Club leaders throughout the country, declared that this partnership effort with HUD would provide many organizations with “a golden opportunity to expand into unserved areas.” Soon after taking office, the current Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Jack Kemp, a Boys Club alumnus, pledged his full support and endorsement to have Boys & Girls Clubs located in public housing developments.

The interest and enthusiasm of Clubs and housing authorities in the B&GCA/HUD partnership is proving beneficial toward making the goal of establishing new Club sites in public housing a reality.

II. Positioning the Boys & Girls Club Organization for Expansion into Public Housing

Capacity and Commitment

From experience, B&GCA has learned that for a town or city to sustain a Boys & Girls Club, it should usually have a population of approximately 30,000 or more people. With that as a base, the strength of the Boys & Girls Club organization—whether it operates one Club or several—rests, in large measure, upon the leaders involved with it.

First among these leaders is the organization's own board of directors, which should be comprised of influential and recognized individuals representative of the community. In cases where the organization operates several units, the board of directors usually includes at least one representative from each unit Club's advisory board or council.

Also of great importance is that the Boys & Girls Club organization have competent staff leadership which is capable of managing expansion into public housing developments.

When the need for a Boys & Girls Club unit in public housing has been determined, the board of directors must decide whether or not to proceed with the establishment of such a unit. A major part of this decision should be based on the organization's ability to generate sufficient, ongoing financial resources.

Note: If there is not an existing Boys & Girls Club organization available and willing to establish a Club in a public housing facility, B&GCA's Field Services staff will provide the assistance needed to organize and develop a new corporation.

Funding and Financial Stability

A successful operation must be financially secure. There is nothing more disappointing to all concerned that for a Boys & Girls Club to start, and then cease operations because adequate financial support is not generated.

Commitment to Growth and Quality of Services

The Boys & Girls Club is committed to both growth in and quality of services whenever it assists with the development of a new Club. This is particularly true for a unit in a housing development.

A Boys & Girls Club unit in public housing should be considered as important as any other unit the organization operates. In order to be effective and successful, it must be a quality operation in all respects.

Achieving Community Acceptance

Usually the Boys & Girls Club unit will be one of a number of organizations working in the community. Therefore, in establishing the Boys & Girls Club, it is important to have an understanding of the community's dynamics and influencing forces, so as to place the Club in a cooperative, rather than competing position.

III. Working with the Housing Authority

Although the governance and management of the Boys & Girls Club unit in public housing should be independent of the local housing authority—even if this is the city's first Club—it is very important for the Boys & Girls Club board and staff to have a good working relationship with the authority.

To work successfully with the housing authority, it is essential to know how it works—the persons involved, the lines of communication and the decision-making process. Developing such awareness, through face-to-face meetings, will help identify the person or people whose assistance and support will be essential to establishing the Boys & Girls Club unit.

Although the executive director of the local housing authority manages its operations on a day-to-day basis, members of the housing authority board and, usually, the mayor are also involved in decision making. A regional Housing and Urban Development (HUD) representative, from one of HUD's 10 regional offices or 200 area offices, will be able to provide support and direction in working with the local housing authority.

Developing a Working Partnership

A successful Boys & Girls Club unit in public housing requires a good working partnership with top housing authority officials. Although the need for a Club in a specific housing development may be quite apparent, support from that housing project's staff is also very important.

Seek the housing authority's agreement and support to explore the development of a Boys & Girls Club unit. Encourage and use the housing authority staff's ideas and assistance. Asking for their participation and support as working partners will assure the best results.

Housing authority officials know how much a Club is needed in a particular development. Each day, they have to deal with the vandalism, drug use, gang activity and other troubles that plague the complex. They know the problems; invite them to be part of the solution.

Verifying the Need for a Club

The B&GCA's Field Services staff will assist in reviewing the local situation to verify the need for a Boys & Girls Club at the particular housing site being considered. Since B&GCA requires that a Club have a minimum of 100 members, it is important to assess the density of the resident youth population to be sure it is large enough to warrant a Boys & Girls Club unit.

Before undertaking the actual development of a Club, it is important to carefully evaluate the feasibility of such a project, who will be served and the impact which can be anticipated.

Selling the Boys & Girls Club Concept to the Housing Authority.

