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Boys & Girls Clubs of the Big Bend Youth Development Programs

CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Keystone Clubs

Keystone Clubs are chartered small group leadership development clubs for young people ages 14 to 18. Keystoners elect officers, choose their own activities and plan and implement community service projects. A national charter entitles a Keystone Club to participate in regional and national Keystone conferences. *Funded by the Taco Bell Foundation.*

Youth of the Year

Sponsored by the Reader's Digest Foundation, the National Youth of the Year Program is designed to promote and recognize service to Club and community, academic performance and contributions to family and spiritual life. Competition begins with each Club selecting a Youth of the Year who receives a certificate and medallion then enters state competition. State winners receive a plaque and \$1,000 scholarship then enter the regional competition. Each of the five regional winners receives a \$10,000 scholarship and enters the national competition held in Washington, DC. The National Youth of the Year receives an additional \$15,000 scholarship, totaling \$26,000 in scholarships, and is installed by the President of the United States.

Torch Club

This small-group leadership development program, sponsored by Staples, is targeted to youth ages 11 to 13. Within some 700 Torch Clubs across the country, members elect officers and plan and implement their own activities and community service projects. Each Torch Club receives an official charter from Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

EDUCATION & CAREER DEVELOPMENT

CareerLaunch

CareerLaunch™ is a career exploration and mentoring program for teens ages 13-18. This program includes the CareerLaunch Web site that allows teens to take an interest survey, explore careers, identify training or college requirements, seek out financial aid and play skills-building games. There's also an easy-to-use Career Exploration Quick Reference Guide with a broad range of career planning and job skills activities that Club staff or volunteers can use with teens. The CareerLaunch Portfolio contains a Teen Tips booklet with helpful interviewing and on-the-spot job tips. *Funded by Gap Foundation.*

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CLUBService

This program, the result of a partnership between Boys & Girls Clubs of America and the Corporation for National Service (AmeriCorps), provides education awards to Club members ages 17 and 18 and Club alumni ages 19-24 who serve their Clubs and communities. CLUBService recognizes young people's service, helps them access higher education opportunities and encourages them to pursue future careers as Club professionals. *Funded by AmeriCorps.*

Goals For Graduation

Goals for Graduation introduces Club members ages 6 to 15 to the concept of academic goal setting. In one-on-one sessions with Club professionals, members set achievable "Know-I-Can" goals, more challenging "Think-I-Can" goals and yearly "Believe-I-Can" goals, then create action plans. The program provides for recognition of members' achievements at every step of the journey. *Funded by Macy's South and MetLife Foundation.*

Junior Staff: Cultivating Tomorrow's Club Professionals Today

Junior Staff is a program that assists Club members ages 13 to 18 explore a career in youth or human services, particularly Boys & Girls Club work. Young people prepare for future roles as human services professionals by participating in career development activities, discovering the importance of community service, building customer service skills and completing a Club apprenticeship. *Funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance and Morgan Stanley.*

Money Matters: Make It Count

Created with the Charles Schwab Foundation, this financial literacy program was designed specifically to help teens (ages 13 to 18) expand their knowledge of money management and learn the skills that lead to financial independence and well-being. The Money Matters: Make It Count program consists of five components: Teen Personal Finance Guide, Program Facilitator's Guide, Money Matters Web site, Schwab eEmployee Volunteer Program and the Money Matters Awards. Via the volunteer component, Schwab employees can pass financial expertise to Club teens through their volunteer involvement.

Project Learn

Project Learn reinforces and enhances the skills and knowledge young people learn at school through "high-yield" learning activities at the Club and in the home. Based on Dr. Reginald Clark's research that shows fun, but academically beneficial activities increase academic performance, these activities include leisure reading, writing activities, homework help and games like Scrabble® which develop youth's cognitive skills. Project Learn emphasizes collaborations between Club staff, parents and school personnel. Formally evaluated by Columbia University, Project Learn has been proven to boost the academic performance of Club members.

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Power Hour: Making Minutes Count

A comprehensive homework help and tutoring program, POWER HOUR is designed to raise the academic proficiency of Club members ages 6 to12.

