

GREAT FUTURES START HERE.



Volunteer Handbook

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with us at The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kalamazoo! We are thrilled to have you working with us and our members! Volunteers are an important part of our organization and open both our staff and members up to external partnerships and us all learn more about our community. Our dedication to Positive Youth Development means everyone who works with our members receive training before working in the units. This training ensures that everyone at our Clubs understand our goals, mission, and policies.

About Us

Overview

For nearly 70 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kalamazoo has been providing youth with life-enhancing, meaningful, and purposeful programming to aid in their professional, personal, and educational development. We are proud to serve the City of Kalamazoo from 4 units providing premier youth development to over 1,300 youths free of charge. Our units are located at Washington Writers' Academy in the Edison Neighborhood, Milwood Middle in the Milwood Neighborhood, Hillside in the Northside Neighborhood and Northeastern in the Eastside neighborhood.

Mission

The Mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kalamazoo is *to enhance the quality of life of young people through education, art, health, and recreation, especially for those who need us most.*

Locations

We currently have 4-unit locations and one administration office.

Hillside (K-12) 1941 Alamo Ave (269) 344-5350	Milwood Magnet (6-12) 2916 Konkle (269) 303-7049	Northeastern (K-12) 2433 Gertrude (269) 492-1120	Washington Writers' Academy (K-5) 1919 Portage St. (269) 348-8551
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**Please note that Unit Hours may vary throughout the year and by location.

Administration office: 4000 Portage St, Ste 201 (269) 349-4485

Our Programs

We have 5 main program areas that we focus on. Programmers oversee developing and running programs at the units within their specialty area. As a volunteer, you may be working with a programmer to assist them in running a program with the kids.

Character and Leadership Development: Empowers youth to support and influence their Club and community, and develop a positive self-image, all while participating in the democratic process. Emphasis is placed on respecting all cultures and working to understand everyone's individual importance.

Education & Career Development: Enables youth to become proficient in basic education disciplines, providing the ability to apply learning to everyday situations. Tutoring and homework help is offered five days a week, with one-on-one tutoring available when requested.

Health & Life Skills: Encourages young people to engage in positive behaviors that nurture their own well-being and helps them set personal goals and live successfully as a self-sufficient, healthy being.

Participating Arts: Engages with youth to explore creativity and cultural awareness through appreciation of the visual arts, performing arts, digital arts, and creative writing.

Sports & Recreation: Encourages youth to develop an understanding and passion for fitness, sportsmanship, and teamwork. With different sports leagues and daily gym activities, the youth always have an opportunity to be active.

Volunteering with Us

Importance of Volunteers

Volunteering allows members of our community to connect with our organizations and the kids we serve. Volunteering is mutually beneficial as our volunteers get an opportunity to aid in our mission, our kids get to connect more with members of their community, and our staff can form relationships with external organizations. Our Clubs are the heart of what makes us who we are, and volunteers help us in achieving our organization goals and making the club a safe and welcoming place for the youth of Kalamazoo.

Club Volunteers: General volunteers that help with daily operations. They are scheduled based on unit needs and volunteer availability. Club volunteers can volunteer in groups or individually.

External Program Volunteers: External programs are run by partner organizations from the community. All volunteers involved with external programs in our unit must go through general volunteer training and meet with the Program Manager for their schedule. Additional training or orientation may be required depending on the program.

Event Volunteers: Volunteers that work at specific Club sponsored events. Event Volunteers can volunteer for as few or as many events as they would like throughout the year. All other volunteers are welcome to work at events.

Volunteer Expectations

Commitment

When you agree to volunteer with us, we ask that you make a time commitment. Our program schedule changes with KPS's trimester schedule, which are about 12 weeks. If you cannot commit to 12 weeks, please speak with the Coordinator to find a commitment length that works for you. We ask that you commit to a minimum of 4 weeks. We also suggest you begin your commitment at one or two hours a week and gradually increase. Weekly hours are scheduled ahead of time by the Coordinator based on volunteer availability and need in the units. Weekly schedules will be sent out at least one week ahead of time via email.