A Boys & Girls Club is different, unlike most other services for young people that might have been offered in the housing development before. It is different because:

- It is open five or six days each week, after school and in the evening and during the day in the summer. It is a "home away from home" to its members.
- It has full-time professional leadership.
- It requires no proof or pledge of good character.
- It keeps membership dues so low that any young person can afford to belong.
- It is for young people of all races, religions and color.
- It operates out of its own quarters, specially adapted and designed for the conduct of Club activities.
- It is nonsectarian.
- It is open to all members at any time during its hours of operation.
- It has a varied and diversified program geared to individuals, small groups, drop-ins and large groups.
- It is guidance-oriented, helping young people make appropriate and satisfying choices in various aspects of their lives.

Remember, nothing sells like success. Over the last 20 years, significant inroads have been made in establishing Boys & Girls Clubs in public housing developments, and success stories are available for use through B&GCA's Field Services staff.

Working with the Tenants' Association

The housing development's Tenants' Association — an organization of the residents — is a necessary and highly valuable ally in establishing a Boys & Girls Club. Through face-to-face meetings and individual personal contacts, get to know its officers and members, its level of influence, how it operates and how best to work with it.

Support from this group, secured in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation, is crucial. Encourage the Tenants' Association and its leaders to 'buy into' the idea by seeking their advice and assistance, rather than 'handing it to them' matter of factly. They, in turn, can be instrumental in helping to convince the at large community's leaders and other residents of the need for a Club and enlist their support.

Getting Specific about Housing Authority Support

Once assurances of the housing authority's commitment for a Boys & Girls Club have been received, it is time to examine what specific help the authority can give.

Now the Boys & Girls Club must specify its requirements and the detailed support it will need from the housing authority. Naturally, there is bound to be some give-and-take as the authority attempts to meet the Club's requests to the fullest extent possible.

In addition to a Club facility in the form of a full building, major portion of a building or converted apartments, the housing authority will provide and bear the cost of some or all of the following:

- Renovations to Boys & Girls Club specifications
- Landscaping and other outdoor improvements
- Utilities including electricity, heat, water and, sometimes, telephone service
- Clerical support, such as secretarial assistance.
- Maintenance and cleaning service
- Professional assistance with preparation of formal grant requests.
- Furniture and equipment

In some cases, housing authorities have provided direct cash allocations for operating support of Clubs.

Drawing up a Letter of Agreement

When negotiations between the Boys & Girls Club and the housing authority are complete, prepare a letter of agreement or a contract specifying the extent of use of the facility, the services to be provided by each party, and the responsibilities of each party. Sample letters of agreement may be obtained from a B&GCA Regional Service Director.

Even in the friendliest, most supportive of circumstances, legal counsel is advisable. If a lawyer does not actually draw up the letter of agreement or contract, he or she should review it to assure protection and compliance with controlling regulations and ordinances.

A clearly defined agreement provides a good foundation for the future involvement of both parties and the continuation of a mutually supportive and beneficial relationship.

Cementing the Relationship for the Long Term

Experience has shown that once a Boys & Girls Club is in operation, the values and benefits to the housing authority — in terms of reduced vandalism, gang activity, drug use and other problems — soon become apparent. These can be interpreted to secure increased participation and support. For example, some of the money saved by the housing authority because of reduced vandalism costs could be channeled to the Boys & Girls Club.

It is important for the Boys & Girls Club and the housing authority to have an ongoing relationship which is mutually supportive and beneficial. When a housing authority sees the benefits that one Club brings, it may soon be ready to make available more space and other resources so that Boys & Girls Club units can be opened in other housing developments.

IV. Planning and Getting Underway

Technical Assistance and Consultation Services

B&GCA is available and prepared to help in establishing a Boys & Girls Club unit through a variety of support services. The Regional Field Services representative can be called upon to answer questions about how to proceed.

When needed, specific assistance with design, renovation and/or expansion of the Club facility, program development, membership recruitment, as well as other technical consultation, can be provided.

A variety of B&GCA publications, videos and kits will also prove useful (see Appendix A). The latest copy of B&GCA's Publications and Resources List can be obtained from a Regional Field Services representative.

