



Opportunity
Changes
Everything

Niagara

WHAT CLUBS DO



homework
help

substance
use &
prevention

teen dating
violence
prevention



youth
shelters
& housing

indigenous
initiatives
& programs

job readiness



financial
education



arts
music
dance
theatre

parenting
education &
support



transportation



scholarships

EDI
initiatives

prevention of youth
gambling



physical fitness
& sports

gardening volunteering

healthy snacks
& meals



digital literacy

virtual
programming

nutrition
& food
education



mental
health &
wellness



breakfast
programs

mentoring



stem
education

youth
leadership



summer
camps



child
care

before and
after school
programs



Zones/OASP Parent Handbook

Last revised October 2024

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1.0 Welcome to BGC Niagara!

Mission Statement

“To provide a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life.”

Core Values

Inclusion and Opportunity

We strive to offer children and youth from all economic, cultural and social backgrounds access to the resources, supports and opportunities that will enable them to overcome barriers and achieve their positive potential in life.

Respect and Belonging

We provide a safe, supportive place where every child is listened to, respected and valued in an environment of inclusion and acceptance. Our staff and volunteers model honesty, fair play, positive attitude, cooperation and respect for self and others.

Empowerment

We believe all young people can grow into responsible, contributing and self-reliant members of society. Children and youth are at the center of everything we do. Through adventure, play and discovery, we encourage and empower them to develop health lifestyles, a life-long passion for learning, leadership and life skills and a sense of social responsibility.

Collaboration

We work together with families and volunteers in each community, in partnership with the public and private sector, to create healthy community solutions to provide children and youth with what they need for optimal development.

Speak Out

We speak out on behalf of children, youth

2.0 Meet the Team

At the BGC Niagara we insist on hiring child-focused professionals who have experience caring for children, a post-secondary education in the field of either Early Childhood Education, Child and Youth Support, Recreation and Leisure and/or education or equivalent and who demonstrate an intuitive

ability to interact with children in a respectful, loving and friendly manner. We hire staff that genuinely enjoy working with children and who strive to build strong relationships with families.

Our team members are encouraged to continually upgrade their skills by attending courses, seminars, workshops and conferences. All staff have provided Police Reference Checks with Vulnerable Sector and proof of certification in Standard First Aid CPR Level C, AED-Defibrillator, Emergency Response, Health and Safety, Food Handlers, and High Five. Program Staff working in Toddler and Preschool programs are required to obtain QCCN Training when offered by Quality Childcare Niagara.

The BGC Niagara was one of the first to achieve the HIGH FIVE Accreditation Organization designation in June 2006. HIGH FIVE is a quality assurance standard of Parks and Recreation Ontario, designed to support the safety, well being and healthy development of children ages 4-12 in recreation and sports programs. HIGH FIVE Accreditation establishes benchmarks for excellence in children's recreation and sport programming, based upon child focused, research based quality framework.

3.0 Zone Programs

The Boys and Girls Club of Niagara offers a wide variety of programming options. Sponsors of programs include, Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, Regional Municipality of Niagara, Sears Foundation, Giant Tiger (Homework Club), and RBC. We employ professional, qualified, caring staff that strive to provide a safe, nurturing environment to further children's personal growth and development.

The program provides experiences that enrich and enhance each child's development. Meal programs provide dinners based around Canada's Food Guide.

Families have the options of enrolling in the following programs:

3.1 Kids Zone – September - June (excluding PD Days and Holidays) 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm.

This program is designed for children ages 6 – 12 years old, and promotes healthy living, social skill development, academic success and goal setting. With qualified staff, children will play gym games and sports, complete homework and learning activities as well as do leadership and goal setting activities. This ensures children will be safe, healthy, connected to others, connected to the Club and develop skills which will help them in their development into the teen years.

3.2 Before and After School Program – September - June (excluding PD Days and Holidays) at Ontario Public School (Thorold) and DeWitt Carter Public School (Port Colborne)

The Before and After School program is designed for children 4-12 years of age to encourage physical activity and develop social, academic and leadership skills through participation in a wide variety of gymnasium games, outdoor activities, creative projects and special interest clubs led by caring, qualified staff. Snacks are provided and the program is HIGH FIVE accredited.

3.3 Teen Zone – September - June (excluding PD Days and Holidays) 6:00pm-8:00/8:30pm depending on location.

This program is designed for youth 13-18 and is a youth directed program that helps teens prepare for adulthood. The program promotes healthy lifestyle choices, goal setting, skill development, and connections to others in a safe and supportive way. Qualified staff help youth begin to think about life after school, and participate in various activities with youth their own age, learn, discover interests and receive supports while mapping out and achieving future academic and career goals

4.0 Developmental Approach

The Boys and Girls Club will provide and allow for a balance of activities:

- Structured / Independent;
- Indoor / Outdoor;
- Observing / Participating;
- Informative / Creative;
- Active / Passive;
- Individual / Group.