If you would like to change the amount hours you are scheduled, please speak with the Coordinator so they can adjust your volunteer schedule for the following week. Not all schedule requests may be completed, however we will work to accommodate you as much as possible.

If you cannot volunteer during your scheduled shift for any reason, you must notify the Coordinator as soon as possible. If you will be out of town or have other work/school commitments please speak with the Coordinator as soon as possible so the volunteer schedule can be changed for those dates.

Weekly schedules will be created based upon the following:

- Your availability information you provide during orientation
- Days you request to volunteer
- Days you request not to volunteer
- Our volunteer needs in the Clubs and for programming
- The Clubs' schedule and hours

Program schedules are created based on unit space and standard schedule. The program schedule is adjusted on a trimester basis per unit.

If you fail to fulfill your weekly commitment for 3 weeks, we will ask you to reevaluate your hours and commitment. Volunteers may end their agreement before their 12 weeks are up, but out of respect for other volunteers and unit staff, we ask you give at least one week of notice. The Club reserves the right to end any volunteer agreements if the volunteer fails to fulfill their commitments or is not following Club rules and policies.

Working with Staff

While you continue to work in the Club, Unit Staff will be there to support you. This includes Intake, YDPs, Behavior Specialists, Unit Managers, and Unit Directors. If you have questions about the Club, make sure you ask. We ask our volunteers to treat all staff with respect and we ask staff to do the same. It is important to remember both volunteers and staff have the same goal: providing quality youth development for members.

If you see a staff member that you believe is breaking rules or policy, please speak to the Unit Manager and your Coordinator. If you are uncomfortable working with any staff or in any unit for any reason, please speak with the Coordinator to change your volunteer assignment.

Working with Members

Volunteers are held to the same Child Safety Policies as our employees. These rules keep both our members and staff safe. Our full policies can be viewed at the end of this handbook. Here are some key rules to remember when working with members:

- Do not touch the members. Touch is sometimes inevitable when helping members with games or activities, but volunteers should refrain from touching members at any time. This includes: carrying kids, tickling, piggyback rides, having members sit on laps, physical discipline etc.
- Maintain a professional relationship with all members. Employees and volunteers are prohibited from inviting members to their personal private residence, driving members in personal vehicles, contacting members (including social media interaction), giving members money or food, etc.
 - o If a member expresses, they or their family may have need for food, money, or transportation, please speak with a Coordinator. The Club is equipped to help members and their families fill these needs and it is not the responsibility of volunteers to help with the personal needs of a member or family.
- Positive Behavior Support
 - o A way for us to reinforce and recognize good behavior in our members.
- Refer to the Schedule. In our units, we have a set daily schedule the YDP's follow. This helps us and members have a reliable structure and

know what to expect each day. Please stick to and respect the set schedule of activities during your time at the club.

- Additionally, volunteers will be scheduled to be at the units for certain activities or programs (meals, reading readiness, specific programs, choice time, etc.). It is imperative that you arrive on time for your shift so activities can start on time.
- While working with members, they may say something that you feel should be shared with a supervisor. When these situations occur, we ask that volunteers go to a trained staff or supervisor who can handle the situation.
- The following should be addressed immediately:
 - If a member states intent to hurt another member as a part of a group or individually.
 - If a member says they have a weapon.
 - If a member expresses intent to harm a staff member
 - If a member has a sudden negative mood.
 - Any other statements that imply a member is a danger to themselves or others.
- If you are unsure about something a member said or how they are behaving, it is better to air on the side of caution and mention it to a staff member.
- If a member mentions or implies a situation involving abuse in the home, please speak with a supervisor. The Boys & Girls Clubs or Greater Kalamazoo's staff are mandated reporters, meaning we are required by state law to report claims or suspicion of child abuse.
 - Avoid asking leading questions. It is not a volunteer's responsibility to investigate a situation of abuse. The situation will be reported and handled by trained professionals and CPS.
 - All members have a right to privacy and confidentiality. Meaning, while you may tell a supervisor about a situation of concern, we ask that you refrain from telling other volunteers, employees, and other members about these types of situations.

