



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF MERCER COUNTY**

Summer 2023 Program Handbook

This handbook is intended to provide information to families of the Centre Street & Spruce Street Programs about our Operations and Policies. **Please refer to our website for the latest updates and camp procedures. Visit us at www.bgcmercer.org**

Mission

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

Enrollment

All children must be members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County in order to enroll in the Summer Program. This membership also allows you to take advantage of other Club programs.

Parents must complete the enrollment package before your child can start the Summer Program. Enrollment package may be found online at www.bgcmercer.org .

Ages

The Summer Program is open to children 5 through 14 years old.

Curriculum

Members will have the opportunity to participate in diverse programming that will include Art Instruction, STEM activities, Character Development, Trips and Academic Support in the areas of Literacy & Math.

Summer Tuition

Tuition for Camp is \$220 per week if registered before 4/29/22, \$245 per week after 4/29/22
Tuition for Teen Travel Camp is: \$260 per week if registered by 4/29/22; \$285 per week after 4/29/22

Balance of camp fees are due on Mondays; two (2) weeks PRIOR to the start of each camp week. Week 1 is due by June 12th, Week 2 June 29th, Week 3 June 26th and so on. We encourage parents to enroll in the credit card auto draft program on the parent portal to avoid late fees. Payments can also be made over the phone, through the online parent portal or with communication envelopes available at the curbside pick- up/drop off.

Late Policy Payment



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If your balance payment is not made by the due date, your deposit will be forfeited and your child will not be able to attend camp for the week. We again encourage all parents to use our credit card auto draft program on the parent portal to avoid this from happening and to help provide for a smooth payment process.

A \$30.00 fee will be charged for checks returned for insufficient funds. If more than one check is returned for insufficient funds, only Money Orders or Cash will be accepted as payment.

Tuition Assistance

Please complete a sliding fee scholarship application if you need assistance in paying for camp. You should also ask if you qualify for the 21st century summer program. Other agencies that support families in our program include Child Care Connection, the Division of Children and Family Services and Social Services.

Withdrawal from the summer program

If you need to withdraw from the summer program, a 3 week notice of withdrawal must be in writing. No refund will be given without proper notice. (If applicable). All refund requests must be submitted to the Camp Director who will review submit for approval.

Please note that deposits are non-refundable.

Memberships are **non-refundable**.

Program Dates and Hours

The program will operate from June 26, 2023 – September 1, 2023 from 7:45 AM – 5:30 PM, Monday – Friday. The program **will be closed Tuesday July 4th**.

Transportation

Transportation will be available with bus stops throughout the community. If you are in need of transportation please contact our membership office or visit our website to view locations and times for pick up and drop off times.

Late Pick-up Policy

All members must be picked up by 5:30PM. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the program staff if pick up will be after the program ends.

A late fee of \$1.00 per minute and per child will be charged after the program closes. (*Even in the event that a phone call is received, a late fee may be assessed.*) If children are not picked up at the close of the program, staff will call the listed emergency pick up person to come for the child(ren).



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Chronic lateness and/or failure to pay the late fee charge will result in dismissal from the program.

Arrival & Dismissal/Sign- in & Sign-out Policy

Staff will greet campers outside as they arrive each morning and walk campers out to their cars/bus at the end of the day. Ideally we would like for the same parent/guardian to drop off and pick up campers each day.

Campers should not arrive at the Club earlier than 7:45 am, Supervision is not provided prior to that time.

Campers must be checked in and signed out every day.

All campers must arrive by 9 am

A child will not be released to anyone other than a parent /guardian or the person designated on the membership form. If your child is being picked up by someone other than yourself or your designee, you must provide a written, signed and dated note of authorization. The person picking up your child(ren) must provide picture identification and is required to sign your child out of the program.

A child will not be released without written authorization.

Release of Children

Once a member has arrived for camp, he or she will not be permitted to leave the building for any reason. Members will only be released to a parent/guardian or authorized person.

Members are not permitted to walk home from the Summer Program.

Attendance & Absences

If your child is going to be absent from camp, please call the Membership Office:

- The Centre Street Camp: The Membership Office line at (609) 392-3191 ext. 117 to report the absence.
- The Spruce Street Camp: Membership Office line at (609) 695-6060 ext. 201 or 202 to report the absence.