Our staff plan and facilitate meaningful experiences based on sound knowledge of children's development and on daily observations of the child's interests, needs and abilities. All programming strives for positive developmental growth in a variety of areas:

4.1 Outcomes

Social Activity:

- Self-regulation including behavioural, social and emotional
- Cooperation
- Perspective Taking
- Fostering positive relationships

Healthy Minds/ Healthy Bodies:

- Development of physical health through exercise and nutrition

- Awareness and positive development of mental health including one's self esteem, positive self image and resiliency

Homework/Lifelong Learning/ Next Steps:

- The development of life skills including everyday skills such as cooking, cleaning, organization
- Development of critical thinking skills
- Focus on decision making
- Development of interpersonal and communication skills

Mentoring/ Goal Setting:

- Developing leadership and management skills
- Providing guidance and support to others
- The definition of what makes a positive role model
- Goal defining/mapping
- Self-reflection

5.0 Facility Cancellation Policy

5.1 Severe Weather Policy

In cases of severe weather, programs may be cancelled or the facility closed all together. If area schools are closed, the Boys and Girls Club will also be closed. If area school buses are not running, the Boys and Girls Club buses will also not be running. Please tune in to the following radio stations to be alerted to these changes:

- CJRN 710
- EZROCK 105.7
- CKTB 610
- Posted on our Website

If children are at the Club with severe weather pending that would warrant closing the facility; Parents will be notified of our imminent closure and advised to make arrangements to have their child(ren) picked up as soon as possible.

If your child is at school being sent home due to severe weather; the Boys and Girls Club of Niagara is not responsible for your child(ren).

5.2 Statutory Holidays

The childcare center will be closed on the public holidays. (New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, Boxing Day) Note: The Club may designate other days in place of the holidays when it falls on a weekend.

6.0 Security Policy

The Boys and Girls Club of Niagara believes that safety and security are paramount. In order to assist us, please observe the following:

Up-to-date Contact Information

Please alert us immediately to any changes to your contact information including home address, phone numbers, and emergency contacts and authorized pick-ups. All children enrolled in BGCN programs must have up to date, complete registration and contact information, as well as applicable sign offs submitted yearly.

Authorized Pick-Ups

Parent/Guardians are asked to provide the names and contact information of anyone who has their permission to remove their child(ren) from the center. These names will be recorded as emergency contacts on their child(ren)'s personal file(s). Please advise your authorized pick-ups to have their government issued photo identification with them.

Prior written authorization/notification to the Front Desk is essential if someone who is not on your regular authorized pick-ups list will be removing your child from the center. Without this authorization the child(ren) will not be released into their custody

ALL persons picking up a child from our program may be asked to present government issued photo identification – including parents/guardians if they are not recognized by the staff. Please always enter the center prepared for this possibility.

PLEASE NOTE: If attempts to reach the parents and/or emergency people listed on the membership form fails within a reasonable time, Police and or Family and Children Services will be contacted. Continued failure to pick up your child during regular operating hours, could result in loss of space.

For the safety of our members, parents and guardians are not permitted to enter program space without express permission/accompaniment by a staff member.

Emergency Evacuation:

In the event of a fire or other incident that requires evacuation of the building, the children will be removed according to our emergency procedures. They will be taken to a secure location until the situation is remedied and it is safe to return. All parents will be notified and asked to pick up their children as soon as possible. The children will be supervised at the evacuation location until all children are picked up.

Lockdown:

In the event of a perceived internal or external threat to the safety of our members, the Club will go into lockdown in accordance with our emergency procedures. It may not be possible to remove your child from the premises until the lockdown has concluded.

7.0 Privacy Policy**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy statement is to outline the framework within which the Club can provide services to our members, staff and volunteers, paying particular attention to their right to privacy.

Definition:

Confidentiality is the safeguarding of information by the Club and by everyone involved in its operation. Confidentiality is a basic right of the individual, and an ethical obligation of the Club. When information is shared with other professional or persons within the Club, this obligation binds them equally.

PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES IN REGARDS TO CONFIDENTIALITY

The policy statement on confidentiality gives all people who come in contact with the Club the right to be respected by all persons associated with the organization. All information about an individual within the confines of our Club programs must be treated as confidential.

All staff and volunteers shall sign a declaration of confidentiality at the time of becoming involved with the Club ensuring that they have a clear understanding of the professional manner in which confidentiality is handled within the Boys and Girls Club of Niagara.

It is expected that volunteers and staff outside the Boys and Girls Club of Niagara keep agency issues and internal conflicts confidential.

