BOYS & GIRLS CLUB MOVEMENT

GREAT FUTURES 2025

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

OUR 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 GREAT FUTURES 2025 PURPOSE
Inspire and empower Club youth to achieve success, and champion opportunities for all young people in America.
A Call to Action on Behalf of America’s Youth

Since the founding of our great Movement in 1860, Clubs have been a vital part of the American fabric, shaping, changing and saving lives in service to young people, their families and our nation. Today’s Boys & Girls Clubs stand proudly on the shoulders of generations of Club leaders, staff, volunteers and members who have valiantly positioned our Movement to have an even greater impact — a transformational impact — at the very time America most needs us to do so.

Six years ago, the Great Futures Impact Plan provided a road map for the Movement to move from outcome-intended to outcome-driven. Working together, we have achieved great success with the plan, which will end in 2017. It is now time to chart the next phase of our Movement, with Great Futures 2025. The new plan was developed by the National Planning Commission, made up of local Club and board leaders, and refined based on feedback received through dozens of Area Council town hall meetings and similar opportunities at regional leadership conferences over the last 24 months.

The plan focuses on providing transformational experiences and opportunities for America’s kids and teens by restoring the foundational tenets of equality and opportunity — a belief that all young people deserve an equal shot at success and the American Dream. Unfortunately, that dream — the promise that through hard work and education, any American can succeed — is becoming harder to realize.

Throughout our storied history, our Movement — like our country — has seen so much. We’ve been a safe haven for those needing help during times of unrest, have provided comfort in times of grief, and have rebuilt communities destroyed by acts of God and man. We’ve served youth before the Civil War and through two World Wars. Our mission transcends politics, partisanship and policy, and nothing will stand in our way as we continue to serve as the leading voice and advocate for all young people in this country.

By working together again, in shared commitment to excellence on behalf of our nation’s children, we can continue this great tradition. We can make Great Futures possible for our nation’s youth.

In service to our youth, our communities and our nation,

Myron Gray
Chairman, Board of Governors

Jim Clark
President and CEO
Introduction

The history of the Boys & Girls Club Movement dates back to 1860, when three women created the Dashaway Club to serve boys in their community of Hartford, Connecticut. Since then, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to provide a safe and caring environment that enables young people to reach their full potential. In 1906, when 53 Clubs came together to form Federated Boys Club, which would later evolve into Boys & Girls Clubs of America, it was to enable Clubs to drive greater impact, and strengthen their ability to deliver on the mission and serve youth in America. Today, some 4,300 Clubs serve nearly 4 million boys and girls in communities across America and on U.S. military installations worldwide. For more than 150 years, our Movement has faithfully fulfilled our mission: to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

Throughout our history, it is has been our shared belief that every young person deserves an equal chance to pursue the American Dream. As the landscape of this country and the profession of youth development has progressed, Boys & Girls Clubs of America has evolved to meet the ever-changing needs of youth and communities. But our commitment to our mission and the young people of America has never wavered.

As we look to the future, it is our duty and responsibility to ensure that we continue to be relevant in the national out-of-school-time space. We must do everything possible to ensure America’s youth have opportunities outside of school and home that promote their healthy development and enable them to succeed as adults.

GREAT FUTURES IMPACT PLAN

The Great Futures Impact Plan, introduced six years ago, served as the road map for our Movement to move from outcome-intended to outcome-driven. It elevated the critical role of Boys & Girls Clubs in creating measurable, life-changing impact for the youth we serve. It defined a theory of change for Boys & Girls Clubs, the Formula for Impact, which identifies key components of the Club Experience and aligns our outcomes to three priority areas: Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles.

The plan called for the development of the National Youth Outcomes Initiative to demonstrate impact and enable us to identify opportunities to increase outcomes.

Additionally, the plan produced a vision statement that continues to express our shared aspirations: to 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.

The National Youth Outcomes Initiative

In conjunction with the Great Futures Impact Plan, BGCA launched the National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI) in 2011. NYOI is grounded in the Formula for Impact and was built to measure the impact of Clubs using a common set of research-informed indicators. NYOI is a tremendous asset to demonstrate impact, support advocacy and resource development, and, most importantly, gain insights to improve performance and make a bigger impact on our Club members.

NYOI’s primary tool for gathering outcomes data is a survey administered to Club members each spring. While there is no one perfect measurement tool, the survey was designed in collaboration with well-respected research partners and was validated in Clubs with Club members. NYOI is a key tool that provides information to help Clubs improve services to youth.

BGCA continues to make strategic changes and additions to the NYOI member survey as needed to deepen our understanding of how Club members are faring in critical areas.
Overview

The steps we have taken in the last six years have provided the insights needed to expand and increase the difference Clubs make for each member. Armed with this information, we’re better equipped for Clubs to effect significantly greater impact on youth, communities and our country.