When leaving a message, please indicate the following:

- Your Child's Name
- Date



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- Teacher and/or Group Number
- Reason for Absence
- Expected Date of Return

Snacks & Lunch

We offer breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks to campers. **Note: Our facilities are nut- free, if sending your child with lunch or snack it must be totally peanut free.**

Discipline Code

At the Club, one of our primary goals is to provide a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment for all of the children we serve. We recognize that one of our jobs is to help children learn appropriate ways to handle conflicts. We work on this as conflicts arise, helping the children find solutions.

Campers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is safe and courteous while enjoying all of the privileges of the club. Mutual respect for the rights of other members and adults and also respect for the rights of others' personal property will help provide a safe, orderly and civil environment for everyone.

A child's behavior which infringes on the rights of other members or on personal or Club property will not be tolerated. Children engaging in such behavior should expect consequences for such behavior.

We reserve the right to exclude any camper from the program for a specified period of time or to terminate any camper's enrollment if that child is found to be continuously disruptive to the program.

Verbal or physical harassment of campers or staff by other campers or staff violates individual rights and will not be tolerated.

Deliberate damage to a Camper, Staff or Club property will result in payment by parents/guardians for such damage. Taking the property of another camper or of the Club will not be tolerated and treated in a serious manner.

Each child is expected to respect and to understand the differences they see in other children's abilities, appearance, dress, etc.

The parents/guardians are included in this discipline process so children can see that both parents and staff are reinforcing the policies while setting a limit. Parents/guardians will be notified verbally or in writing regarding disciplinary action taken by a program staff member, to better aid the child in improving and correcting their behavior.



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Program staff shall provide each child with guidance that helps the child acquire positive self-concept and self-control. Behavior guidance used by each program staff member will be constructive, positive, and suited to the age of the child at all times.

The following rules and standards apply.

1. To prevent unacceptable behavior from occurring the staff will:
 - Model appropriate behavior.
 - Arrange the classroom environment to enhance the learning of acceptable behaviors.
 - Use descriptive phrase praise when appropriate behavior occurs.
2. When unacceptable behavior occurs or is about to occur, program staff will use:
 - a. redirection—substitute a positive activity for a negative one
 - b. distraction—change the focus of the activity or behavior
 - c. active listening to determine the underlying cause of the behavior
 - d. If A, B or C options do not work parents/guardians will be called and given the opportunity to calm down your child.
 - e. Failure to calm down your child will result in you needing to pick up your child immediately for the remainder of the day.

Staff, Campers, Parents/Guardians, are expected to:

1. Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
2. Respect and treat each other as they would like to be treated.
3. Respect others differences.
4. Campers should dress appropriately (see dress code policy).
5. Campers should not bring any items into the Club.
6. Resolve conflict peacefully, ask for help from staff when needed and do not resort to violence.
7. Be polite, have fun, and smile.
8. Strive for their best and encourage others to do the same.
9. Adhere to classroom and bus rules/regulations;
10. Conduct themselves appropriately on any field trips.
11. Respect Club property and the property of others;
12. Respect the authority of all program staff of the Boys & Girls Club;

Please note that these expectations apply to all parents/guardians when in the building or on Club Property.

Abusive behavior and/or verbal threats by parents/guardians toward program staff will not be tolerated. This will result in immediate termination.



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In addition, lack of cooperation by the parents with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences can result in termination from the program.

Our primary method of discipline is to keep kids active in well-structured programs, focus on and reward positive behavior, and to catch minor issues before they become bigger problems.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying or passive support for those acts. A safe environment is necessary for members to be able to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying is conduct that disrupts both a member's ability to learn and the club's ability to educate its members. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication (phone, computer, etc.), that takes place on Club property, at any Club-sponsored function or on a school bus that is motivated by an actual or perceived characteristic, (race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc) and has the effect of harming a member or damaging the member's property, or placing a member in reasonable fear of harm or damage to his/her property; or is insulting or demeaning to any member to cause substantial disruption in, interference with, the orderly operation of the Club.

This policy will impose appropriate consequences and remedial actions in response to acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and applies to all members, Club employees and volunteers.

Dress Code

Members should dress appropriately for the weather. Campers should not wear any revealing tops or shorts/skirts that are above the mid-thigh. If a camper is deemed inappropriately dressed, the parent/guardian will be asked to take the child home and return with clothing that is deemed appropriate.

