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Testimony of the Kansas Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs

Presented by Allie Devine, Lobbyist

Joint Committee on Child Welfare System Oversight

Representative Susan Concannon,
Senator Richard Hilderbrand, Vice Chair,
Representative Jarrod Ousley, Ranking Minority Member,

Good afternoon Representative Concannon and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on issues facing school age youth in Kansas. The Kansas Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs (Clubs) is a statewide network of youth development community-based organizations with 41 locations in 17 communities. The Clubs serve youth from kindergarten to age 18. Clubs provide before and after school programs; out of school programs; and summer programs to nearly 18,000 of the neediest children.

Clubs are fully licensed as school-age drop-in entities with structured programs focusing on the health, safety, and well-being of children who attend a Club. Club programs focus on completion of school work and graduation from high school; abstinence from premature sexual activity; alcohol and illicit substance abuse. The Clubs have strong records of helping youth thrive and have deep connections to families, schools, and community partners.

We are here today to seek your support for funding for school age youth mental health programs, youth development professionals and training for staff in Clubs. The pandemic exacerbated conditions related to mental health in youth. Clubs across the state have seen increased rates in incidents and behavior problems in Club members, especially those who are homeless or in foster care.

We recently opened discussions with Mr. Kyle Kessler and his staff with the Association of CMHCS of Kansas, Inc. We hope to form partnerships with their members to provide Clubs the support they need to best serve Kansas youth. We are not sure what the assistance will be, but are hopeful that Clubs will be able to assist children at times when they need help the most-before and after school; days out of school; and summer breaks. It is during these times when kids need the structure and safety of a Club.

We appreciate the support the Kansas Department of Children and Families, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment have provided. We continue to work to be efficient in the delivery of child care services. We are very appreciative of the Kansas Legislature's support for funding for Club programs. We look forward to working with you in the 2023 session on youth mental health issues and other issues facing children, families, and child care providers. Thank you.



Our Mission

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

2022 KANSAS FACT SHEET



The Club Experience

Boys & Girls Clubs provide safe places where young people can learn and grow.

During the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic, Boys & Girls Clubs throughout the country partnered with state and local officials to help meet the larger needs of communities to provide childcare for health care professionals and other essential workers, meal and snack services and deliveries, and virtual learning to fill the education gap.

“Growth and healing are time-consuming processes, but the sheer fact that I signed up to begin them reminds me that I am stronger than I think.”



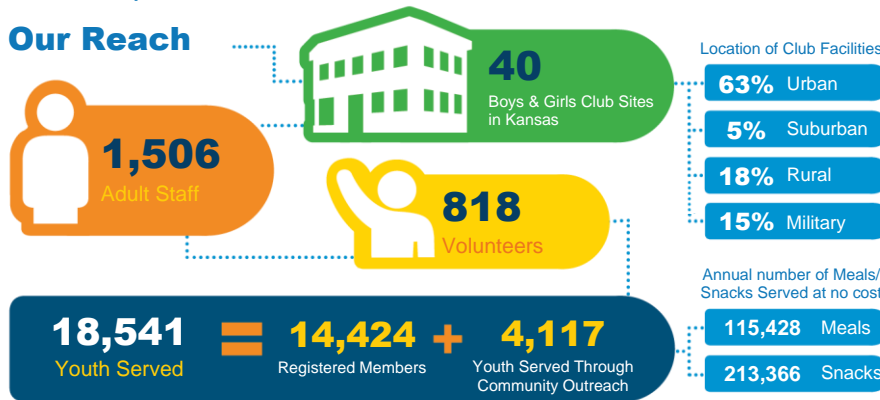
Chalice C.
2021 Kansas
Youth of the Year



The Need in Our State

Every day 91,728 kids in Kansas leave school with nowhere to go*. They risk being unsupervised, unguided and unsafe.