Identifying Financial Support

Adequate sources of continuing income must be assured. These may include federal, state and local funds; funds from the housing authority and financial support from the United Way, corporations, foundations, individuals and other sources (See Chapter IX).

Secure the help of individuals active in fundraising and well-placed contacts at various potential funding sources, such as foundations, businesses and civic groups, to help determine the range of possibilities. Although there is competition for philanthropic dollars, with the right leaders, a well-planned approach and a strong "case statement," the support needed will be forthcoming.

Establishing an Advisory Board or Council

A Boys & Girls Club in a housing development should have a group of individuals whose main concern is the development and support of that particular unit. Usually this is known as an advisory board or advisory council. It operates under the authority and policies of the board of directors of the existing Boys & Girls corporation in the community.

Tapping Experienced Leaders

Individuals with skills and experience in organizational matters and a track record for getting things done should be enlisted to serve on the advisory board or council to help get the Boys & Girls Club underway and to continue operation.

These individuals are the “go-getters” of a community, known for generously contributing their time, leadership and financial support to worthy endeavors.

Among the types of members to consider for the advisory board are:

- Business owners/operators
- Top school administrators
- Senior law enforcement officials
- Housing authority representatives
- Tenants’ Association members
- Professionals (lawyers, physicians, accountants, etc.)
- Other community leaders

Input from Housing Development Residents and Others

Input from the Tenants’ Association and other residents of the housing development, as well as others in the immediate community, is vital. More than anyone, they are on the front line—often the victims of an adverse environment and, hopefully, the beneficiaries of the changes a Boys & Girls Club unit can bring. Involve them in the Boys & Girls Club unit plans. Seek their opinions and assistance. Encourage them to volunteer and support the establishment and operation of the Club. To insure their continuing goodwill and support, keep them informed and involved.

V. Site Determination, Preparation and Maintenance

Finding a Suitable Facility

In determining the most suitable location for the Boys & Girls Club unit, there are several options, depending upon the layout of the particular housing development under consideration. The Club might have exclusive use of a free-standing building, such as a community activities center, or operate in a portion of a building; it could be placed in several contiguous apartments which have been "joined" together by removing walls or it could be placed in a building newly constructed for its use.

Existing facilities sometimes come with attractive "extras" such as an adjacent park, sports fields, tennis and basketball courts, or even a swimming pool. Such amenities offer added opportunities for expanded program activities.

B&GCA's Field Services staff are available to provide assistance with the exploration of a proposed site for the Club unit.

Planning and Developing the Facility

In many cases, the available space is ready for Club occupancy and use with minimal, if any, modifications, renovations or redecorating. A thorough cleaning, minor repairs and painting touch-up may be all that is needed.

If modifications or renovations are needed, B&GCA's Building Consultation Service personnel will assist in assessing the available facility and make recommendations as to the changes needed to accommodate a quality program. Or, locally developed plans can be reviewed and critiqued resulting in suggestions for and clearance of the final plans.

If new construction is proposed, B&GCA's Building Consultation Service personnel will assist in site evaluation and provide a functional building plan, including furnishings and equipment layouts.

B&GCA's *"Guide for the Planning, Design and Construction of Club Facilities"* is available upon request and will be extremely helpful to both the building committee and architect.

Costs for Renovations and/or Construction

Usually, the housing authority will not only cover the costs for whatever is done, but will handle the entire undertaking, according to specifications submitted by the Boys & Girls Club. Funds may also be available from foundations, corporations, municipalities and the federal government for such projects.

Equipping the Club

Here, too, the housing authority may be the prime benefactor, actually providing needed equipment or funds for its purchase. Area businesses may also provide equipment through in-kind giving. Local civic clubs and fraternal groups may wish to "sponsor" equipment and supplies for certain rooms or activities.

Upon request, B&GCA will help develop a list of equipment needed. Also, after the Club is operational and chartered, it will be eligible to receive available government surplus property. B&GCA Field Services representatives will provide details.

Maintenance and Cleaning

The arrangements for maintenance and cleaning of both the interior and exterior of the Club should be worked out between the Boys & Girls Club and the housing authority in the letter of agreement. In most cases, the housing authority will do both. It should at least agree to perform all major repairs related to plumbing, mechanical (heating, ventilating and air conditioning), electrical and roofing. Make certain that the process for requesting such repairs is clearly defined and includes a policy for responding to emergency repairs.