Skill Tech: Basic Training

Skill Tech is a hands-on program that appeals to members of all ages and technical abilities. Through three levels of animated lessons (available in English or Spanish exclusively online at www.bg cayouthnet.org) for members and instructor-led group activities, members learn skills in various Microsoft software programs, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Publisher and Digital Image Pro. *Funded by Microsoft Corporation.*

Skill Tech II

Skill Tech II teaches advanced, yet practical technology skills to Club members. It features three eight-session modules (available in English or Spanish exclusively online at www.bg cayouthnet.org) for beginner, intermediate and advanced skill levels. Participants learn about hardware identification and installation, networking and technology-related careers. *Funded by Microsoft Corporation.*

Strategic Approach for Academic Success

Boys & Girls Club professionals are informal educators and strive to ensure that all Club youth, through their experiences at school and with the Club, are able to make good post-secondary education decisions. This vision identifies key objectives and strategies for working with members ages 6 to 12 and 13 to 18. BGCA helps local Clubs combat problems that contribute to low high school graduation rates by implementing localized activities and strategies with rigor, emphasizing more intentional integration of programs across core program areas and conducting and sharing findings of evaluation efforts. *Funded by Macy's South and MetLife Foundation.*

HEALTH & LIFE SKILLS

Cavity-Free Zone

Cavity-Free Zone was developed in response to the recent U.S. Surgeon General's report on oral health, which revealed a silent epidemic of oral disease in America, especially among disadvantaged youth. Cavity-Free Zone aims to improve the oral health of Club members ages 6 to18 nationwide. Through oral health educational program materials, a Web site and collaborative efforts with local dental schools, dental societies and other health care agencies, Cavity-Free Zone will be a catalyst for change in providing dental services to disadvantaged youth. *Funded by Crest.*

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Healthy Habits

Designed for ages 6 to 15, the program aims to incorporate healthy living and active learning in every part of the Club experience, Healthy Habits, which is also the "Mind" component of Triple Play: A Game for the Mind, Body and Soul, emphasizes good nutrition, regular physical activity and improving overall well-being. *Funded by Kraft Foods Inc. and The Coca-Cola Company.*

NetSmartz

NetSmartz teaches Internet safety skills through engaging multimedia activities and offline interaction with Club professionals in three age-appropriate modules: Clicky's Web World (for ages 6 to 7); NetSmartz Rules (for ages 8 to 12); and I-360 (for ages 13 to 18). Topics include personal safety, shopping safety and ethical use of the Internet. To learn more, youth ages 12 and younger can go directly to www.netsmartzkids.org; while teens, parents and Club staff can learn about Internet safety at www.netsmartz.org. BGCA collaborated with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children to develop NetSmartz. *Funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.*

SMART Moves

The SMART Moves (Skills Mastery and Resistance Training) prevention/education program addresses problems such as drug and alcohol use and premature sexual activity. The program uses a team approach involving Club staff, peer leaders, parents and community representatives. More than simply emphasizing a "Say No" message, the program teaches young people ages 6 to 15 how to say no by involving them in discussion and role-playing, practicing resistance and refusal skills, developing assertiveness, strengthening decision-making skills and analyzing media and peer influence. The ultimate goal: to promote abstinence from substance abuse and adolescent sexual involvement through the practice of responsible behavior.

SMART Girls

An outgrowth of the popular and effective SMART Moves program, SMART Girls is a health, fitness, prevention/education and self-esteem enhancement program for girls ages 8 to 17. The program is designed to encourage healthy attitudes and lifestyles that will enable early adolescent girls to develop to their full potential. The SMART Girls program is sponsored by Tupperware Brands Corporation. Learn more about SMART Girls.

Passport to Manhood

Passport to Manhood promotes and teaches responsibility while reinforcing positive behavior in male Club members ages 11 to 14. Passport to Manhood consists of 14 small-group sessions, each of which concentrates on a specific aspect of manhood through highly interactive activities. Each participant is issued his own "Passport" to underscore the idea that he is on a journey of maturation and personal growth.

