

# MEASURING THE IMPACT OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

2018 National Outcomes Report

2018



**NYOI**  
National Youth Outcomes Initiative



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF AMERICA**

**03**

**INTRODUCTION**

**05**

Building a Data-Driven Culture

**05**

Highlights from this Report

**07**

**THE IMPORTANCE OF  
THE CLUB EXPERIENCE**

**08**

A High-Quality Club Experience  
Drives Positive Outcomes  
for Members

**10**

Higher Quality Practices Enhance  
Members' Club Experience

**12**

Enabling Clubs to Enhance  
Program Quality

**13**

**CLUB MEMBERS ACHIEVE  
POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

**14**

Developing Globally  
Competitive Graduates

**19**

Developing 21st Century Leaders

**21**

Developing a Healthier Generation

**27**

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM  
BGCA EVALUATIONS**

**33**

**ABOUT BOYS & GIRLS  
CLUBS OF AMERICA**

**35**

**ENDNOTES**

# MEASURING THE IMPACT OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

2018 National Outcomes Report

Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) is committed to measuring how much our young people are achieving and how effectively our Club Experience is implemented. Our measurement efforts are aimed at delivering high-quality programming and services, engaging in continuous improvement and demonstrating our impact to stakeholders. BGCA is proud to present this seventh annual outcomes report summarizing our 2018 national findings.

2018

# INTRODUCTION



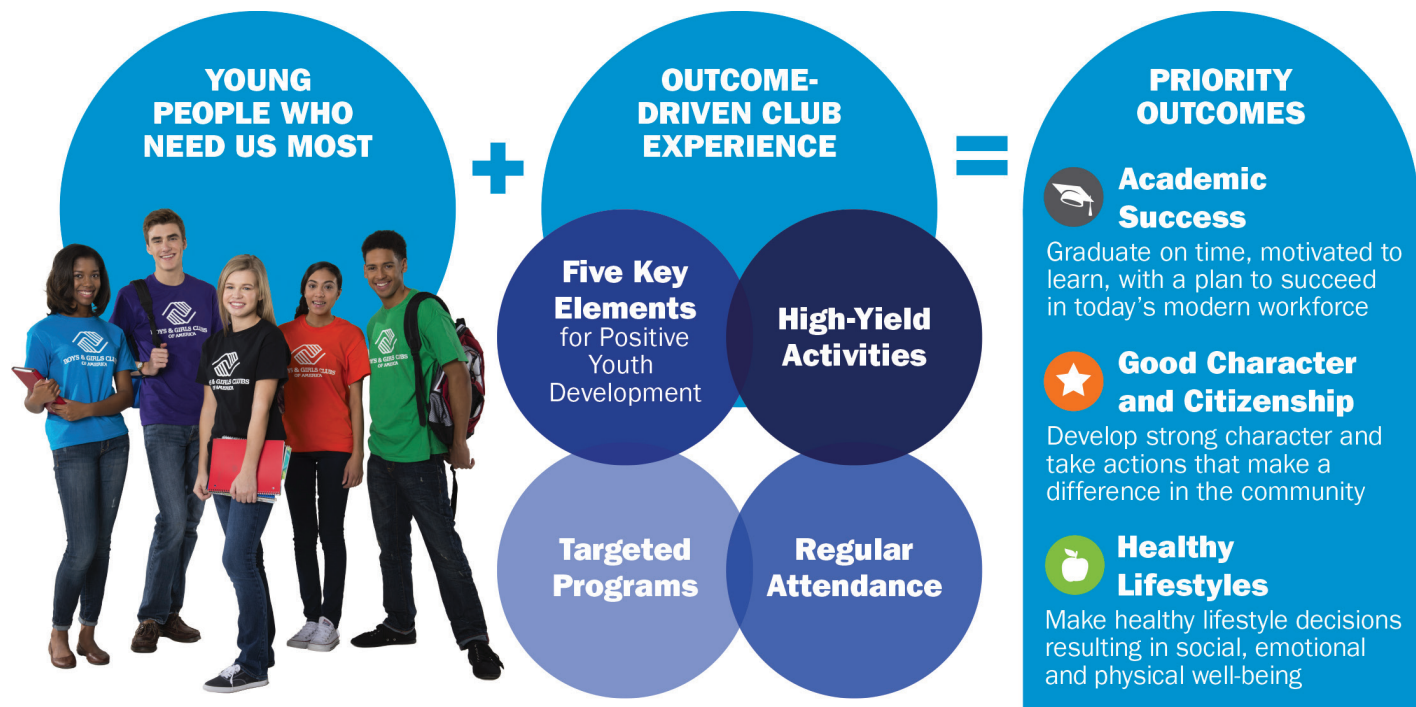


Over the past decade, BGCA has worked with Club organizations to build their capacity to collect and use data to measure youth outcomes and demonstrate their impact to stakeholders. This data also enables Clubs to adjust their practices and implement quality improvements to have a greater beneficial effect on young people.

Based on youth development research and more than a century of Clubs' own experience, Boys & Girls Club leaders articulated a new theory of change in 2010. The Formula for Impact depicts how Clubs put our youth development mission in action. It identifies who Clubs serve, shows how they serve, and what they hope to accomplish with young people. The Formula for Impact guides Clubs in helping youth achieve positive outcomes in three priority areas: Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles.

In 2011, BGCA launched the National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI), a system grounded in the Formula for Impact and built to measure the impact of Clubs using a common set of research-informed indicators of our priority outcomes. NYOI's key tool for gathering outcomes data is a survey administered to Club members each spring. BGCA provides training and technical assistance to enable local Club organizations to use their data more effectively.

**Our Formula for Impact**



Club professionals use outcome data to inform planning and operational decisions, make improvements to programs and services, and demonstrate their impact.

### Building a Data-Driven Culture

As BGCA completes the eighth year of NYOI implementation with nearly all non-military Club organizations participating, its measurement efforts remain focused on how well Clubs implement the Formula for Impact and how much young people are achieving as a result. Professionals at the local and national levels use outcome data to inform planning and operational decisions, make improvements to programs and services, and demonstrate their impact to donors and stakeholders. NYOI's tools, data and the insights they yield are particularly useful as Clubs and BGCA work on two of the priorities of our federation's Great Futures 2025 strategic plan, improving program quality and strengthening capacity.

To facilitate more effective use of data and a deeper understanding of how Club members are faring, BGCA continues to enhance NYOI data collection and reporting tools and expand its capacity to conduct more sophisticated data analytics and program evaluation, often in collaboration with well-respected research partners.

In 2018, in response to Club feedback, BGCA field-tested a new platform to make the NYOI Member Survey more engaging for youth and easier for Club staff to administer. The new format – which will be launched in spring 2019 – features interactive characters who read each question aloud; more engaging, colorful backgrounds; and

a quick mini-game break to help youth re-energize and re-focus as they complete the survey. Staff will benefit from simplified registration and training, expanded help functions during registration and administration, and a universal link to make it easier to pull up the survey on any computer or tablet.

To support Clubs' continuous quality improvement efforts, BGCA also developed new resources in 2018 to help Clubs access, understand and analyze their NYOI results using the online reporting portal, My Data. The portal is available on BGCA's internal website for Club professionals and volunteers.

### Highlights from this Report

Throughout this report, the findings are for *regularly attending* Club members, defined as those who attended the Club on average once per week or more in the six to 12 months prior to taking the survey.

Based on fundamental youth development principles, a high-quality Club Experience is fun and safe, provides guidance by caring adults, and fosters a sense of belonging. BGCA's analysis of 2018 NYOI Member Survey data provides updated findings that continue to show that a high-quality Club Experience drives positive outcomes for Club youth.

In addition, this report presents 2018 findings about Club members' positive outcomes in the three priority areas. For example, BGCA finds that:

- 76 percent of low-income Club members ages 12 to 17 report earning mostly As and Bs in school, whereas 67 percent of their peers nationally report doing so.
- Club members in eighth, 10th and 12th grades have significantly higher rates of volunteering than their same-grade peers nationally.
- More than twice as many Club members consume the daily recommended amount of vegetables and fruits as their peers nationally. In addition, teens who stay connected to the Club as they get older seem better able to resist engaging in high-risk behaviors than their same-age peers nationally.

The report also highlights findings from formal, third-party studies conducted for BGCA over the past two decades.



## More about BGCA's National Youth Outcomes Initiative

In NYOI, Boys & Girls Clubs collect data about their registered members' demographics, attendance and participation. Local data management systems feed data into the national system, allowing BGCA to compile data on the overall population served by Clubs.

The NYOI Member Survey asks young people about their perceptions of the Club. Their responses allow BGCA to assess how well Clubs deliver a high-quality Club Experience that promotes positive youth development. The survey also measures indicators of youth achievement in BGCA's priority outcome areas. Some survey questions are asked of members of all ages, while others are only asked of teens ages 13 to 18; this is noted as applicable throughout this report.

BGCA processes Club member survey responses, furnishes each participating Club organization with its members' survey data, then aggregates and analyzes the data to render national results.