Volunteering in the Club

When you receive a weekly schedule, it will include which Club location you are working at.

Please arrive to the designated Club with enough time to sign in and settle in for the day.

Volunteers must wear their volunteer shirts while in the Club and shirts must be visible, meaning no pullovers or hoodies over the shirt. If you need a jacket, please keep it unzipped so your shirt is visible.

Other clothing and shoes should be comfortable and clean.

On your first day, the Coordinator will meet you at the Club. On your first day you will be given a brief tour and be introduced to Unit Staff. The Coordinator will not be onsite for all your volunteer shifts. If you need to contact them while at the unit, please call them.

When you arrive at the Club you will sign in at Intake. Intake and Unit Management staff will receive the volunteer schedule for the week and should know who to expect in the Club and when they are arriving.

Valuables should be left in your vehicle or at intake to avoid losing them.

After signing in, you will report to the Unit Director or Manager who will give you further instructions on your duties for the day.

Volunteer duties may change with the need in the Club, the programming for the day, the number of volunteers, and the number of members in the Club at the time.

Generally, volunteers will be asked to do the following*:

- Sit in on a program or classroom to assist with set up, clean up, and helping members with an activity
- General club clean up
- Helping with dinner including set up and clean up
- Greeting members as they come into the club
- Escort members to rooms
- Read to/with members
- Play games during Choice Time.

Volunteers will NOT be asked to*:

- Call parents or guardians
- Drive members in personal or club vehicles
- Run a program or classroom
- Interfere with members who are fighting
- Manage member behavior or discipline members
- Run intake

*External Programming and Mentor Volunteers have different duties and responsibilities and should refer to their specific Volunteer Agreement and job description or speak with their supervisor/coordinator for clarification on those duties.

If you have questions about your duties do not hesitate to ask for clarification from a YDP or Unit Manager. If a unit staff member asks you to do a task you are not comfortable with or a task that is listed as something volunteers should not do, please let the unit staff know and then speak with the coordinator.

Volunteers are responsible for keeping track of time for their shift. At the end of your shift, let the Unit Staff know it is the end of your shift and that you are leaving. Sign out on the sign in/sign out sheet and remember to collect any belongings you left at Intake.

Volunteers who commit to more than 4 weeks of volunteer work will have a short meeting (about 15 minutes) with the Coordinator on designated days every 4 weeks and at the end of their commitment. These meetings allow you to discuss any questions or concerns you have about your work in the Club or scheduling changes/adjustments.

While in the Club, volunteers will be held to the same Code of Conduct policy and all other Club policies that YDPs are held to. These policies are detailed at the end of this handbook.

Volunteering at Events

We have multiple events throughout the year that volunteers can be part of.

- Golf Outing (held annually in May)
- Fun Day (held annually in October)
- One One Run (held annually in January)
- Holidays
 - o Christmas
 - o Thanksgiving

Each of our events will require different duties and responsibilities. After signing up to volunteer for an event, the Coordinator will contact you and establish a day and time for training. All volunteers must go through a short orientation prior to or on the day of the event. You will receive further instruction about your volunteer shift and responsibilities prior to the event date.

When you arrive at the event, you will check in and receive any clarifying instructions on your job for the day. A staff member will periodically check in on you throughout your shift to make sure everything is running smoothly. This location will also be where you go to check out. We ask that you keep valuables or personal positions either in your car or at the check in booth/table/tent.

If you have any questions or concerns throughout your time at the event, please do not hesitate to ask a staff member or your Coordinator.

Volunteers will be responsible for watching the time for the end of their shift.

Before leaving, check out at the same location you checked in and gather any belongings.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF GREATER KALAMAZOO

Volunteer Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kalamazoo Volunteer Handbook and have completed orientation. I also agree to comply with the terms of this Handbook.

Print Name

Signature

Date