Our Reach

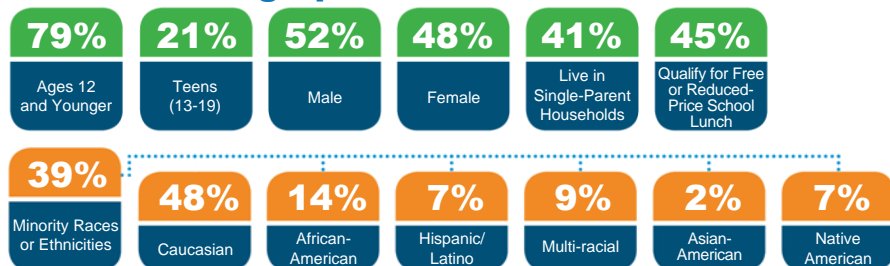


Club Locations

Multi Club Cities are bolded, Military Bases are italicized

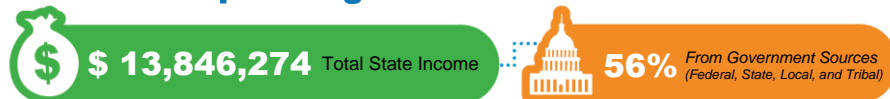
- Atchison
- Coffeyville
- Fort Leavenworth**
- Fort Riley**
- Horton
- Hutchinson**
- Junction City
- Lawrence**
- Manhattan**
- Mayetta
- McConnell AFB*
- Olathe
- Tecumseh**
- Topeka**
- Wamego
- White Cloud
- Wichita**

Member Demographics



* 11% Ethnicity Unknown

2020 Club Operating Income



Every dollar invested in the Boys & Girls Clubs returns \$9.60 in current and future earnings and cost-savings to their communities

COVID Response

When the COVID-19 pandemic eliminated the structure of the traditional in-person school day and access to safe places, meals and more for millions of youth, **Clubs stepped up:**

1. At Club learning centers, 200K+ youth received internet access and technology to support virtual schoolwork.
2. Clubs served 24M+ emergency meals and snacks and provided wellness checks, youth activities and more to 460K families.
3. Through Club relief and crisis funding, Clubs provided 42K families with \$10M+ in economic assistance.

Youth pitched in, too – assembling community care packages, writing letters to frontline workers and sharing in community efforts to recover and look beyond the pandemic to hopeful days ahead.



Our Agenda for America's Youth

Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Agenda for America's Youth focuses on solutions and policies that will have the greatest impact on the youth of this country, and the fight to strengthen them. America's youth need a voice and with your help, we will close the opportunity gap for all youth in America.

Out-Of-School Time

Every young person should have access to a high-quality out-of-school time experience.



What We DO

Club youth are the leaders, innovators and problem-solvers of tomorrow – developing skills to be change agents in their communities and beyond

Our Impact

*Clubs across the country provide over 4 million young people with a safe place, caring adult mentors, fun and friendship, and high-impact youth development programs on a daily basis during critical non-school hours. Club members in 8th, 10th and 12th grades volunteer at significantly higher rates than their peers nationally. ***

Safer Childhoods

Every young person has a right to a safe, positive environment in which to learn and grow.



What We DO

Every child has a right to a safe, positive environment in which they can learn and grow.

Our Impact

*Boys & Girls Clubs are committed to supporting communities and local Clubs ensure the safety of all youth especially during youth are not in school. **90%** of Club members say they could go to staff for help in a crisis.*

Health & Wellness

Every young person should be equipped to make healthy decisions resulting in positive social, emotional, and physical well-being.



What We DO

When young people live healthy lifestyles, they are able to make decisions that result in their social, emotional and physical well-being.

Our Impact

*Our programs help youth engage in positive behaviors that nurture their well-being. Club members learn how to manage stress, demonstrate good teamwork, eat well, and keep physically fit. Club teens are less likely to use drugs or alcohol and more likely to engage in regular physical activity than their peers nationally. ***

Education, Workforce & Leadership

Every young person deserves to be well prepared for life and career.



What We DO

When young people perform well academically, they graduate from high school on time, are motivated to learn and have a plan to succeed in today's modern workforce.

Our Impact

*Clubs equip youth with the soft and hard skills they need to succeed in the workforce and create access to partnerships for real-life experiences to explore career options. Among youth ages 12 to 17 living in households experiencing low income, Club members report higher grades than youth nationally. ***

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Every young person has the right to safe, positive and inclusive environments where everyone can reach their full potential.



What We DO

The mission and core beliefs of Boys & Girls Clubs fuel our commitment to promoting safe, positive and inclusive environments for all.

Our Impact

*Clubs champion opportunities for the unique challenges and circumstances in communities, while respecting and celebrating their strengths and cultures. **83%** of Club members believe they can make a difference in their community.*

* America After 3PM

**2020 National Outcomes Report, National Youth Outcomes Initiative, Boys & Girls Clubs of America

For more information, please visit www.bgca.org
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