Exterior of the Club

The outside appearance of the Club makes an important statement to members, parents and area residents. Make certain that the appropriate signage is displayed in a prominent and attractive manner. Make arrangements with the housing authority for ongoing maintenance of that area immediately outside of the Club as well as any athletic fields or play areas which are utilized.

Perhaps nothing can more easily tarnish the appearance of the Club than graffiti. It is critical that graffiti be removed immediately should it appear. Therefore, from the outset develop a policy for dealing with it. Perhaps the housing authority has such provisions. Again, it is much easier to work out a suitable arrangement in advance of moving in.

Safety and Security

It is essential to plan for and assure the security of the Club members, staff, property and equipment against destructive or harmful acts by individuals or groups. Work closely with local law enforcement officials, housing authority management and the Tenants' Association to develop prevention and problem-solving strategies, staff and volunteer training, Club member education and any needed surveillance. Such a comprehensive plan and actions will help to significantly reduce problems with safety and security.

VI. Structure and Organizational Relationships

Board of Directors

The responsibility of the board of directors of the Boys & Girls Club corporation is to oversee the Boys & Girls Club organization's total operation. This may mean an organization with one Club or a multi-unit organization with several Clubs.

The board of directors determines all organizational policies and employs the executive director, who manages the overall operation.

B&GCA's Board Members Handbook provides useful information for board members.

Unit Advisory Board or Council

The advisory board or advisory council is the supporting volunteer group for the Boys & Girls Club unit (see page 11). It usually has one or more representatives on the board of directors of the Boys & Girls Club corporation.

Staff

The executive director of the Boys & Girls Club corporation is directly accountable to the board of directors and is responsible for the employment and supervision of all other employees (see page 17).

The unit director is accountable to the executive director or an assigned administrative supervisor, depending upon the staff structure of the organization.

B&GCA has many resources that will be useful to boards of directors and professional staff. A list of these is available from the Regional Field Services representative.

VII. Management and Business Practices

Budget Planning

The budget of the Boys & Girls Club unit should be planned and developed each year in advance by the unit director and Boys & Girls Club corporate administration. Advisory board members should be involved at appropriate stages in this planning. Final budget determination will be made by the organization's board of directors.

There must be a commitment by the unit director and advisory board to secure their portion of the income and control the expenses as established in the budget (see Appendixes B and C).

Business Practices

The management and business practices of the Boys & Girls Club unit must be consistent with those established and utilized by the Boys & Girls Club corporation which oversees the operation of the unit. These include matters such as purchasing procedures, handling cash and budget management.

Insurance

The Boys & Girls Club organization should secure adequate insurance coverage for the unit, consistent with its risk-management practices and the letter of agreement with the housing authority.

VIII. Staffing

Positions to be Filled

- *Unit Director* is one of the most important positions on the Boys & Girls Club staff since this person manages and supervises the day-to-day operation of the Club unit. It is a salaried full-time position and should be filled by a professionally trained person. He or she should have experience working with young people in a facility setting. B&GCA will provide assistance in identifying prospective candidates for this position.
- *Other full-time staff*, such as a program director or education director, should be hired as facilities, membership size, and activities dictate to assure an effective program.
- *Clerical support*, such as a part-time secretary, may be supplied by the housing authority or employed by the Boys & Girls Club.
- *Part-time staff* should be hired to provide leadership and supervision for various program areas, depending on community needs and Club activities.
- *Volunteers*, including senior citizens who may belong to the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), parents of members, other housing development residents and even older teenagers can be an excellent source of assistance and help in various program areas.

Staff can also be recruited through the use of other programs, such as Project Self Sufficiency (managed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and HUD) and VISTA.

Whenever possible, consider members of the Tenants' Association and other residents of the housing development in filling some staff positions. Since this is their home and these are their children, what better group is there to involve in improving their own community?

It is essential that all workers at the Club have a genuine interest in the boys and girls and that they are positive role models.

