



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF HENDERSON COUNTY**



Same Mission - New Methods

By Julia Hockenberry

Necessity is the mother of invention, as they say, and we couldn't agree more at the Boys & Girls Club. Through the last 5 months, the Club has responded to diverse needs prompted by the Coronavirus pandemic, serving the community in many unexpected ways.

During the earliest days of shelter-in-place, we collaborated with Henderson County Public Schools to provide full-day programs to children of essential workers. Then we transformed our Club robotics lab into a PPE manufacturing lab, utilizing 3D printers to make hundreds of medical-grade face shields for local hospitals and medical care workers. We served as a daily school meal distribution site, and every Friday we provided hundreds of families with non-perishable groceries in partnership with the Backpack Program, filling hungry bellies over the weekends. We also partnered with Blue Ridge Health to host a drive-thru COVID testing site and successfully served over 300 individuals in one afternoon.

And that's just the stuff that happened outside of normal operations!

Following our wonderful 10-week summer session, (during which time we served 243 unduplicated youth!) the Club faces another innovative shift for the upcoming school year.

Last month the school board voted to delay in-school instruction and instead provide online classes only to local youth. In response, our Club will shift from providing three hours of "after school" care each day to more than doubling our budgeted hours of operation in order to provide a full day of care for members. Children and teens who attend this special session will complete their virtual schoolwork with us each day and benefit from a host of Club programs. Our goals with this change are twofold: first, to provide a safe and nurturing environment, academic supports and supplies for youth, and second, to provide families with a continuum of care for their children, enabling breadwinners to return to work.

This is a costly and cumbersome endeavor, but it's the right thing to do. Many children face distinct challenges around remote learning including inconsistent supervision, inadequate technology infrastructure, food insecurity and, sometimes, stress and trauma from staying home in unhealthy dynamics.

Our increase in program hours, coupled with the need for more program staff, more classroom supplies/technology, and manpower and materials associated with rigorous daily cleaning regimens, means a significant increase in our cost of doing business. But it's worth every penny.

Doing the right thing takes guts, and it helps to know we aren't alone in our efforts. Please consider a gift to the Club that will fuel our mission during this unusual time, helping us bridge gaps for the kids who need us most.

Because of your partnership, this work is as much yours as it is ours.

Bravo.

SUMMER 2020 BY THE NUMBERS

**243 YOUTH SERVED
FROM
171 HOUSEHOLDS**

**115 MEMBERS
PARTICIPATED IN
VOLUNTEER
PROJECTS**

**THE AVERAGE
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD
INCOME OF
MEMBERS THIS
SUMMER IS \$25,663**

**53% OF MEMBERS
LIVE IN SINGLE-ADULT
HOUSEHOLDS**

CONGRATULATIONS 2020 GRADUATES!



**Alex Acosta
UNC Chapel Hill**

**Xzavier Jacobs
NC A&T**

**Omar Serrano
UNC Greensboro**

**Kate Siefert
Appalachian State Uni.**

**Stephen Tucker
Blue Ridge Comm. Col.**

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

What it is, and why it's important

Early in the COVID-19 crisis, reports of the pandemic's impact on mental health began dominating the news cycle. Social isolation, uncertainty, and stress often led to increased instances of fear, anxiety, and depression in young people, especially when compounded by existing trauma. Club staff recognized the tremendous opportunity this summer to meet kids exactly where they are, helping them to cope and recover through social-emotional learning (SEL).

Social-emotional learning is a process that helps children understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions; a process that helps kids develop the tools they need to become productive, responsible, caring citizens.

During summer programming, the Club increased its emphasis on SEL and expanded the program's focus, giving members time to practice group processing skills and self-awareness. For example, each day begins and ends with a group circle, allowing members to express feelings about fear, stress, and unfolding current events. Weekly SEL sessions, meanwhile, led by the Club's in-house counselor, formally explore concepts such as empathy, resiliency, goal-setting, and positive decision making.



"I liked the circles most at the beginning of the summer. We talked about what was going on in the world and everyone just got it. I felt like I didn't have to argue and I was at a place that understood."

- Jill, age 15



JUNETEENTH

Ms. Kris stands at the front of the classroom, instructing teens who are working on creating a Juneteenth flag. This would be the first of many activities planned for the June 19th celebration of the day when enslaved people in Texas were finally informed that they were free - a full two and half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

"So, in the blue section write what freedom means to you, and in the red, write what you are thankful for," Kris says. Teens immediately line up to fill in the sheet of poster board taped to the wall.