As of late 2018, 93 percent of non-military Club organizations were participating in NYOI. More than 189,000 youth completed the member survey in some 3,200 sites in spring 2018.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CLUB EXPERIENCE





**The central principle of the Boys & Girls Club theory of change continues to be supported by analysis of data from NYOI: When Clubs deliver a high-quality Club Experience, young people are more likely to achieve positive outcomes.**

In 2004-05, BGCA partnered with the Search Institute to identify core Club practices that are instrumental for fostering high-quality youth development.<sup>1</sup> This comprehensive study took place in Clubs across the country and resulted in the Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development that lie at the center of our Movement's Formula for Impact theory of change. These key elements, when combined with frequent attendance, boost Clubs' impact on youth. They are essential for creating a Club Experience in which members feel physically and emotionally safe, receive support and recognition from caring adults who set expectations for them, are provided opportunities to try new things, have fun, and feel a sense of belonging.

Over time, BGCA designed NYOI member survey questions to capture members' perceptions of the Club Experience. The questions relate to the Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development, asking about components such as physical and emotional safety, fun and adult connections. BGCA categorizes the responses to these questions to determine how many members report a Club Experience that is optimal, fair or needs improvement.<sup>2</sup>

## **A High-Quality Club Experience Drives Positive Outcomes for Members**

Since NYOI's inception, BGCA has examined the relationship between members' Club Experience and the outcomes they achieve. BGCA has consistently found that when members report having an optimal Club Experience, they are more likely to achieve positive outcomes in three priority areas: Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles. This finding is consistent with our Formula for Impact and core youth development principles. When members are immersed in an out-of-school-time (OST) environment grounded in effective youth development practices, they are more likely to acquire social-emotional skills and confidence, remain engaged in school, and make healthy life choices.

BGCA used a statistical method called *regression analysis*<sup>3</sup> to determine the effects of the Club Experience on various youth outcomes, while controlling for member characteristics. Club members who reported an optimal Club Experience were compared to Club members who reported a Club Experience that needs improvement. Among regularly attending Club members, defined as those who attended the Club on average once per week or more in the past six to 12 months, some key findings follow.

**When members have a high-quality Club Experience, they are more likely to achieve positive outcomes.**

**Teens (16 and older) who report an optimal Club Experience are:**

**46%** | more likely to volunteer on a monthly basis

**41%** | less likely to get into a physical fight

**40%** | more likely to be on track to graduate from high school on time

**19%** | less likely to ever skip school

**18%** | more likely to expect to attend college



**Younger teens (13 to 15) who report an optimal Club Experience are:**

**54%** | more likely to volunteer on a monthly basis

**38%** | less likely to consume alcohol

**32%** | less likely to smoke marijuana

**31%** | less likely to get into a physical fight

**14%** | more likely to be physically active five or more days per week

## Exploring the Connections between Club Experience and School Climate

In recent years, the education field has recognized that learning is social and emotional. Students' ability to learn is affected by their social-emotional development and the climate in their schools. A positive school climate is strongly linked to academic success and is predictive of students' ability to learn and develop in healthy ways.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly to the Club Experience, the concept of school climate encompasses dimensions such as physical and emotional safety, peer and adult relationships, sense of belonging, adult practices and the environment. And just as the optimal Club Experience is associated with key youth outcomes, a positive school climate is also linked to indicators of student learning and engagement, including better attendance, test scores, promotion rates and graduation rates.<sup>5</sup>

In school settings and out-of-school settings, young people need meaningful opportunities and strong support systems to develop to their full potential. In that sense, Clubs' efforts to foster a high-quality Club Experience complement schools' efforts to foster a positive climate. Their combined efforts have the potential to significantly improve positive outcomes for many young people, as they constitute the spaces where young people spend most of their time outside of home.

### Youth (9 to 12) who report an optimal Club Experience are:

**40%** | more likely to believe that school work is meaningful

**17%** | more likely to be on track to graduate high school

These findings about the importance of the Club Experience apply to members regardless of their gender, ethnicity/race and family income. Each component of the Club Experience, such as sense of belonging, staff expectations or recognition, is independently associated with at least three youth outcomes. In other words, all components of the Club Experience matter.

### Higher Quality Practices Enhance Members' Club Experience

Boys & Girls Clubs are built on the principles of positive youth development, which are implemented through the creation of positive experiences, relationships and environments.<sup>6</sup> Positive youth development gives young people opportunities to cultivate relationships and develop and practice social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills within a supportive environment.<sup>7</sup> These experiences, values, skills and opportunities support young people in reaching their full potential.<sup>8</sup>

A Club that provides an Outcome-Driven Club Experience puts youth development principles into action through the following practices.



## Youth Development Practices

Staff members encourage youth and support them in building skills. Staff members create opportunities for youth to develop a sense of belonging, recognizing their contributions and accomplishments, and helping them build relationships with their peers. Staff members use youth-centered approaches to reframe conflict; acknowledge and help young people identify their feelings and see the connection between their emotions, behaviors and consequences; and find their own solutions.

## Management Practices

As in other work settings, management practices have to do with developing successful teams and creating a working environment in which staff members can do their best work. Managers of youth development professionals focus on hiring the right people, orienting and onboarding them properly, setting clear expectations and holding staff accountable to those expectations. Managers provide employees with regular supervision, training and coaching to maximize their potential and performance as youth development practitioners and facilitate their career growth. Managers also focus on building teamwork, open communication, collaboration and a continuous quality improvement mindset among their staff.

## Club Environment

The Club is a youth-centered environment that supports young people's active engagement and emotional well-being. It consists of the Club-wide behavioral norms, formal and informal traditions, recognition, and youth input mechanisms that foster emotional safety and youth agency and keep youth wanting to come back every day. The Club offers a variety of fun, developmentally appropriate experiences throughout the day that tap into youth interests and help them build a diverse skill set, while also providing youth with opportunities to influence the format and content of program offerings based on their interests and preferences.

BGCA collaborated with Hanover Research and the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality to develop, refine and validate a staff survey. The survey was designed to collect data on key youth development practices from Club professionals who work directly with Club young people. In 2016, BGCA made the staff survey part of NYOI to provide Clubs with another tool with which to assess their effectiveness and quality. This survey was updated in 2018 to incorporate learnings from previous years about the practices that create a high-quality Club and to align with BGCA's professional development initiatives. Over 11,000 professionals from more than 2,150 Clubs took the survey in spring 2018. This data was combined with 2018 Club member survey data for analysis.

The analysis shows that all of the aforementioned practices matter for providing young people with a high-quality Club Experience. In the graph at left, the percentages show how many more members report an optimal Club Experience when professionals indicate that their Clubs and fellow Club staff are effective in these practices. For example, Clubs that report the strongest youth development practices have 41 percent more members who report an optimal overall Club Experience.

### Clubs that Implement High-Quality Practices Have More Members who Report an Optimal Club Experience

#### YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES



*Clubs that report the strongest youth development practices have 41% more members who report an optimal overall Club Experience.*

#### MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



#### CLUB ENVIRONMENT





## Enabling Clubs to Enhance Program Quality

As part of the Great Futures 2025 strategic plan, BGCA is developing a comprehensive suite of resources and professional development opportunities to support Boys & Girls Clubs in enhancing program quality. The following took place in 2018:

### Professional Development

BGCA refined and expanded two major initiatives:

- The Club Directors Academy, a three-day workshop for Club directors and other management professionals that builds leadership, management and youth development skills and equips Clubs to create action plans for continuous quality improvement.
- The Youth Development Institute, a highly interactive two- to three-day experience that models and teaches fundamental youth development practices using a research-based framework.<sup>9</sup>

### Quality Networks

BGCA field-tested a quality network approach with groups of Boys & Girls Club organizations around the country. Five networks were established and guided through a full continuous

quality improvement cycle, consisting of assess, plan and improve phases. A total of 24 Club organizations, with 118 of their sites, focused on improving program quality and the overall Club Experience for staff and youth. With technical support from a BGCA quality coach, the networks implemented the David P. Weikart Center's Youth Program Quality Intervention strategy.<sup>10</sup> The Clubs used several strategies and tools, including the Youth Program Quality Assessment, training on planning with data, developing and executing improvement plans, and improving staff coaching practice. Clubs collaborated with each other, providing support and accountability within their networks throughout the cycle.

### Program Basics Suite

Partnering with hundreds of Club professionals, BGCA developed a collection of resources for planning and delivering high-quality programming in Clubs, work that continues in 2019. The suite is comprised of:

- The BLUEprint, a guide that reviews Club history, culture, youth development fundamentals and provides practice tips and planning tools;
- Playbooks, tools designed to create an Outcome-Driven Club Experience for youth in any physical space, time of day or core program area;

- The YDToolbox mobile app, revamped with new features and content to make it even more useful for programming;
- The Planner, a new resource made up of online tools for quickly and more easily building effective Club program plans and schedules; and
- New and revised learning opportunities in different formats from Spillett Leadership University, the training system for Clubs.