Please be advised the following articles of clothing are prohibited:

- Bandanas(unless used as face covering); hats; hoods; torn clothing or excessively long t-shirts
- Open toed shoes, sandals, or any loose-fitting footwear. Members must have sneakers to participate in any physical activity.
- Any clothing featuring violence, profanity, or any offensive pictures or words.

Personal Belongings

Members should not bring any personal items to the summer program.

The Boys & Girls Club will not be held responsible for any lost or stolen items.



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Telephone Use/Cell Phone Usage

If you need to contact a Camp staff member, call our main office at Spruce (609) 695-6060 or Centre (609) 392-3191.

Campers are not permitted to use cell phones while at the club.

In case of emergency members should ask staff for permission to use the phone. If a member is found to be using a cell phone without permission, they will be asked to put it away. If we see it again, we will confiscate the phone until the parent/guardian picks up the camper at the end of the day.

Policy Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with the Cell Phone Policy may result in confiscation of cell phone, disciplinary action, and possibly expulsion for members.

Computer Use

All members are required to abide by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County Acceptable Use Agreement. All computer hardware and software belong to the Boys & Girls Club and the Club retains the right to access e-mail, files or other material maintained on a B & G Club computer as it believes necessary. All members are expected to be on appropriate websites. Violations of the rules and code of the Acceptable Use Agreement will be dealt with seriously. Violators may lose computer privileges and may be subject to other disciplinary action.

Use of Social Media and/or other Websites

Our Club uses several social media, networking and websites to communicate including but not limited to our BGC website, Facebook page, Twitter, Instagram etc.

Posting photographs or videos of club members, other than your own, and staff members is prohibited including, but not limited to photographs or videos of club and or staff members obtained through handheld devices, computers, video monitoring systems, childcare monitoring apps, or any other electronic device or transmission. Posting of photographs or videos of club or staff members with written permission from the parent/guardian or staff to do so on file is permitted.

Posting of private or sensitive company, staff or prior staff, and/or enrolled or previously club members/family information is prohibited.

Staff/parent/guardian communication is limited to Club sites only.

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Posting of live feeds obtained through handheld devices including club or staff members with written permission from the parent/guardian or staff members to do so on file is permitted.

Use of social media/networking and/or other websites is prohibited when supervising club or staff members.

General Club information/updates may be posted with prior approval from the Director.

Vulgar or abusive language, disparaging remarks and/or references of a disparaging manner, personal attacks of any kind, or offensive terms targeting individuals or groups is prohibited.

Any breaches of the Club's Policy on the Use of Technology and Social Media identified must be promptly reported to the Director.

Information we may choose to communicate via electronically to parents/guardians

We are using the Remind, communication app which helps us to connect quickly and efficiently. We will be using it to inform or remind parents/guardians of Club happenings, updates, upcoming events/special programs, or other important information/notices for you.

In addition, we will also use it to contact you if we are unable to reach you by phone and need you to contact us regarding

- Illness
- Accidents
- Camp Updates
- Community Information
- Emergency Closures/Delayed Openings

Medicine

Medications will be administered by a designated program staff when physicians find it necessary for a child to have medicine during the day. Permission must be granted by parent/guardian and specific instructions must be obtained from the physician prescribing the medicine.

1. Must be accompanied by a note from parent/guardian giving permission for the staff to give the medication.

2. Must have a note/order from a physician, dentist, and orthodontist (*on form or letterhead*) containing the following:

- a. Member's name
- b. Date
- c. Medication name
- d. Dosage



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- e. Time to be given
- f. Diagnosis
- g. Side effects to be observed
- h. Length of time order is in effect.
- i. Physician's signature

3. Must be in its original container (*ask your pharmacist for a separate bottle for the Club*). Over-the-counter items **MUST** be in original packaging.

4. A member may self-administer medication without supervision of the camp health director for asthma or other life-threatening illnesses with the permission of the doctor, staff member, parent and director.

"Life-threatening illness" has been defined as an illness or condition that requires an immediate response to specific symptoms that if left untreated may lead to potential loss of life such as, but not limited to, the use of any inhaler to treat an asthma attack or the use of an adrenaline injection to treat a potential anaphylactic reaction.

5. All medications shall be administered by only the Camp Health Director.

These regulations are for the protection and well-being of all the children. If you have any questions concerning these procedures, please contact the Camp Health Director.