Meetings and conversations concerning any person involved in the Club shall be held in an office, not in program rooms or hallways.

All files and records are the property of the Boys and Girls Club of Niagara and must be maintained in a secure place at all times: children's files are locked in the daycare and in the Finance office.

All open files regarding members assigned to a staff remain in that person's possession in a secure place at all times. The file on any member is primarily the responsibility of the staff person assigned. However, because teamwork often improves the quality of our work, it will at times be appropriate that designated volunteers have access to the files and information.

When requesting reports or information from other agencies, they should be aware of the use to which the information will be put. If the information is to be used for any other purpose, the consent of those parties is required again.

Information concerning members may only be given to other community agencies and professionals with written consent or a signed Form 14. Information concerning volunteers or staff will be given only if a reference check is being made by another source of information.

There shall be, at all times, a special respect in regard to the sensitivity of information and materials when dealing with members who are relatives or friends of employees, Board Members or volunteers associated with the Boys and Girls Club of Niagara.

Release of liability must be received before a picture is taken for publication or advertisement, check the membership application.

The Executive Director or his/her designate shall be the spokesperson on behalf of the Club in any matter regarding the Club, members, staff or volunteers.

Employee's and Board Member's phone numbers will not be released outside this agency, without their authorization. A phone message should be taken and passed along, if someone should call requesting a home phone number. The same consideration should be taken about cell phones.

Families are welcome to speak with coordinators and Managers, but are required to set up a meeting in advance. Concerns cannot be discussed in the rooms with the staff while they are attending to the children.

8.0 Registration and Fee Payment Policy

Families may enroll children or youth in programs. Upon enrollment parents must provide completed registration forms. Participants in Boys and Girls Club programs will be required to register as members on an annual basis. The annual membership fee entitles children to attend open public swims and **Club Kids Zone/Teen Zone programs** for children 6-12 or 13-19 years of age.

Times and locations of Kids Zone programs vary throughout the Region. Details can be found in the Club program guide and on the Club website. It is important to note that in order for a child registered in licensed childcare to “stay” for a Kid’s Zone Program, **the parent must still come to the center and sign their child out of the licensed childcare program.**

For the Thorold and Port Colborne locations, registration and payment must be completed online prior to attending program. Children will not be admitted into program without payment of fees.

Kids Zone/Teen Zone Locations

Niagara Falls Center, 8800 McLeod Rd.	905-357-2444
St. Catharines Center, 2 Facer St.	905-937-1072
EJ Freeland Centre, 1555 Garrison Rd	905-871-2592

9.0 Behaviour Management Policy

In accordance with the Child Care Early Years Act all staff, students and volunteers must read and sign the Behaviour Management Policy when they begin their employment/placement and annually thereafter.

Child Guidance Techniques

- Children will be guided in a positive manner that is appropriate to their age and developmental level;
- Guidance will assist the children to learn self-discipline and appropriate behaviours;
- Limits or rules of any activity or play area will be clearly outlined to all children. They will be repeated if necessary;
- Regular staff intervention will be in the form of praise, encouraging comments and reminders to children of acceptable behaviour. Where possible, intervention will permit logical consequences;
- All staff will use soft, supportive voices, model acceptable behaviour and will not discuss children’s behaviours in front of them;
- All staff will have visual contact of all children at all times and be within proximity to intervene for safety purposes;

- Children in attendance will be supervised by an adult at all times. Student and Volunteer participants in the program are never allowed to be alone with a child or group of children;
- Snacks and meals – Children will be encouraged to feed themselves and to at least taste all foods. Force feeding or the withholding of any food or drink is not allowed;
- Children in attendance over six hours will rest each day after the noon meal. Anyone unable to sleep after one hour will be allowed to play quietly under supervision;
- Children will be assisted through the washroom routine according to the amount of adult help they require. Hands must be washed after going to the washroom and before handling food;
- Children will be streamed in small groups to the washroom, cloak room, and sleep room and will not be made to wait without teacher directed activities. (ie: Holding circle) Lining up should be discouraged.

Dismissal Policy

When undesirable behaviors have been occurring with a particular child, the following steps are taken:

- Intervention Strategy
- Withdrawal of Privileges
- Quiet Time
- Discussion with Parent

We will contact our Resource Teacher to make every effort to find strategies that will assist your child to be successful in our programs.

If all strategies and options have been exhausted and the behaviour still continues the center has the authority to have a child dismissed from the center for the safety of that child, the other program participants, our staff and/or equipment.