### Pulse Checks

BGCA provided Clubs with a process and tools for gaining timely insights about the Club Experience between annual administrations of the NYOI surveys. Pulse checks are quick, easy and inexpensive ways of collecting data through polls, listening sessions and parent surveys. Pulse checks are also an effective youth development strategy, because they promote a culture of openness and learning and convey that Clubs care about members' experiences and want their input.

In 2019, BGCA will provide Club organizations with formal guidance and resources for establishing quality improvement systems and invest in more professional development opportunities for organizational leaders. BGCA will also continue to test and improve its measurement tools and processes to support Clubs' data-informed decision-making efforts.

# CLUB MEMBERS ACHIEVE POSITIVE OUTCOMES





## Developing Globally Competitive Graduates

High school graduation continues to be a critical milestone on the path toward greater success and well-being in adulthood. Youth who graduate from high school are more likely to achieve better financial, social and health outcomes for themselves, and make greater contributions to the U.S. economy through increased employment opportunities and spending, and fewer health care and judicial costs.<sup>11</sup>

Through the GradNation campaign and a national commitment to achieve a 90 percent high school graduation rate by 2020, America’s Promise Alliance acknowledges the essential role that positive relationships with caring adults, social-emotional learning and college and career pathways play in our efforts to ensure that all young people graduate from high school on time and with a plan for the future.<sup>12</sup> As of 2017, the national high school graduation rate reached an all-time high of 85 percent, an increase of six percentage points since the GradNation campaign began in 2010.<sup>13</sup>

Through Boys & Girls Clubs’ long-standing focus on academic success, and our priority to ensure that all Club members receive a high-quality Club Experience that builds the social-emotional skills necessary for holistic positive youth development,

we have continuously found that Club youth are more likely to demonstrate many of the behaviors for on-time high school graduation in comparison to their peers nationally. To understand the extent to which Club members are on track to achieve high school graduation within four years, BGCA examines a composite indicator made up of several other NYOI education-related indicators. Members are considered to be on track to graduate on time when they: 1) progress to the next grade level in school within at least a year of the expected timing, 2) report grades of mostly As and Bs, 3) do not skip school, and 4) expect to graduate high school.

In 2018, 57 percent of regularly attending Club members ages 9 to 18 met these criteria: They are on track for on-time high school graduation with low risk.<sup>14</sup> An additional 20 percent of members are on track with some risk, such as having poorer grades or occasionally skipping school. Altogether, 77 percent of members can be considered as being on track to graduate on time, an increase of one percentage point from members who completed NYOI in 2017.

When examined by age group, the percentage of Club members who are on track to graduate decreases as they get older. At the same time,

however, their personal expectations to graduate increase. This discrepancy shows that as young people approach the expected four-year deadline for high school graduation, more encouragement and support is needed to help them stay focused on completing the requirements necessary to move forward toward their post-secondary aspirations.

### Percentage of Members who Are on Track to Graduate Decreases with Age, Yet their Expectations for Graduation Increase



■ Expectations to Graduate ■ On Track to Graduate

76% of low-income Club members ages 12 to 18 reported earning mostly As and Bs, compared to 67% of their peers nationally.

Looking at one of the components of the on-track-to-graduate indicator, school grades, BGCA is able to examine how regularly attending Club members compare to their national peers. BGCA compared 2018 NYOI data to data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration annually since 1988. NSDUH collects data from youth aged 12 and older to understand young people’s levels of substance use and engagement in mental health services. NSDUH also collects demographic information and self-reports of academic performance and school attendance, allowing for academic success comparisons between Club youth and youth nationally.

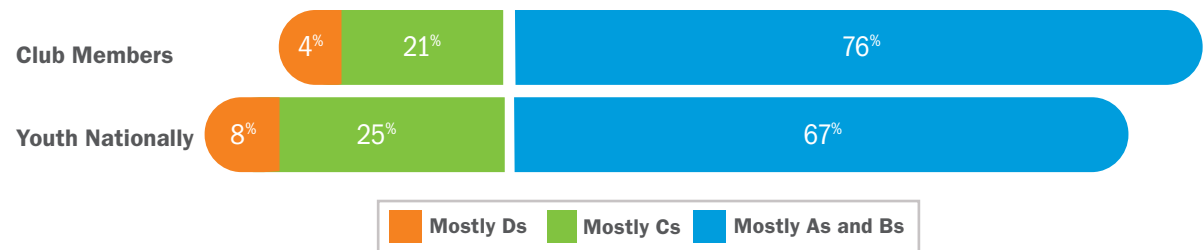
Using 2016 NSDUH data, the most current available, BGCA finds that 76 percent of low-income Club members ages 12 to 18 who attend the Club regularly reported receiving mostly As and Bs, compared to 67 percent of their peers nationally.<sup>15</sup>

One of the greatest opportunities to accelerate national high school graduation rates is to bolster the amount of academic support provided to young people of color and those who live in poverty. National trends continue to suggest that achievement gaps across race and income persist, with low-income youth, especially black and Hispanic youth, more likely to be off track.<sup>16</sup>

Our data shows that Boys & Girls Clubs help to minimize the disparities in academic performance typically seen among racial and ethnic groups nationally. While race-based differences in self-reported grades persist for Club members, the range between the highest and lowest performing group is 9 percentage points smaller than the range across racial groups for youth nationally. Clubs’ commitment to ensuring that all youth have the educational supports and resources they need to graduate on time is essential for addressing educational equity.

### Club Members Report Higher Grades than Youth Nationally

Among Low-Income Youth Ages 12 to 18





## Engaging Club Members in STEM

In addition to basic academic skills and performance, BGCA recognizes that science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education is critical to the future success of America's young people. The U.S. Department of Commerce reports that between 2014 and 2024, the number of STEM jobs will continue to grow by almost 9 percent, while non-STEM jobs will only grow 6 percent.<sup>17</sup> Yet too few elementary- middle- and high-school students are interested in and adequately prepared for STEM subjects. This is especially true for youth of color and girls.

In 2011, the National Research Council identified criteria of successful STEM education, acknowledging the critical importance of developing STEM career aspirations and readiness, especially among women and minorities.<sup>18</sup> To better understand Club members' interest in and level of preparation for STEM careers and inform new program development, BGCA worked with the PEAR (Partnerships in Education and Resilience) Institute at Harvard University in 2016 to create STEM measures for NYOI.

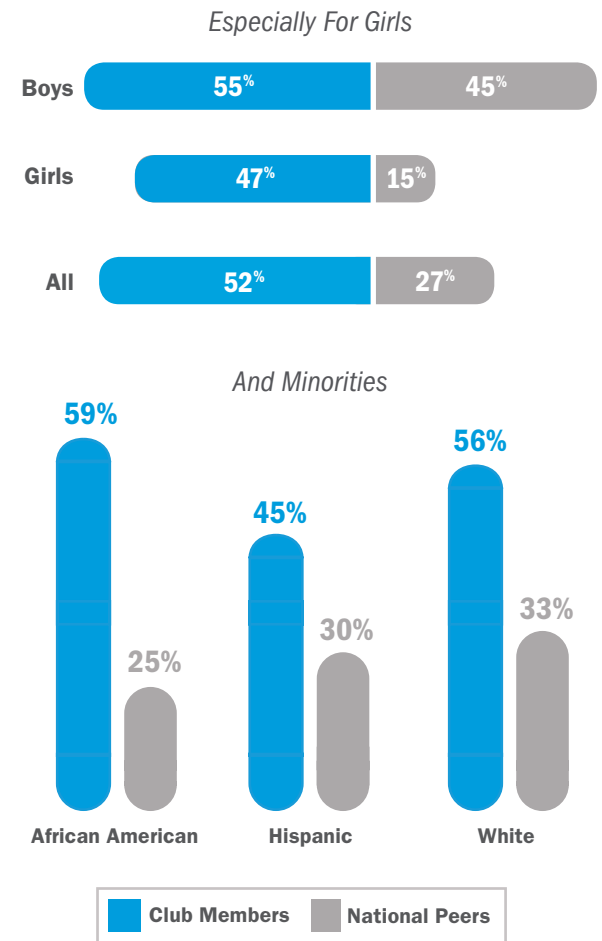
Using one of these NYOI STEM-related survey questions,<sup>19</sup> BGCA can compare data about Club members' interest in STEM careers to survey data reported by the Alliance for Science & Technology Research in America.<sup>20</sup> When examining the college and career interests of the 2018 graduating class, 12th-grade Club members are twice as likely to express an interest in a STEM career as 12th graders nationally (52 percent of 12th grade Club members and 27 percent of national 12th graders report having this interest).

More interestingly, the percentage of Club girls who express an interest in a STEM career (47 percent) is more than three times greater than that of their same-aged female peers nationally (15 percent).