Personnel Policies and Practices

It is important to note that all Boys & Girls Club unit personnel — employees and volunteers — must be governed by the personnel policies and practices of the Boys & Girls Club corporation. Guidelines for policies and practices are available from Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

Each employee should have an up-to-date job description which specifies his or her major responsibilities, the know-how required, specific functions and expected outcomes.

Staff Training

A comprehensive plan for staff training should be developed by the Boys & Girls Club unit to ensure that all employees are equipped to perform their duties responsibly and effectively. B&GCA provides a wide range of training opportunities for staff at all levels. Costs for training should be included in the Club's budget.

Supervision and Performance Reviews

All staff must have ongoing supervision and an annual performance review to ensure that work performance is consistent with job expectations.

On a more frequent level, supervisors should monitor and guide workers, including volunteers and part-time staff, to help them gain confidence, improve their skills and successfully perform their assigned responsibilities.

IX. Funding and Fundraising

A Planned Approach

The board of directors and executive director of the Boys & Girls Club corporation should develop a comprehensive plan for securing funding support for the Club unit in public housing. Such planning should take into consideration existing fundraising activities and recognize the potential for increased gifts from present contributors as well as attracting new donors. Appropriate involvement from the unit advisory board or council should be included in the plan.

Sources of Funding

- *Foundations*, particularly local ones, can provide seed money and on-going operating funds.
- The *local housing authority* controls significant local funds and has access to funds and grants from HUD and other government agencies. It should be encouraged to provide and apply for funding for a Boys & Girls Club unit in one or more of its developments.
- *Corporations and businesses* will provide financial support plus in-kind donations of equipment and supplies.
- *Individual contributions* can be generated from board members, community leaders, "alumni" who were Boys & Girls Club members as youngsters and other prospective donors.
- *Civic clubs*, such as the Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimists and Altrusa can make an annual operating gift to the Boys & Girls Club or underwrite the costs of certain activities such as arts & crafts, a computer lab or sports teams.
- *Fraternalities and sororities*, such as the Shriners, Masons, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority can make an annual contribution and conduct fundraising events. If a board member or other Boys & Girls Club supporter is a member of one of these groups, he or she may be able to provide an entree.

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- *Churches*, particularly those that serve the housing development area or are attended by someone associated with Boys & Girls Clubs, can ask their parishioners for special contributions to help support the Club. Inquiries should be made to the minister, elders or other persons in authority.
 - Through venture grants, some *United Ways* provide funds for the initial operation of a Boys & Girls Club. Most United Ways also provide ongoing funding.
 - *Special events*, such as a Steak and Burger Dinner, can be one of the Boys & Girls Club's own ways of raising funds.
 - The housing authority can secure federal Comprehensive Improvement Assistance Program (CIAP) funds to renovate housing authority facilities, as well as for some operating costs. Other funding sources may also be available to the housing authority.
 - *Federal, state and local government* funding may be available through various programs such as Community Development Block Grants. B&GCA's Office of Government Relations periodically alerts Clubs about opportunities to apply for federal grants.

X. Program

Hours of Operation

Club program hours are generally after school and in the evening during the school year. Clubs are usually open during the day, and sometimes in the evening, during the summer. However, Club program hours should be scheduled according to the needs of the boys and girls and their community.

Assessing Needs and Interests of the Target Population

Guided by B&GCA's comprehensive youth development strategy, the local Boys & Girls Club unit should adapt its programs to the specific needs of its members. Aided by knowledge of the community, including demographic data and case studies of successful programs in housing developments, B&GCA's Field Services representative can provide guidance in designing an appropriate program for the Boys & Girls Club.

Youth Development Strategy

While specific activities vary from Club to Club, their programs and services promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling:

- *a sense of competence*—the feeling there is something they can do and do well.
- *a sense of usefulness*—the opportunity to do something of value for other people.
- *a sense of belonging*—a condition when youngsters know they have a place where they 'fit' and are accepted.
- *a sense of power or influence*—a feeling that they have a chance to be heard and to influence decisions.

When this youth development strategy is fully implemented, the self-esteem of young people is enhanced and an environment is created which helps them achieve their full potential.

Commitment to Quality

A Boys & Girls Club's commitment to quality program is supported by careful planning and ongoing evaluation. Essentially, the quality improvement plan meets two criteria: it is responsive to the needs of members and the results expected are specified. Club personnel also understand that, in order to provide quality programs, the facility must be attractive and inviting.