10.0 Health and Wellness Policies

10.1 Illness

In order to safeguard the health of all children at Boys and Girls Club, we require that children who are ill not be brought to the center. If staff sees that a child shows any symptoms as outlined in Boys and Girls Club Illness Exclusion Policy (see below), the parents will be notified and asked to pick up the child. An ill or contagious child will be isolated from the other children until the parent arrives. Children on antibiotics must be excluded from the Boys and Girls Club for at least the first 24 hours that they are on the antibiotics. A contagious child must remain home for the period as outlined in our Illness Exclusion Policy. At the Unit Manager's discretion, a doctor's certificate may be requested to accompany a child returning to the center who appears to have a highly contagious condition.

Your child will not be allowed to attend the Boys and Girls Club if he/she exhibits any of the symptoms listed below within a 24-hour period prior to the child's admittance back to childcare. If your child is unable to participate in the normal activities of the daily schedule, then your child must stay home.

Symptoms for exclusion include (but are not limited to):

- Fever higher than 100°F or 37.8°C
- Diarrhea (two or more watery stools within 24 hours)
- Vomiting on two or more occasions during past 24 hours
- A draining rash
- Eye discharge or "Pink-Eye"
- Lice or nits
- Too tired or ill to participate in normal activities

Each illness will be recorded on a monthly health report. Serious illnesses will be reported to the Regional Department of Health Services.

We are required to report communicable diseases to the local health department.

10.2 Medication Policy

All participants are required to complete registration forms including a Special Requirement Form if applicable. Special Requirement Forms will alert staff to allergies and special requirements with respect to medicines in order to ensure appropriate care.

Medication may be administered to your child only when your child's physician has prescribed it. Non-prescription drugs will not be administered. All over the counter medications such as Tylenol and cough syrups must have a prescription label. Parents are asked to inform your child's caregiver and complete a medication authorization form (available at the front office). The medication must be in its original container and the prescription label must be on the container. The label must have the prescribing doctor's name, the date of issue, instructions for dosage and frequency. Only the supervisor will be responsible for administering the medication, unless absent, where the center designates will be responsible. Medication will be stored in designated locked boxes. No medication should be left in the child's bags.

10.3 Nutrition

All participants are required to complete registration forms including a Special Requirement Form if applicable. Special Requirement Forms will alert staff to allergies and special requirements with respect to medicines in order to ensure appropriate care.

For children participating in the Zone programs, a nutritious dinner and/or snack(s) will be provided.

Children's allergies and special dietary needs will be posted in cooking and serving areas.

Weekly snack and lunch menus will be posted for the current and following week.

No food will be withheld from a child for any reason.

Children are encouraged to try the food, which has been prepared, but are not forced to eat.

Children in Zone programs will be asked to keep any personal food items in their school bags.

The Boys and Girls Club of Niagara is a Peanut/Nut aware facility.

10.4 Suspected Child Abuse

CASES OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE WILL BE DOCUMENTED AND REPORTED AS REQUIRED BY LAW. All records shall be kept in the strictest of confidence

10.5 Clothing and Belongings

At the Boys and Girls Club children are to come prepared to go outside for fresh air and play. Therefore, to ensure that your child can join the fun and have a comfortable day, please ensure they have weather appropriate clothing. Clothing worn by your child should be suitable for play and be easily laundered as they may get dirty (paint, glue, sand, etc.). As the children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves, clothing that is easy to remove is appreciated.

All children should have appropriate indoor/outdoor footwear. Running shoes are required to safely participate in the gymnasium.

Unless it is a special event, please do not send toys from home. This will prevent competition and disappointment.

In the event your child does not have clothing at the club, we will attempt to contact the guardian. We will then provide extra clothing we have on site. Please ensure you launder and return the clothes the following day.

11.0 Parent Concerns

Have a question or concern?

The Boys and Girls Club takes pride ensuring your child is happy and well during their stay with us. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child and their program, please call the numbers below and ask to talk to the General Manager.



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Niagara Falls: 905-357-2444
St. Catharines: 905-937-1072
Fort Erie: 905-871-2592

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

After reading the Zone Parent Handbook, please sign below. Your signature below indicates that you have fully read and understood the 2023-2024 Zone Parent Handbook and agree to all terms and conditions contained herein.

Initial:

- I have provided the Boys and Girls Club with the most recent information with respect to my child including emergency contacts and special requirements.
- I agree to keep my child home or make other arrangements if s/he is not well enough to fully participate in daily activities and am prepared to pick up my child if ill within 45 minutes of Club contact.
- I will call the appropriate Boys and Girls Club Unit if my child will be absent for any reason understanding that I will be charged the daily fee.
- I understand payment of fees for before and after school care must be paid in advance online.
- I have read the Parent Handbook and understand the policies and procedures as it pertains to my child's care at the Boys and Girls Club.
- I have read, understand and authorize the administration of over-the-counter products I may send with my child, if my child is unable to self administer.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____