Strong academic programs, coupled with mentoring opportunities and exposure to new skills and interests such as STEM, can help address challenges with school performance and attendance that impede young people's ability to graduate from high school on time. Youth who have a positive relationship with a supportive non-parental adult are more likely to build the skills and confidence they need to achieve their goals.<sup>21</sup> BGCA's Power Hour program is designed to support on-track-to-graduate behaviors by providing members with homework help, tutoring and high-yield learning activities, thus encouraging members to become self-directed learners. Power Hour was recently revised to facilitate social-emotional skills development and more closely align its activities to Common Core State Standards.<sup>22</sup>

Summer Brain Gain, BGCA's program designed to combat summer learning loss, offers six weeks of fun, theme-based activities for elementary-, middle- and high-school youth. The program features project-based learning, in which youth learn through discovery, creative expression and collaborative group work. Summer Brain Gain: READ! and Summer Brain Gain: STEM provide Clubs with options for focusing on literacy development or science, technology, engineering and math. The 2019 program will include modules focused on forensics, escape room design, animation, authenticity, entrepreneurship and music.

## Club Members in the 2018 Graduating Class Show More Interest in STEM Careers than their Peers Nationally



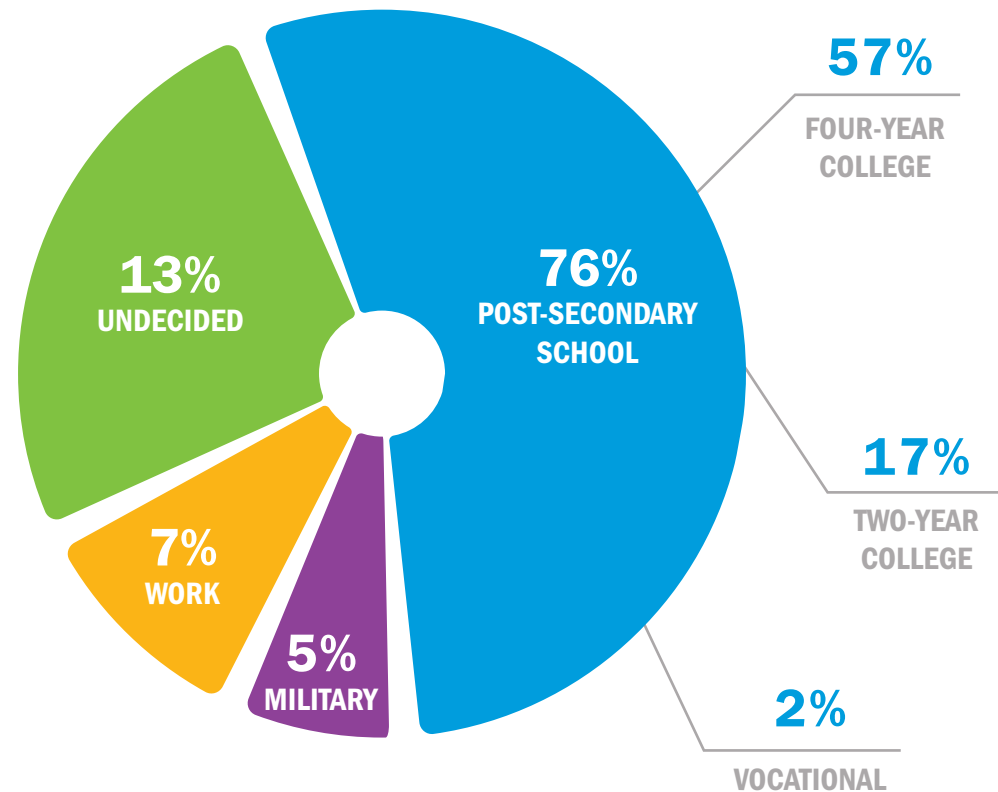
## Preparing Members for College and Careers

Boys & Girls Clubs work to ensure that members leave the Club with a plan to succeed in today's modern workforce. Clubs strive not only to help young people succeed in school, but also to equip them with the tools and knowledge to be college and career ready.

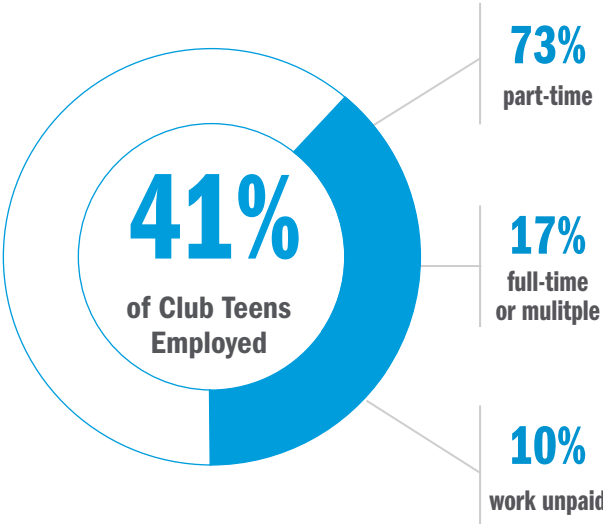
In 2018, more than three-quarters (76 percent) of high-school-aged youth who attended the Club at least once per week expressed an interest in pursuing post-secondary education. An additional 7 percent planned to pursue some type of employment opportunity after high school, 5 percent intended to join the military and 13 percent had not yet decided on their post-secondary plans.

Looking at just the graduating class, as of spring 2018, 80 percent of high school seniors had followed through on their intentions and submitted an application to a post-secondary institution. More specifically, 65 percent of these 12th graders applied to a four-year college or university, 48 percent applied to a two-year college, and 20 percent applied to a vocational or trade school, meaning more than one-third (37 percent) of high school seniors were actively pursuing multiple post-secondary education options.

Majority of High School Club Members Intend to Pursue Post-Secondary Education



### Club Teens Need Programs that Develop Workforce Readiness Skills



With this information in mind, Boys & Girls Clubs can be proactive about providing meaningful opportunities and experiences to better prepare young people for a successful next step after high school.

In 2018, less than half of 11th and 12th graders who attended the Club at least once per week reported engaging in college or career readiness activities in the Club, with older teens indicating they received greater support for college preparation than for seeking work.

The survey also provides useful insights about employment among Club teens. While 25 percent of Club high-school-age youth indicated they were unable to find work in 2018, 41 percent of Club teens reported having a job in 2018, and of those, 17 percent worked either multiple jobs or one full-time job. Yet less than one-third of 11th- and 12th-grade teens received support in finding a job (34 percent); networking with local businesses through career fairs, business tours or guest speakers (31 percent); and obtaining job skills or certification (27 percent).

This data seems to point to a great need for and interest in building workforce readiness skills for Club members.

BGCA's current approach is to embed workforce readiness activities and opportunities throughout the Club day, supporting young people of all ages to articulate and achieve their plans for the future. From the time youth enter the Club and through graduation, programs and experiences will focus on skill development and career exploration, providing opportunities for all youth to connect their passions and talents to careers, gain new skills and access real-life work experiences.



## Developing 21st Century Leaders

Boys & Girls Clubs are committed to developing productive, caring and responsible citizens. Leadership and service enable young people to leverage their strengths and passions to create meaningful change. Young people who regularly engage in voluntary community service are more likely to achieve greater academic, emotional, behavioral and economic outcomes throughout their lives.<sup>23</sup> As a result of participating in *service-learning*<sup>24</sup> opportunities, youth are more likely to build positive relationships and work collaboratively with others from diverse backgrounds, apply the knowledge and skills they gain to improve their school performance, and increase their involvement in activities that shape community and society.<sup>25</sup>

Through a high-quality Club Experience with intentional programming and practices that target social-emotional skill development, Boys & Girls Clubs build the next generation of leaders by providing transformative experiences that promote youth self-leadership, empathy and community service.

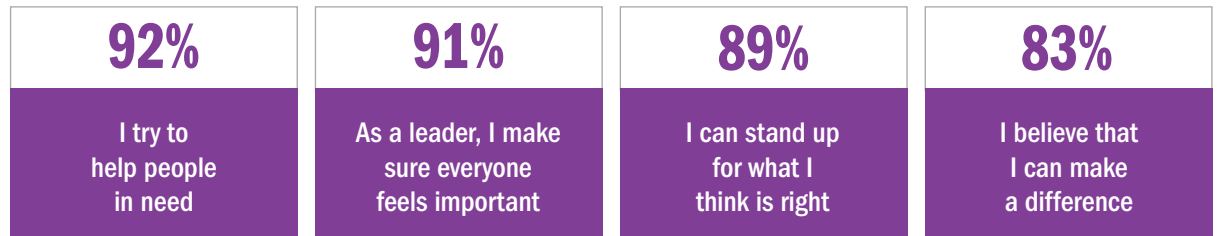
To better understand Club members' attitudes related to good character and citizenship, the NYOI survey examines members' leadership skills, as measured by leadership with self,

leadership with others, and leadership within the community.<sup>26</sup> The results show that 92 percent try to help when they see people in need, 89 percent stand up for what they think is right, 83 percent believe they can make a difference in their community, and 82 percent have taken action to help people in their community. Similarly to previous years, 91 percent of members reported that when they are the leader of a group, they make sure everyone feels important.