What do they write?

I am thankful for: Life, Family, Education, The winds of change that are blowing, Friends, The Boys & Girls Club, Love, Food.

Freedom means: Peace, Voting, Family, No one is afraid to live their life, I can be me, I can do whatever I set my mind to, Being equal, Rights.



With food generously donated from Hickory Nut Gap Farm and prepared by the skilled hands of the non-profit, Feed Asheville; our Club family smiled, learned, ate, and celebrated together - all backgrounds, all races, all religions - all welcome at the Boys & Girls Club of Henderson County.

Club to Kitchen

A new program for our middle and high school members emerged this summer – Club to Kitchen!



This program sparks a passion for food in teens, connecting them to the sources of their food, having a positive impact on their approach to eating and cooking, as well as teaching practical cooking and food preparation skills - all while connecting our members to career possibilities in the food industry.



2020 Staff Additions



"My goals are to be the adult I needed when I was a teen and to leave every place better than I found it."
Angel Chandler,
Teen Operations Director

"Sports and Recreation has helped mold me into the person that I am today. I am excited to use sports and recreation to teach members interpersonal skills that can be used in all settings of their lives."
Cheryl Coulson,
Athletics Director



"Youth development and experiential education have my heart, so it's a natural fit with the Boys & Girls Club's whole child approach. Serving with teen members is especially rewarding, supporting them to grow into awesome humans"
Kris Schafer,
Outcomes Associate

Capture the flag produces life lessons

Physical activity is crucial, especially when parks are closed and so many are staying at home. At the Club we focus on providing 60 minutes of physical activity each day. It can be in the form of open play or a structured game. Sometimes interacting with others is natural, and other times it takes stopping to think about how to work together. For example, Club 3rd graders decided recently as a group to work on following the rules of the game and being honest.

They put their rules into practice with a game of capture the flag. The whistle blows, they are off! For a change, there are not as many fights about who is out and where the tag was within the boundary. After the game, the group chats. These fun and vibrant 8-year olds recognize how their honesty and willingness to obey the rules made the game a lot better. They are also able to acknowledge how important it is to follow directions in all aspects of life - at home, school, the store, and the playground. We also identify other things to work on, like sportsmanship.

This is exactly what our Club physical activity curricula (Triple Play) establishes in youth - providing a game plan for the mind, body, and soul.



Increasing capability in movement and fitness, confidence in physical activity, motivation, and enthusiasm for an active life, all while keeping emotions regulated and making responsible decisions can all be lessons in health and wellness.



Heard Around the Club

"I never want to go that long without being at the Club ever again. I will even do homework without complaining."
- Madison, Age 8

"Did you know a rainbow isn't even real?! It's an optical illusion. We read about it in Rainbow Science. There isn't even a pot of gold." - Ion, Age 7



LIVE UNITED

Jumpstart closes the gap for Club members

This summer, thanks to a partnership with Henderson County Public Schools (HCPS), the Club was able to bring the Jumpstart program to members in elementary school. This program, created by HCPS following COVID-related school closures, serves at-risk youth in need of intervention and supplemental instruction based on student performance.

Jumpstart allowed five certified teachers to join Club programs five days a week, with teachers offering one-on-one and small group tutoring for members and sharing feedback with parents. Areas of focus included literacy skills and some math activities.



Members benefited from these services at no cost from July 6 through August 6.

According to the Summer Learning Association, students lose two months of skills every summer and for low-income children, that number doubles. In general, 9 out of 10 teachers spend at least three weeks of lesson reviewing at the beginning of the school year. This year, the education gap is even wider, due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Early numbers from Henderson County show that up to 25% of students did not engage with the online "Learn at Home" model from March - May, 2020



"Distance learning was difficult in the spring for my child, she has enjoyed tutoring with her teacher this summer and is having so much fun, she doesn't realize she's learning." -Club Parent

To support our members and families though HCPS virtual learning, beginning August 17th we are expanding our operating hours and hiring additional staff. This model will result in more than \$3,000 of added expenses each week.

WAYS TO HELP

1. By mail, just return your donation in the enclosed envelope.
2. Online, you can visit us at www.bgchendersonco.org
3. Text, "BGCKIDS" to 44-321 to donate via cell.
4. Become a monthly donor online, or by calling (828) 693-9444.
5. Talk with your financial planner about an IRA distribution, or stock gift.
6. Include us in your estate planning.
7. Share our story with your friends: By phone, email, a note, or social media!

Annual Campaign

\$256K	GOAL \$500k
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You could be our Sunshine!

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