To help guide the development and maintenance of effective programming, all Clubs receive a copy of the "Commitment to Quality" workbook each August. Upon completion of the "Commitment to Quality" review and planning sections, the summary form is completed and mailed to B&GCA in return for a certificate of participation.

Six Core Program Areas

Based on the physical, emotional, cultural and social needs and interests of young people, and guided by the Youth Development Strategy, Boys & Girls Clubs offer diversified program activities in the following six core program areas:

- *Cultural enrichment* to help youngsters enhance self-expression and creativity, develop multi-cultural appreciation and provide exposure to and develop skills in crafts and the visual, performing and literary arts.
- *Health and physical education* to help young people achieve and maintain fitness; acquire a broad range of physical skills; develop a sense of teamwork, cooperation and fairness and to help them adopt healthy, active lifestyles.
- *Social recreation* to help youngsters learn to get along with others, make new friends and provide opportunities for fun and the constructive use of leisure time.
- *Citizenship and leadership development* to help young people understand their democratic heritage and acquire skills for participating in the democratic process; develop leadership skills and provide opportunities for planning, decision-making and contributing to the Club and community.
- *Personal and educational development* to help youngsters prepare for their future, offer assistance in resolving personal crises and provide opportunities for educational enhancement and career exploration.

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- *Outdoor and environmental education* to help young people develop an awareness, appreciation and knowledge of our environment through activities in the Club or in natural settings.

B&GCA's publication, "*Program: Opportunities—Resources—Workshops*" details available resources to help Clubs design and tailor programs to suit their membership's special needs.

Building Self-Esteem

Boys & Girls Clubs help build young people's self-esteem by increasing and enhancing their personal sense of belonging, competence, usefulness and influence. In essence, Clubs give girls and boys a feeling of self-worth by providing constructive activities and positive relationships in a supportive atmosphere.

Job Training and Employment

In areas of high unemployment—usually those where housing developments are located—teenage unemployment can be addressed through two specific B&GCA programs:

- *One-With-One*, which links Club members with successful adults, providing them unique exposure to the world of work and stimulating their career interests and
- *Job Search*, which teaches youngsters skills with which they can seek and secure employment.

Advice on setting up these programs is available from B&GCA.

SMART Moves

The B&GCA's **SMART Moves** Program is a comprehensive drug, alcohol and pregnancy prevention program. Its aim is to help 10 to 15-year-olds resist the temptations of drugs, alcohol and sexual activity. The program is coordinated by a prevention team made up of Boys & Girls Club staff, parents, community resource people and Club members. Guidance and training on setting up this program is available from B&GCA.

Program Evaluation

Evaluation of the Club's program provides a means to heighten its effectiveness. B&GCA's **Commitment to Quality** process includes an excellent format and procedure for program orientation, planning and evaluation.

XI. Membership Recruitment and Retention

The establishment of a Boys & Girls Club in a housing development is frequently such a welcome event that youngsters flock to the Club without much of a recruitment effort. However, it is important to keep girls and boys, as well as their parents, aware of the Boys & Girls Club's activities and services.

Recruitment Methods

- *Use the media*—radio, TV and newspapers — to create awareness about the Boys & Girls Club that is soon to open. Send a short news release to the appropriate editors at all the media in town; offer a telephone interview with a board member or unit director to radio stations. Give them some background on Boys & Girls Clubs and tell them when this newest unit will open and who it will serve.
- *Create a flyer* announcing the opening of the Club. Ask a board member or other "contact" to have it designed and printed. Make it a simple, eye-catching, one-sided handbill on colored paper that can be handed out to people and taped in store windows.
- Ask the *Tenants' Association* to tell all the residents of the housing development that a Boys & Girls Club will be opening soon. Offer them quantities of the flyer to circulate door to door, or mail it to everyone in the development. Just before opening, ask the Tenants' Association to help arrange and host an open house, so that youngsters and their families can come and see what the Club has to offer.
- *At schools* ask teachers to talk about the Club. Tell them about the Club's commitment to encourage boys and girls to attend school and be good students. Put copies of the flyer on all bulletin boards, and leave extra copies at some central point for anyone who is interested.
- *Churches*, too, can help spread the word by putting a notice of the Boys & Girls Club opening in the Sunday bulletin. The pastor can also mention it from the pulpit and talk about it elsewhere, as the opportunity presents itself. A flyer can also be posted in the church's activities hall.