In 2018, Club youth reported their levels of volunteering over the past year. The data show that 75 percent of regularly attending members volunteered in their Club, school, neighborhood or community at least once in the previous 12 months, with 41 percent of those volunteering at least once per month.<sup>27</sup>

These findings are especially positive when we compare Club teens to teens nationally who participate in the Monitoring the Future study (MTF). Conducted by the University of Michigan annually since 1975, MTF examines the behaviors, attitudes and values of U.S. students in eighth, 10th and 12th grades. While the survey content may change slightly each year in response to current trends and experiences of secondary students, MTF continually focuses on academic behaviors, healthy habits and community engagement. The MTF questions provide a valuable comparison point for NYOI survey items. In this report, BGCA used 2016 MTF data for eighth-grade, 10th-grade and 12th-grade comparisons, the most current data available.<sup>28</sup>

### Club Member Leadership Strengths





As shown below, NYOI and MTF data demonstrate that the rate of teens volunteering at least once a month increases with age. This makes sense given volunteering and community service requirements for high school graduation. More importantly, the data show that regularly attending Club members in eighth, 10th and 12th grades who completed the 2018 NYOI survey<sup>29</sup> have significantly higher volunteering rates than their same-grade peers nationally. Across all grade levels, almost twice as many Club members report that they volunteer at least monthly than their peers nationally.

These results speak to the benefit of Clubs' fundamental youth development work, as well as specific programs such as Torch Club, for youth ages 11 to 13, and Keystone Club, for teens

age 14 and older. These small-group programs provide members with the consistent guidance of adult advisors and age-appropriate activities to develop critical character and leadership skills. Both programs focus on integrating service and leadership development into academic plans, career exploration, and health and wellness activities to promote members' overall success.

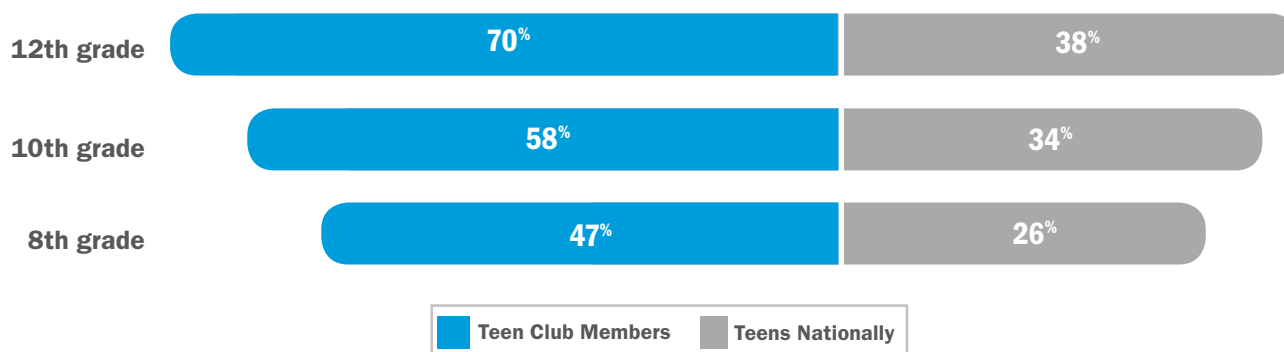
The demand for strong character and leadership skills is increasing in classrooms and workplaces. Being able to think critically, communicate effectively and collaborate well are necessary skills for young people to navigate the challenges of adolescence and adulthood.<sup>30</sup>

In response to the growing need for 21st century leaders, BGCA offers the Youth of the Year suite

of programs for Club youth ages 6 to 18. Junior Youth of the Year offers hands-on experience for members ages 10 to 13 to develop their leadership skills. The Youth of the Month program recognizes members for their leadership roles in the Club. Youth of the Year extends teens' opportunities for leadership in their communities, encouraging them to explore identity, passion, personal branding, voice, teamwork and goal setting as they prepare for the selection process. With the component of a leadership badge on the MyFuture digital platform, the suite exposes Club youth to online opportunities, helping them build leadership skills that support their academic, career and life goals.

### More Club Teens Volunteer at Least Monthly Compared to Teens Nationally

*More Teens Serve as They Get Older*





## Developing a Healthier Generation

The most effective way to build a healthier generation of young people is to focus on developing healthy habits during childhood, instead of trying to correct unhealthy behaviors as youth get older.<sup>31</sup> Using a whole child approach to positive youth development, the most productive environments attend to physical health and nutrition, social-emotional skill development and the prevention of risk behaviors to promote healthy outcomes for youth.<sup>32</sup> Research shows that when this comprehensive approach to youth well-being is taken, young people are not only physically and mentally healthier, but also more likely to do well in school and have more positive relationships with peers and adults.<sup>33</sup>

### Promoting Physical Well-Being

One-third of all young people in the United States are overweight or obese.<sup>34</sup> The overall obesity rate among children ages 2 to 19 has held steady at 17 percent for almost a decade, with the prevalence of obesity increasing as children get older.<sup>35</sup> The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, adopted by the American Academy of Pediatrics, recommend that youth participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 60 minutes per day.<sup>36</sup>

Research indicates, however, that levels of physical activity among youth fall short of this

recommendation, and girls are even more likely to fall short than boys.<sup>37</sup> In fact, only 35 percent of high-school-aged boys meet this recommendation, nearly double the proportion of girls (18 percent) who report engaging in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 60 minutes per day. Across both genders, levels of daily physical activity decline as youth age. By 12th grade, only about 1 in 6 girls is participating in the recommended amount of daily physical activity.

With young people losing opportunities for physical education and recess in school,<sup>38</sup> Boys & Girls Clubs provide a safe space to play and take part in team sports. Clubs offer fun, creative ways for youth of all skill and fitness levels to get moving.

To understand the positive impact that Club participation has on youth, each year BGCA compares NYOI member survey data to data from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS). The YRBSS is a national survey administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that monitors health-risk behaviors among youth and young adults.

The survey is administered every two years to students in sixth through 12th grades in their school classrooms. The NYOI member survey

includes questions from the YRBSS. In this report, BGCA used 2017 YRBSS data collected from high-school-aged youth, the most current available.<sup>39</sup>

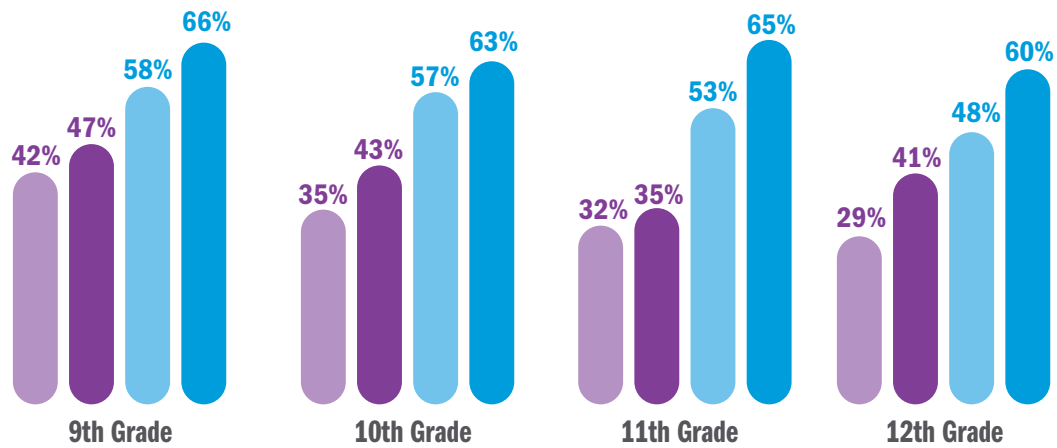
Both NYOI and YRBSS data continue to show that engagement in daily physical activity is lower for girls and declines as youth get older. While all Club members would benefit from greater levels of physical activity, the data shows that regularly attending Club members report higher levels of daily physical activity than their peers nationally.

BGCA continues to prioritize and support sports league programs through the ALL STARS organized sports program to increase the number of female participants by emphasizing peer-to-peer recruitment and increasing the number of female coaches. In 2017, 69,000 girls participated in ALL STARS, compared to 20,000 girl participants in 2016.

In addition to physical exercise recommendations, the U.S. Department of Agriculture also suggests that youth consume at least three vegetables and two fruits on a daily basis.<sup>40</sup> Comparisons between NYOI and YRBSS show that more than twice as many Club members consume the daily recommended amount of vegetables and fruits than their peers nationally.

**More Club Members Participate in Daily Physical Activity than Youth Nationally**

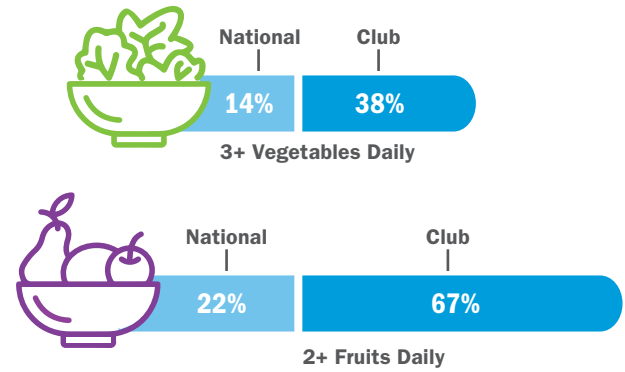
*Girls and Older Teens Need Additional Support*



Girls Nationally Club Girls Boys Nationally Club Boys

Higher percentages of Club girls and boys report being physically active every day than their counterparts nationally.