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ARTS & CULTURE

Digital Arts Suite and Festivals

The Digital Arts Suite teaches members ages 6 to 18 how to create computer-generated art. In each of five programs (Web Tech, Design Tech, Photo Tech, Music Tech and Movie Tech), members advance through three levels of animated lessons online (delivered in English or Spanish) and participate in instructor-led group activities. Club members ages 10 to 18 are invited to submit their artwork to the annual Digital Arts Festivals, which celebrate Club members' creativity in Web design, graphic design, photo illustration, music composition and movie making/screenplay writing. Digital Arts Suite and Festivals are a part of Club Tech, which is a partnership between Boys & Girls Clubs of America, founding partner Microsoft and Best Buy Children's Foundation.

ImageMakers: National Photography Program

Funded by the Circuit City Foundation, this comprehensive photography program encourages girls and boys to learn and practice photography, expressing themselves in creative and innovative ways. The national initiative delivers a state-of-the-art photography curriculum, provides photographic resources and opportunities for Club members to compete on a national level. ImageMakers provides local, regional and national recognition through an annual photography contest. Winning photos will be displayed nationwide at museums as well as at BGCA's annual National Conference.

MusicMakers

This year-round program, developed in collaboration with NAMM, the International Music Products Association, encourages Club members ages 6 to 18 to have fun exploring music making and learning to play drums and guitar. Clubs provide step-by-step activities for drums and guitar in beginner, intermediate and advanced skill levels. *Funded by NAMM.*

National Fine Arts Exhibit

This competition, which encourages creativity through a variety of media, is made up of local, regional and national exhibits. Young people are encouraged to create artwork in any of the following categories: monochromatic drawing, multicolored drawing, pastels, water color, oil or acrylic, print making, mixed media, collage and sculpture. Artwork selected through a national competition is displayed at BGCA's annual National Conference.

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SPORTS, FITNESS & RECREATION

TRIPLE PLAY: A Game Plan for the Mind, Body and Soul

Triple Play, sponsored by The Coca-Cola Company and Kraft Foods Inc., is a dynamic wellness program currently being offered in Boys & Girls Clubs that demonstrates how eating right, keeping fit and forming positive relationships add up to a healthy lifestyle. The goal of the Triple Play program is to improve Club members' knowledge of healthy habits; increase the number of hours per day they participate in physical activities; and strengthen their ability to interact positively with others and engage in positive relationships.

Program components include:

- Healthy Habits Nutrition Curriculum
- Daily Challenges
- Sports Clubs
- Triple Play Games
- Social Recreation

Triple Play Parents Game Plan

Because parents play such a critical role in the development of a child's physical and social well-being, in February 2007, BGCA, Coca-Cola and Kraft launched a tool that could be used at home – where healthy habits start, are modeled and reinforced.

The Major League Baseball® S.T.A.R. Award

The MLB® S.T.A.R. Award program recognizes members ages 10 to 18 for demonstrating **S**portsmanship, **T**eam spirit, **A**chievement and **R**esponsibility in sports, fitness and social recreation programming. Clubs may participate in this program by regularly acknowledging young persons who demonstrate S.T.A.R. characteristics. Each organization selects one outstanding youth who best embodies these characteristics to receive a beautiful trophy and become eligible for state, regional and national MLB® S.T.A.R. Award competition. *Funded by Major League Baseball®.*

Rookie League

Rookie League, which is a bridge between t-ball and fast pitch baseball, is an organized league designed to teach youth ages 9 to 12 the fundamentals of baseball. One of the unique features of this program is that participants hit live pitches from a pitching machine that always throws strikes. The primary goals of Rookie League are to increase the number and quality of grassroots level baseball programs, increase participation, and provide a fun environment for beginning players. Program benefits include building confidence of members and attracting new members to the Club. *Funded by Major League Baseball® Charities.*

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NFL Youth Football

The National Football League Youth Football Fund provides grants for local Boys & Girls Clubs to start, expand or enhance tackle or flag football programs. The program also consists of a Youth Football Summit and recognition program for coaches and players.

Jr. NBA/Jr. WNBA

This national youth basketball initiative, launched by the NBA and the WNBA, connects players, parents and coaches. The program, which is supported by an all-star Advisory Council as well as Boys & Girls Clubs of America and other national youth organizations, provides unique information within its training guide curriculum. Subjects include advice for coaches from the first practice to the final game, ideas on creating a positive and fun environment for youth and tips for players ranging from skills to sportsmanship.

Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI)

Through a collaboration with Major League Baseball, Boys & Girls Clubs of America has expanded or established baseball and fast-pitch softball programs in more than 150 communities nationwide. All RBI leagues incorporate Quick SMART!, a condensed version of Boys & Girls Clubs of America's SMART Moves prevention/education program designed to teach players to avoid alcohol and other drug use and premature sexual involvement.

SPECIALIZED INITIATIVES

Street SMART

Street SMART focuses on gang prevention, conflict resolution, positive peer groups, and other situations and issues that affect teens in the area. In response to the number of youth gangs growing in cities and expanding to suburban and rural communities, BGCB has developed special gang prevention and intervention initiative targeting youth ages 6 to 18. Through referrals from schools, courts, law enforcement and community youth service agencies, the tested and proven Street SMART program identifies and recruits delinquent youth, or those "at risk" of delinquency, into ongoing Club programs and activities. *This initiative is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.*

Embracing Inclusion

This initiative provides Clubs with resources to enhance their services to youth with disabilities within fun, safe environments. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 13 percent of young people ages 6 to 14 have a disability (2001). Unfortunately, many of these young people have limited access to after-school programs that provide engaging, enjoyable opportunities for social and personal development. BGCA is working with Kids Included Together (KIT) to provide Club professionals and volunteers with effective strategies, tools and best practices for recruiting more youth with disabilities and serving them more effectively. *Funded by Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation.*

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ClubTech

Through Club Tech, and thanks to a more than \$100 million donation from Microsoft, BGCA is providing Clubs with the tools to make Club members and staff effective technology users. In 2007, long-time supporter Best Buy Children’s Foundation joined forces with BGCA and Microsoft to equip America’s youth with essential digital literacy skills.

Clubs receive a comprehensive package of the latest Microsoft products – a combined \$88 million software gift. With another \$12.3 million in cash, BGCA has developed technology programs that will give members basic computer skills; introduce them to digital movie making, music making, photography, graphic design and Web development through Digital Arts Suite and Festivals; and guide staff in using technology to enhance all program offerings. Club Tech also includes extensive technology training opportunities for Club staff at all professional levels.

These initiatives emphasize community mobilization and family involvement as strategies Clubs can use to better serve more young people and broaden the impact of all Club programs.

Latino Outreach Initiative

Boys & Girls Clubs play a critical role in providing young Latinos with opportunities to succeed. By engaging Latino youth and families through word-of-mouth referrals, face-to-face contacts, community collaborations, special events and targeted programming, Clubs give young Latinos access to interest- and need-based programs to help them develop leadership abilities and strong decision-making skills. BGCA offers professional training and mentoring for Club staff in the area of Latino cultural diversity. *Funded by The Goizueta Foundation, Hispanic Scholarship Fund, UPS Foundation and Turner Broadcasting System Inc.*

Teen Initiative

Teens are not simply “older children;” they have reached a developmental stage that requires a different strategic approach to recruitment, retention, marketing, staff interaction, space utilization and programming. In addition, the needs and developmental abilities of younger teens (13 to 15) vary from those of older teens (16 to 18). The Teen Initiative provides program resources, grant funding, training and technical assistance to Club staff and boards so they can deepen their impact with teens in their communities and serve them more effectively. *Funded by Taco Bell Foundation.*

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Family PLUS (Parents Leading, Uniting, Serving) Initiative

Family PLUS, the Family Support strategy generously funded by the Kimberly-Clark Corporation, provides an opportunity for Clubs to receive pass-through funding to continue or initiate family inclusion activities and events in their Club community. The Family PLUS strategy consists of five components from which Clubs select their focus. Each component is designed to fit specialized area(s) of need of Club families. Learn more about this exciting strategy and impressive advisory committee.

Youth for Unity

To help educate young people across the country about the importance of tolerance and diversity, Boys & Girls Clubs of America has joined forces with The Allstate Foundation to develop *Youth for Unity*, a diversity education program designed to combat prejudice, bigotry and discrimination. *Youth for Unity* is the umbrella title for a comprehensive set of programmatic interventions that will allow Clubs to help members appreciate and understand our society's diversity, recognize unfairness and take personal leadership in confronting bias. Under this initiative, an additional diversity module will be developed for the Street SMART Program.

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