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- The B&GCA *Membership Recruitment Kit* is full of many good ideas which can be tailored for local Club use.

Retaining Members

Once initial interest is created, there are several ways to foster the sense of involvement and belonging that will keep youngsters coming back.

- *T-shirts and other "identity" symbols* let youngsters say, "My Club;" "I belong." This is particularly important in housing developments where young people are often forgotten by the rest of the community.
- *Membership cards* are a good selling point to new members. They are a badge of distinction and another way of saying, "I belong." Cards are also useful for identification and control of entry into the Club.
- *Membership Dues*, kept very low so that everyone can afford to belong, help youngsters feel that they are sharing in something, and not just taking another handout. Dues also give them a sense of responsibility toward the Club, and avoid the notion that what costs nothing is worth nothing.
- *Attendance and participation data* provide valuable information useful for publicity and fundraising purposes. Increased attendance and membership point to success, and help to make the case for continued funding.

XII. Marketing and Public Relations

Interpreting the Boys & Girls Club's Work and its Value to the Community

When a Boys & Girls Club unit is established in a housing development, everyone wins: the housing authority, development residents, area businesses and, most importantly, the Club's members.

The results are clear: reductions in vandalism, street gang activity, truancy and substance abuse. The reasons are simple: youngsters who become members of the Boys & Girls Club gain a sense of self-esteem/self-worth and the belief that they now have opportunities for better, more productive lives in the future.

The management know-how and program excellence that Clubs offer make them particularly well suited for positively impacting the lives of young people living in housing developments. In short, setting up a Club unit in a housing development is a basic fulfillment of the mission of Boys & Girls Clubs — to serve those young people in greatest need.

B&GCA's *"Marketing/Communications Handbook"* and its Marketing and Communications Services can provide information that will help the Boys & Girls Club target its message to important community groups.

Initial Press Conference

The Boys & Girls Club should carefully organize and conduct a press conference to announce plans to open the "new" Club in public housing. The press conference should be held in advance of the Club opening in order to generate maximum interest and support. The press conference should include the delivery of prepared statements from the president (chief volunteer officer) of the Boys & Girls Club organization, the heads of cooperating and participating parties (housing authority, city/county government, United Way, etc.), and other significant leaders whose endorsement of the Boys & Girls Club is very important. Following the formal remarks, members of the press will usually ask a variety of questions of the key people involved. Responses to these questions should be kept on a positive note. Any problems or controversies raised should be dealt with in another forum more appropriate for wide-ranging, in-depth discussion.

It is important to have attractive press kits prepared with detailed information (perhaps a question and answer format addressing anticipated inquiries) ready for distribution to all members of the press in attendance and sent to those who do not attend.

Working with the Media

Enlist the assistance of an experienced board member or other community supporter to help design a simple, but effective year-round marketing and public relations campaign to promote the Boys & Girls Club unit.

Potential media channels for the Boys & Girls Club story are radio stations (with appropriate language considerations), TV stations, newspapers (dailies, semi-weeklies and weeklies), local magazines, public transportation posters and outdoor billboards.

Booklets, films, posters, billboards, press, radio and TV kits and many other promotional materials are available upon request from B&GCA's Marketing and Communications Services. Depending on the media's needs, these materials may be given to them to be used as is or to provide them with background information on Boys & Girls Clubs to assist with their efforts on behalf of the local Club.

Successes, Statistics and Stories

A well-planned story about the Boys & Girls Club unit, one of its members or other human interest angle, will get attention. B&GCA's Marketing and Communications Services and Field Services representative will help with background, statistics and anything else needed to develop a good story. It is a task that should be repeated often to keep the Boys & Girls Club name and achievements before the public.

XIII. Community Networking

Community networking provides the Boys & Girls Club unit with a system of outreach and referral. Building a base of support through networking not only gets the word out about the Club and its activities but also brings in other resources. Both the Boys & Girls Club and the community benefit.