**Club Members Are More Likely to Consume Recommended Daily Amount of Fruits and Vegetables**



BGCA also remains dedicated to helping more Clubs enroll in federal food assistance programs so that they can serve more healthy meals and snacks to youth. In 2017, 91 percent of Club sites provided 88 million snacks and meals at no cost to members, a 10 percent increase in the number of snacks and meals served over the previous year.



## Promoting Social-Emotional Well-Being

**As BGCA and Clubs expand the definition of well-being to include physical and emotional well-being, there is an increasing emphasis on enhancing young people's social-emotional skills. Studies show that people who develop healthy and adaptive social-emotional skills during childhood are more likely to make positive decisions regarding alcohol, illegal substances and criminal activity, as well as avoid physical and mental health challenges later in life.<sup>41</sup>**

A focus on social-emotional well-being becomes even more imperative when we acknowledge the increasing stress and pressures today's youth face. With national attention on rising levels

of bullying and cyberbullying, especially toward targeted groups such as LGBTQ youth, there is an even greater need to equip young people with the social-emotional skills needed to cope with challenges.

In 2018, 15 percent of high-school-aged Club youth reported being bullied at school, and 9 percent reported experiencing cyberbullying. While these statistics are slightly lower than national reports of school bullying (20 percent) and online bullying (15 percent) among high school students,<sup>42</sup> more than two-thirds of Club teens shared that when something goes wrong in their life, they can't stop worrying (75 percent) and try to keep others from finding out (69 percent).<sup>43</sup>

The majority of members report having strong social-emotional skills such as building relationships and identifying emotions.



## Club Members Report Having Strong Social-Emotional Skills



94%

self  
efficacy

There are  
many things  
I can do well



88%

relationship  
building

I have at least one friend  
who helps me when I'm  
having a hard time



80%

identify  
emotions

I understand how  
my feelings  
influence how I act



68%

impulse  
control

I think carefully  
about what I say  
before I speak



79%

problem  
solving

I think about what  
might happen before  
making a decision

In 2018, BGCA piloted a new NYOI module to better understand the social-emotional competencies and needs of youth.<sup>44</sup> Club members responded to questions regarding emotion identification and impulse control, relationship building and empathy, and self-efficacy and problem solving, all to better understand the extent to which Club youth are prepared to effectively and responsibly respond to the opportunities and challenges they face in their daily lives.<sup>45</sup> Across all domains, the majority of Club members report high levels of social-emotional skills.

Following up on previous guides and toolkits developed to promote staff practices that enhance social-emotional skills and positive Club climate, BGCA published additional resources in 2018 that focus more on programs and activities for youth to develop social-emotional resilience. A new service-learning guide, *Teens Take the Lead*, aligns with the Million Members, Million Hours of Service initiative and provides opportunities for youth to experience first-hand how they can play a role in achieving positive community change through service.

The 2018-19 National Keystone Project guide encourages Keystone Club members to explore the topic of emotional wellness with their peers and design a service-learning project to support emotional well-being for themselves and their community.

Clubs can access these resources on BGCA's internal website for Club professionals and volunteers.

## Avoiding Risky Behaviors

Club members in ninth through 12th grade report doing better than the YRBSS national average on key health-risk behavior measures, including abstention from alcohol, marijuana and cigarette use. In response to rising levels of opioid and prescription pill use, and vaping and e-cigarette use, these additional questions were examined to understand the extent to which Club youth are affected. High-school age Club youth continue to report lower levels of alcohol, cigarette and drug use when compared to their peers nationally.

BGCA compared regularly attending Club teens and teens nationally by grade level. Across almost all health-risk behavior indicators, with each successive grade, the difference between Club members' abstention rates and those of YRBSS respondents increased. In other words, teens who stay connected to the Club as they get older seem better able to resist engaging in high-risk behaviors than their counterparts nationally at the same ages.

The charts on the next page compare Club high-school-age respondents in the 2018 NYOI survey to respondents in the CDC's 2017 YRBSS by grade level on lifetime abstention from health-risk behaviors (e.g., "During your life, on how many days have you had at least one drink of alcohol?"). Looking across the charts, as high-school youth get older, they are less likely to abstain

from health-risk behaviors. Club members, however, report higher levels of abstention, and the decrease in their abstention rates is much smaller than it is for youth nationally.

For example, as youth progress from ninth grade to 12th grade, the percentage who report they abstain from alcohol decreases, with Club youth reporting greater levels of alcohol abstention than their peers nationally. The difference between Club members and YRBSS youth widens with each successive grade, and by 12th grade there is a 39-percentage-point difference between the two groups.<sup>46</sup>

This pattern is observed across all risky behaviors examined, such that by 12th grade, Club members report higher rates of lifetime abstention from prescription pill use (a 12-percentage-point difference), cigarette use (a 22-percentage-point difference), sexual intercourse (a 17-percentage-point difference), marijuana use (a 20-percentage-point difference) and electronic vapor product use (a 28-percentage-point difference), compared to their peers nationally.

For several years, BGCA has observed this pattern of widening differences in health-risk behavior abstention rates as Club members and youth nationally progress through high school. Other external and BGCA research

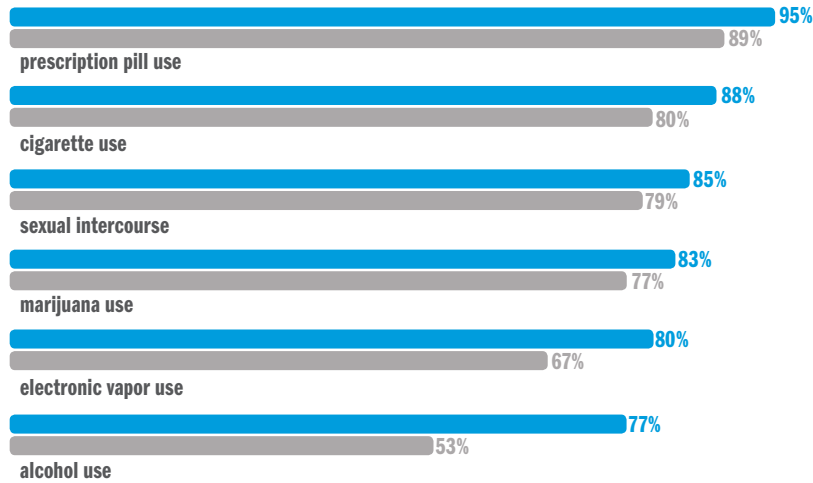
has found that participation in quality after-school programming leads to less involvement in health-risk behaviors, among other positive outcomes.<sup>47</sup> Our NYOI data suggests that members who stay involved with their Clubs through their teen years are reaping some of those benefits.

For this reason, BGCA continues to evolve its risk-behavior prevention programs, such as SMART Moves, as well as develop resources like the *Opioid and Substance Use Prevention* resource guide, providing Clubs with effective strategies to combat substance use. In 2018, BGCA secured \$1.25 million from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs for opioid and substance use prevention programs. Integrating social-emotional and trauma-informed approaches, programs will continue to offer staff practices and resources to reduce risk factors for addiction and promote social-emotional resilience in youth.

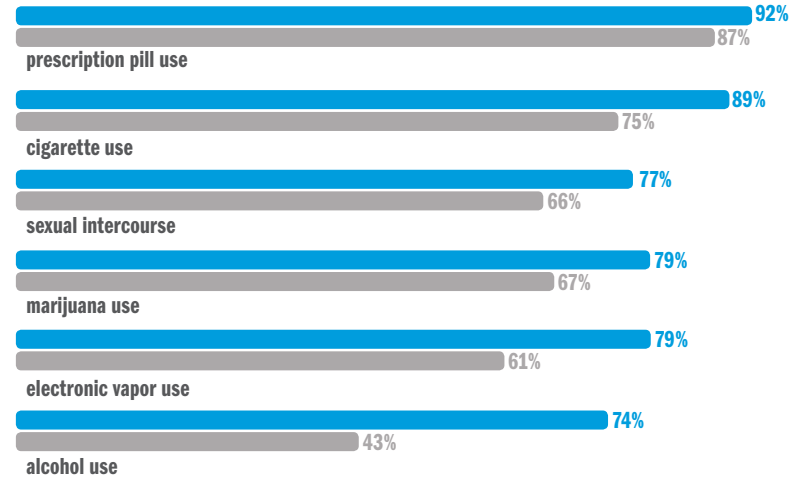
## Club Teens More Likely to Abstain from Health-Risk Behaviors in Comparison to Teens Nationally