Members are not permitted to carry prescription or non-prescription medication(s) in the Club unless permission has been granted to self-administer medication in accordance with *The Self Administration of Medication Policy*.

All prescription medicines must be in the original bottle. A signed consent form and prescription from the doctor must be on file. Your child will not be able to start the summer program if you have not completed this as well as supplying the program staff with the medicine.

Illness

If a child has any of the following symptoms, the parent/guardian or emergency contact will be notified to pick up the child immediately:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher;
- Vomiting or diarrhea;
- Accident requiring medical attention or a change of clothes
- Contagious disease;
- Any other physical or emotional situation or trauma which requires parent intervention.



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Your child should be fever free and free from any other contagious diseases for 24 hours before returning to our program.

When accidents occur during the summer program, first aid is given to the child.

For serious injuries requiring immediate medical attention, Emergency Medical Technicians/Police Department will be called and the child will be taken to the hospital. Parents/Guardians will be called immediately.

It is therefore extremely important that we have all current, working numbers for all parent/guardians and emergency contacts.

A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and remain at the hospital until a parent/guardian arrives.

Communicable Diseases

If a child contracts any communicable disease, please report it to us immediately. The child may not return to the program without a written doctor's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others.

If a child becomes ill during the program, first aid certified staff will use his/her professional judgment to determine if the student should remain at program, or sent home. **It is essential for the program to have the current working telephone number of each parent or guardian.**

If it is deemed necessary for the child to be sent home, a parent or guardian must pick up the child within one hour of being contacted by the Boys & Girls Club Staff.

The Boys & Girls Club staff will not be responsible for providing any change of clothing for any child for any reason. **A parent/guardian or emergency contact will be called to pick any child that requires a change of clothing.**

Daily health screening will be done for each camper each morning at curbside. This will include some simple health questions, temperature reading, and observation. Any camper with a temperature reading of 100.4 or higher will not be admitted to camp.

Pick up/Drop Off

Please be careful and slow down when you enter our street as there are children present.

No double parking.



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Field Trips

The same rules of conduct required in the Club are expected and enforced on field trips.

A completed permission slip and/or waiver may be required for some field trips.

Emergency Evacuation

In case of an emergency or natural disaster where the building must be evacuated, campers will be escorted out of the building to the nearest safety zone.

Drills

The Club performs monthly emergency drills.

Procedures are outlined for each staff member. For safety reasons, members are expected to follow the staff's instructions, exit the room in a single line, refrain from conversation, use assigned exits and report to the assigned outdoor area.

Custody/Court Orders

Safety and security is our top priorities for every member. As a result, we must make sure to have accurate information relating to parent/guardian custody.

We must be advised of all court orders and/or custody matters involving a child enrolled in the summer program. In the event that a legal document restricts or limits contact with a child enrolled in our program, this document must be furnished to the program.

If your child(ren) is living with one parent who has legal custody and the non-custodial parent is not permitted to contact the child at the Club, or remove the child from the Club, the Membership Office must be provided with custody papers and/or written evidence indicating the same. If these papers are not provided, we cannot refuse access to the child by the non-custodial parent.

Any change in the custodial status must be reported to the Membership Office. Should the stipulations or conditions of any legally binding document change, we must receive a copy of the revised legal document. Without this, we are obligated to comply with the existing documents in our possession.

Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P)

In keeping with New Jersey's child care center licensing requirements, we are obligated to provide you, as the parent/guardian of a child enrolled at our center, with this informational statement. The statement highlights, among other things: limit your right to visit and observe our center at any time without having to secure prior permission; the center's obligation to be



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licensed and to comply with licensing standards; and the obligation of all citizens to report suspected child abuse/neglect/exploitation to the Child Protection and Permanency, CP&P (*formerly the Division of Youth and Family Services, DYFS*). **That being said the club may have limited in person engagement this summer if COVID 19 protocols are in place. If this is the case we will require parents to make an appointment to enter our buildings for any meetings or conferences that are deemed necessary. Parents /Guardian's that enter our buildings will be required to take part in the same health screenings that staff and campers are required to go through each day. If a parent/guardian does not pass the health screening or refuses to take part in the health screening their meeting we be canceled or rescheduled for another date.**

Here is a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website:
www.state.nj.us/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/index.html