Successful networking involves cultivating top community leaders, institutions and organizations in your area. Among those important to include in this network are:

- Police, who improve the general community's safety by making the Boys & Girls Club site a part of their regular patrol and build friendships through occasional visits to the Club.
- Churches, who can give sanction to and endorse the Club by spreading the good word about it.
- Schools who, through teacher support of the Boys & Girls Club, stand to benefit from reduced absenteeism and fewer behavioral problems.
- PTAs and PTOs who can generate parental support.
- Other agencies, both public and private, who can refer at-risk young people to the Club.
- Courts, especially Juvenile Court, who can also refer youngsters to the Boys & Girls Club.
- Neighborhood associations and collaborations, made up of area residents and business leaders with a special interest in their community, who can also provide important support to the Club.

Appendix A

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND OTHER RESOURCES available through Boys & Girls Clubs of America SUPPLY SERVICE 771 First Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Board Members Handbook

Commitment to Quality

CONNECTIONS Magazine

Graphic Standards Manual

*Guide for Planning, Design and Construction
of Boys & Girls Club Facilities*

Long Range Planning Guide

Membership Recruitment Manual

Program: Opportunities — Resources — Workshops

SMART Moves

Standards for Self-Evaluation

Testimony to Boys Clubs

*14 Hours—In-Service Training for
Boys & Girls Clubs*

Appendix B

Boys & Girls Club in Public Housing Sample Expense Budget One Full-Time Staff Member

PERSONNEL COSTS:		\$52,750
Unit Director	\$25,000	
Benefits & Soc. Sec. (25%)	<u>6,250</u>	
	<u>\$31,250</u>	
Part-Time Workers		
Secretary	\$5,000	
Activity Leader	5,000	
Activity Leader	5,000	
Activity Leader	5,000	
Social Security	<u>1,500</u>	
	<u>\$21,500</u>	
OTHER EXPENSES:		<u>15,500</u>
Program Supplies	\$4,000	
Equipment	2,500	
Transportation	1,200	
Telephone	600	
Office Supplies	800	
Building Supplies	1,200	
Postage & Shipping	600	
Printing	400	
Conference & Training	1,200	
Insurance	2,000	
B&GCA Dues	<u>1,000</u>	
	<u>\$15,500</u>	
TOTAL		<u>\$68,250</u>

Appendix C

Boys & Girls Club in Public Housing Sample Expense Budget Two Full-Time Staff Members

PERSONNEL COSTS:		\$82,750
Unit Director	\$30,000	
Program Director	19,000	
Benefits & Soc. Sec. (25%)	12,250	
	<u>\$61,250</u>	
Part-Time Workers		
Secretary	\$5,000	
Activity Leader	5,000	
Activity Leader	5,000	
Activity Leader	5,000	
Social Security	1,500	
	<u>\$21,500</u>	
OTHER EXPENSES:		<u>17,400</u>
Program Supplies	\$4,000	
Equipment	2,500	
Transportation	1,200	
Telephone	600	
Office Supplies	800	
Building Supplies	1,200	
Postage & Shipping	600	
Printing	400	
Conference & Training	2,500	
Insurance	2,000	
B&GCA Dues	1,000	
	<u>\$17,400</u>	
TOTAL		<u>\$100,150</u>

Appendix D

Boys & Girls Clubs of America REGIONAL SERVICE CENTERS

Northeast Region

Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania; Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Northeast Service Center
771 First Ave.
New York, NY 10017
(212) 351-5922

Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Northeast Service Center
Westfield Office Condominium
478 Torrey St.-Ste. 3
Brockton, MA 02401
(508) 588-2353 or 2411

Southeast Region

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia; the District of Columbia.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Southeast Service Center
420 Fourteenth St., N.W.
Atlanta, GA 30318
(404) 892-3317

Midwest Region

Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Midwest Service Center
1535 Burgundy Pwy.
Streamwood, IL 60107
(708) 830-9200

Southwest Region

Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and Wyoming.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Southwest Service Center
2107 N. Collins Blvd.
Richardson, TX 75080
(214) 690-1393

Pacific Region

Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Pacific Service Center
10520 Magnolia Blvd.
North Hollywood, CA 91601
(818) 506-8033