*The Difference Is Larger for Older Teens*

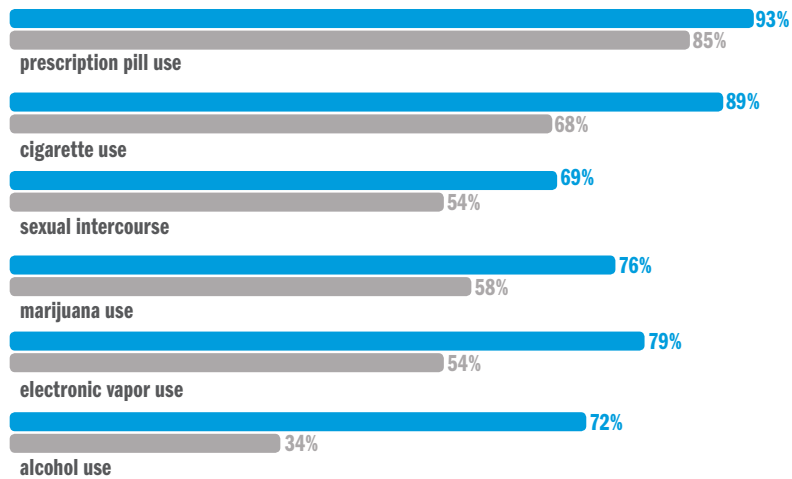
### Lifetime Abstention Behaviors Among 9th Graders



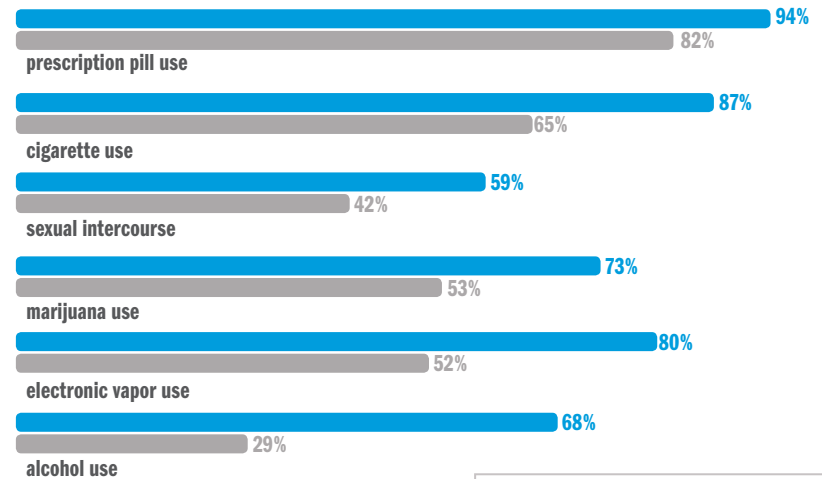
### Lifetime Abstention Behaviors Among 10th Graders



### Lifetime Abstention Behaviors Among 11th Graders



### Lifetime Abstention Behaviors Among 12th Graders



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM BGCA EVALUATIONS





## **BGCA complements its youth outcome measurement efforts with formal, third-party evaluations and other types of studies to inform the development, implementation and enhancement of Club programs and services and gauge their impact with additional empirical rigor.**

BGCA takes a research-informed approach to developing the programs it makes available to Boys & Girls Clubs. Such projects typically begin with a review of the relevant professional literature, to ensure BGCA is using the best, up-to-date research to determine the appropriate content to cover, but also to create an instructional design that employs the most effective strategies to facilitate young people's learning and skill development.

BGCA often works with external evaluators to study new or revised programs as they are field-tested. The purpose of these *formative* studies is to strengthen the program being studied.<sup>48</sup> Such studies may be designed with process and outcome components, meaning primarily they examine what it takes for Clubs to implement the programs effectively, but they also explore in preliminary ways to what extent the programs produce the desired youth outcomes. BGCA uses the insights from these studies to refine the instructional design and content of the programs and offer Clubs practical guidance on

implementation fidelity. Recently, BGCA partnered with external evaluators to conduct formative studies of the Computer Science Pathway and Youth Arts Initiative.

### **Insights from the Computer Science Pathway Evaluation**

The Computer Science Pathway includes several programs designed to build young people's critical-thinking, problem-solving and coding skills: Hour of Code, which covers basic computer science concepts; CS Unplugged, which more deeply explores computer science concepts without using electronic devices; and App Lab, in which youth build apps for Android mobile devices. BGCA engaged Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) in 2016 to conduct a formative evaluation of the pilot test of Hour of Code and CS Unplugged in 23 Boys & Girls Clubs. EDC measured youth outcomes, but more importantly, it collaborated with BGCA to develop a logic model and indicators for the pathway, as well as a longer-term evaluation strategy.<sup>49</sup>

In 2017, EDC conducted another formative evaluation of the implementation of Hour of Code, CS Unplugged and App Lab at 30 Boys & Girls Clubs.<sup>50</sup> The study found that:

- Youth participants reported an increased interest in exploring computer science and an increased understanding of computer science concepts after completing App Lab.

- Staff reported they needed more hands-on training and time to prepare to facilitate App Lab.

EDC made recommendations for increasing youth participation year-round in the pathway, deepening youth engagement in App Lab, and strengthening training and resource-sharing opportunities to enable staff to implement the programs more effectively.

### **Insights from the Youth Arts Initiative Evaluation**

BGCA's Youth Arts Initiative (YAI), funded by the Wallace Foundation, seeks to learn whether youth-serving organizations with generalist, multidisciplinary programming like Boys & Girls Clubs can effectively deliver otherwise inaccessible high-quality arts programs to low-income urban "tweens" in an after-school setting. YAI is grounded in 10 previously researched quality and youth development principles for successful teen arts programs.<sup>51</sup>

The YAI pilot test began in 2014 in three Club organizations in Minnesota and Wisconsin, with six sites and over 900 youth ages 10 to 14 participating in arts exposure and skill-development classes focused on particular art forms and taught by professional artists hired by the Clubs. The study found that youth-serving organizations not primarily focused on the arts

can implement a high-quality arts program; however, implementation requirements created some additional challenges for leadership, operations, community partnerships, and resource allocation.<sup>52</sup>

To examine YAI sustainability, scalability and outcomes for youth, a subsequent evaluation took place from fall 2014 to fall 2016 with more than 1,280 Club participants. The study found that:

- Tweens were interested in programs with high-quality features such as dedicated spaces, professional teaching artists, near-professional equipment, and high-profile culminating events or experiences; these attracted attention in the Club and made arts programming visible.
- Youth participation and retention was high in these challenging arts programs that nurtured young people's creative interests.
- Youth, parents and staff reported many benefits from regular YAI involvement, such as increased Club attendance and development of social-emotional skills as well as technical art skills. They also reported that YAI added value to their Club Experience overall.

The research yielded several recommendations for out-of-school-time providers that want to attract and engage tweens in high-quality arts programming.<sup>53</sup>

## From Research-Informed to Evidence-Based

Formative evaluations such as those completed for the Computer Science Pathway and the Youth Arts Initiative are critical during program development and field-testing. But to show definitively that programs achieve their intended outcomes, different evaluation strategies and a higher level of rigor are required. *Summative* or *outcome* evaluations are conducted to determine a program's overall effectiveness based on its success in achieving its outcomes. They are particularly important in deciding whether a program should be continued.<sup>54</sup>

Summative evaluations usually have an *experimental* or a *quasi-experimental* design. In an experimental design, people are randomly assigned to either the treatment group, which participates in the program, or the control group, which does not, and the outcomes of these groups are compared. This helps ensure that any observed differences in outcomes between the two groups are the result of the program and not other factors. A quasi-experimental design is sometimes used when randomization is not possible. Program participants are compared to a group of people similar to the program participants. Because there may be unobserved differences between the two groups, evaluators cannot conclude with the same certainty that the program was responsible for the impacts observed.<sup>55</sup>



A program is considered to be *evidence-based* when:

- The program has been evaluated using an experimental design or a rigorous quasi-experimental design;
- The evaluation findings show that the program produces the expected positive results; and
- The results can be attributed to the program, rather than to other factors.

BGCA has commissioned studies with this level of rigor for certain programs. Notably, the educational enhancement program Project Learn underwent a 30-month quasi-experimental evaluation in the late 1990s, and the summer learning program Summer Brain Gain was evaluated in a randomized control trial in 2015.

The key findings of these program evaluations are summarized later in this section.

Some evaluations undergo additional scrutiny through peer review by experts in the field, which usually happens when the evaluation is submitted for publication in a professional journal, or by federal agencies or respected research organizations that have created registries listing effective programs.<sup>56</sup> For example, *Prevention Science* published an article about the Project Learn evaluation in 2000, and the National Institute of Justice accepted the program into its CrimeSolutions.gov registry with a Promising Practice designation.<sup>57</sup>

BGCA strives to provide Boys & Girls Clubs with high-quality programs that enable youth to build skills and achieve positive outcomes, and remains committed to using different types of evaluation to ensure their effectiveness and demonstrate their impact. Following are key findings from some of BGCA's most important studies over the past two decades.

## National Economic Impact Study

BGCA's 2015 national return-on-investment study shows that Boys & Girls Club services and programs produce significant, lasting value for youth, families and their communities.<sup>58</sup>

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

greatest benefits are from Club members' improved grades and reduced alcohol use and their parents' earnings.

- Clubs spend \$1.64 billion annually on operating costs, resulting in \$15.7 billion in lifetime benefits to youth, families and communities.
- Boys & Girls Clubs help increase the earning power of parents, as well as of youth when they become adults.
- Boys & Girls Clubs also contribute to major societal savings by helping to prevent costly expenditures for health care, public assistance programs, and criminal justice system involvement.

In 2018, the same researchers completed a follow-up study for BGCA to estimate the additional economic impact of improving the Club Experience for members. The study found that for every member whose Club Experience improves from the needs improvement category to the optimal category, society realizes an estimated lifetime economic impact of \$8,037.



## Summer Brain Gain

Summer Brain Gain is designed to promote and sustain learning in youth of all ages during the summer. The 2015 randomized control trial of Summer Brain Gain's modules for elementary-school youth found<sup>59</sup>:



- Program participants experienced no significant losses in early literacy, math or reading. This is encouraging, because research indicates that most youth lose about two months of grade-level equivalency in math skills over the summer, and low-income youth lose more than two months in reading achievement.<sup>60</sup>
- Program participants in fourth and fifth grades had notably higher gains in math than control group youth. Participants in first through third grades had slightly greater gains in early literacy than control group youth. None of these gains, however, were statistically significant.
- The study did not find that the curriculum had a demonstrable impact on participants' 21st century skills or interest in reading.



## Money Matters: Make It Count

Club youth who completed this program, which builds the financial management skills of members ages 13 to 18, had a<sup>61</sup>:

- 35%** | average increase in their saving and investing smarts
- 27%** | average increase in their credit and debt savviness
- 17%** | average increase in their budgeting and living-within-means knowledge
- 16%** | average increase in their college planning knowledge

Among participants with spending money, more of them reported starting to save money (79 percent, an increase of 11 percent) and sticking to a budget plan (43 percent, an increase of 8 percent), once they completed the program.



## Triple Play: A Game Plan for the Mind, Body and Soul

Participants in the Triple Play family of programs, which strive to improve the overall health of members ages 6 to 18<sup>62</sup>:

### Increased time spent engaging in physical activity

- 35 percent engaged in vigorous activity for an hour or more at least five times per week by the end of the study (an increase of 10 percentage points), compared to no change among the control group youth

### Improved their eating habits

- 51 percent made improvements to their eating habits, compared to only 21 percent of control group youth
- 52 percent ate breakfast more often by the end of the study, compared to 38 percent of control group youth

### Improved their relationships with peers

- 44 percent improved peer interactions by the end of the study, compared with 33 percent of control group youth



## Making Every Day Count: Boys & Girls Clubs' Role in Promoting Positive Outcomes for Teens

This study examined the overall impact of Clubs on adolescents during the critical transition from middle to high school. Young teens were more likely to demonstrate more positive outcomes when they attended the Club at least 52 times per year. The positive effects were greater when they attended at least 104 times per year. These young teens were more likely to report<sup>63</sup>:

### Academic Success

- Decreased number of times skipping school
- Increased academic confidence
- Increased school effort

### Good Character and Citizenship

- Higher levels of community service involvement
- Increased levels of integrity (knowing right from wrong)
- Decreased levels of shyness
- Decreased levels of aggression

### Healthy Lifestyles

- Increased levels of future connectedness (how much youth think about their future and how their current activities help them prepare for it)

- Decreased numbers of negative peers as friends
- Decreased number of times stopped by the police
- Lower likelihood of initiation of carrying a weapon, smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana and sexual intercourse

## Gang Prevention/Intervention Through Targeted Outreach

Compared to their peers, high-risk and gang-involved youth with more frequent participation in BGCA's prevention and intervention programs experienced<sup>64</sup>:

- Less contact with the juvenile justice system
- Fewer delinquent behaviors (stealing less, less likely to start smoking marijuana)
- Higher grades
- Greater expectations of graduating from high school or receiving a GED
- More positive social relationships with peers and adults as well as productive use of out-of-school time
- Disengagement from gang-associated behaviors and peers



## Project Learn

Participants in this Club-wide program, which builds on the skills and knowledge youth learn at school, had significantly better academic outcomes than Club youth who did not participate in Project Learn and non-Club youth<sup>65</sup>:

- 11 percent increase in overall GPA
- 13 percent increase in math GPA
- 22 percent increase in spelling GPA
- 5 percent increase in reading GPA
- 66 percent decrease in number of days absent from school
- 87 percent fewer missed school days when compared with non-Club youth

# ABOUT BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA



**Boys & Girls Clubs provide children and teens with a safe, affordable place during critical out-of-school time. They offer life-changing programs and services to youth across the nation and on U.S. military installations worldwide.**

### **Mission**

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

### **Vision**

Provide a world-class Club Experience that assures success is within reach of every young person who enters our doors, with all members on track to graduate from high school with a plan for the future, demonstrating good character and citizenship, and living a healthy lifestyle.

### **Our Scope**

4,300 Clubs are located in schools, public housing, on Native lands, in rural areas and inner cities – wherever youth need us most.

**57%**  
of Club members are **eligible for free- or reduced-price school lunches**, an important indicator of low-income status, compared to 52% of public school students nationally.<sup>66</sup>

On a typical day,  
**458,000**  
children and teens attend a Boys & Girls Club.

Clubs serve  
**4.3 million**  
young people, a diverse population ranging from  
**ages 6 to 18.**

**413,000**  
adult staff and volunteers work to **fulfill our youth development mission** and strengthen the Boys & Girls Club affiliates in our federation.





# Endnotes

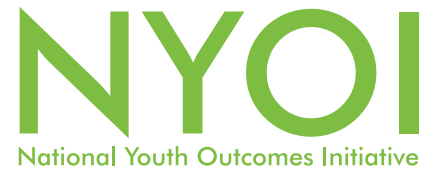
- 1 Mannes, M.; Lewis, S. and Streit, K. (April 2005). *Deepening Impact through Quality Youth Development Strategies and Practices*, (Minneapolis, Minn.: Search Institute).
- 2 *Optimal* means that the Club environment is consistently providing the Club member with positive experiences in a specific area, experiences that are consistent with positive youth development and what young people need. *Fair* means that the member's responses fall somewhere in the middle. A child might describe it as "fine" or "just okay." It is not consistently good, nor is it clearly negative; it has room for improvement. *Needs Improvement* means that the member's responses reflect an experience that was overall negative, or strongly lacking in certain areas. There is clearly room for growth.
- 3 Regression is a method of statistical analysis used to evaluate the strength of relationships between variables. This type of analysis allows researchers to examine how strongly a specific variable may be associated with a particular effect by factoring out other variables that might also influence the effect. Researchers can then calculate a level of statistical significance for associations that they find; that is, they can rule out with some degree of confidence whether a particular finding occurred by chance. The level of statistical significance is noted with a p value; a p value of less than 1 percent ( $p < 0.01$ ) is considered a very strong level of statistical significance, and a p value of less than 5 percent ( $p < 0.05$ ) is considered a strong level. For those relationships that were statistically significant and meaningful, follow-up comparisons were made to quantify the group differences in simpler "more likely to" or "less likely to" percentage terms.
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- 5 Thapa, A.; Cohen, J.; Guffey, S. and Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). "A Review of School Climate Research," *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 83, No. 3, pp. 357-385, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258183185\\_A\\_Review\\_of\\_School\\_Climate\\_Research](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258183185_A_Review_of_School_Climate_Research).
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- 8 Benson, P. L. (2006). *All Kids Are Our Kids: What Communities Must Do to Raise Caring and Responsible Children and Adolescents*, Second Edition (San Francisco: Wiley).
- 9 The content of the Youth Development Institutes is based on training content from the David P. Weikart Center's Youth Program Quality Intervention.
- 10 David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (2012). *Continuous Quality Improvement in Afterschool Settings: Impact Findings from the Youth Program Intervention Study*, <http://cypq.org/ypqi>.
- 11 Alliance for Excellent Education (2018). "The Graduation Effect: Every Student's Potential to Influence a Community, a State, and the Nation," <https://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Graduation-Effect-OnePager-FINAL.pdf>.
- 12 America's Promise Alliance (2018). "About the GradNation Campaign," <http://gradnation.americaspromise.org/about>.
- 13 National Center for Education Statistics (2019). "Table 1. Public High School 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR), by Race/Ethnicity and Selected Demographic Characteristics for the United States, the 50 States, and the District of Columbia: School Year 2016–17," Common Core of Data, [https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR\\_RE\\_and\\_characteristics\\_2016-17.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_RE_and_characteristics_2016-17.asp).
- 14 The sample size for regularly attending Club members ages 9 to 18 who were included in the on-track-to-graduate analysis was 50,174.
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- 16 McFarland, J.; Hussar, B.; Wang, X. et al. (2018). *The Condition of Education 2018*, NCES 2018-144 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics), <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2018144>.
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- 18 National Research Council (2011). *Successful K-12 STEM Education: Identifying Effective Approaches in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics* (Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press), <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/13158/successful-k-12-stem-education-identifying-effective-approaches-in-science>.
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