ROAD TO 2025
Throughout 2015 and 2016, a National Planning Commission, comprised of local Club executives and board leaders on the National Area Council Committee and the President’s Advisory Council, convened to establish a direction for the Boys & Girls Club Movement through 2025. They concluded that the very fabric of the American Dream is at risk. The future stability and success of our nation lies in the balance. Boys & Girls Clubs are the only organization with the scale, experience and capacity to lead a transformative change in the opportunity equation for America’s youth.

Achieving this bold vision requires looking beyond just the next few years and establishing a bold plan. It requires aggressive action to broaden the role Boys & Girls Clubs play across the nation to enable more youth to succeed. It requires a collective, collaborative call to action to focus on quality, advocacy, and, ultimately, growth, and continuing to customize services to meet the needs of the diverse communities served. It also requires that the national organization focus on providing the right tools, training, measurement, resources and coordination to enable national impact.

The 2025 strategic direction has been validated and shaped in partnership with Clubs through critical input, dialogue and feedback through town halls at Area Council meetings across the country; general sessions, learning teams and feedback discussions at regional leadership conferences; a major metro conference with more than 80 Club leaders and board members; and a planning retreat with 20 emerging leaders within the Movement. The direction has been informed by focus groups with local board members, through insight and input provided via an online community, and a white paper.

GREATER OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH
The resulting direction builds on our past success to propel our Movement forward. Great Futures 2025 is built upon research and data analysis that confirmed what we knew to be true from practical experience: a positive Club Experience leads to life-changing outcomes for youth.

A strong Club Experience drives positive outcomes in all three priority outcome areas: Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles. It may also help increase retention of members through their teen years. It stands to reason that the more positive the Club Experience, the more likely it is that a member will remain engaged through the critical tween and teen years, noted as a traditional drop-off period for membership. As a result, Great Futures 2025 is focused on increasing delivery of a high-quality Club Experience to drive greater outcomes for youth in our country.

Great Futures 2025 will enable Clubs to meet the challenges facing our nation’s youth today, and evolve to overcome obstacles impeding young people’s success tomorrow. Through our collective experience and expertise, we have shaped a strategic direction for our Movement that will enable our collective success through 2025 and beyond.
Great Futures 2025: Strategic Direction

PURPOSE
The single most important issue in our country is ensuring that today’s generation of young people has the opportunity to achieve the American Dream. We believe that every young person deserves the chance to realize his or her full potential and achieve a great future. The belief in our mission and the belief in the ability of Clubs to effect life-changing impact for kids fuel Great Futures 2025.

With our reach, scope and history, the Boys & Girls Club Movement is uniquely positioned to respond to this challenge. Our mission demands that we take an active role. It is our duty and responsibility on behalf of youth in America.

Our driving purpose for Great Futures 2025 is centered on just that: to inspire and empower Club youth to achieve success and champion opportunities for all young people in America.

Our purpose directs how we organize and focus our collective work into the next decade. The entirety of Great Futures 2025 is centered on fulfilling the purpose statement.

The purpose statement should be viewed as a continuum. At one end is a focus on achieving our vision for the young people currently served by Clubs. These are the youth we know and directly impact through membership and community outreach. At this end, our focus is on the programming and opportunities provided through the Club Experience. At the other end of the continuum is our mission. It represents our aspiration for all youth in America, especially those who need us most. At this end, our focus is on advocating for the existence of opportunities for youth in every community to enable success for all. As Clubs increase their capacity to inspire and empower young people, we will expand efforts to champion opportunities for all youth in America.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
Great Futures 2025 will be implemented through four strategic priority areas. Working together to achieve our purpose, each strategic priority includes initiatives and measurements to drive success of the identified goal. These priorities provide direction to our actions, ensuring that our efforts serve to fulfill the promises made through the statements below to provide members with a life-changing Club Experience.

While the four priorities work in concert together, there is a natural staging of the efforts for greatest effectiveness, aligning with the continuum outlined in our stated purpose.

- **Inspire and empower Club youth to achieve success:** The first two priorities focus on achieving our vision for the young people currently served by Clubs. These are the youth we know and directly impact through membership and community outreach, through an emphasis on quality programming and stronger Club organizations.

- **Champion Opportunities for All Youth in America:** The last two priorities focus on growth and advocacy, positioning us to expand our impact to achieve our vision for all youth in America, especially those who need us most.
By focusing first on program quality and the strength of Clubs, we will enable accelerated growth in latter years. This growth will be a natural outcome of our collective efforts to improve program quality, build Club organizational capacity and sustainability, and become more effective as youth development advocates. Growth is also a natural outcome of establishing a stronger position as a leading youth development organization, with recognized expertise nationally and locally. The staging of these priorities is not time-bound or formally sequential but rather a guide for building upon progress, based on where we are as a Movement and within individual organizations.

Greater detail for each strategic priority area, including annual plans, is provided in the Great Futures 2025 Operational Framework, a companion piece to this document that will be reviewed and updated periodically based on results and insights to ensure our collective positioning for success.

1. INCREASE PROGRAM QUALITY
To achieve greater outcomes for youth and to live our mission, it is critical to achieve a high level of program quality at every Boys & Girls Club, ensuring every Club is consistently providing relevant, engaging experiences and opportunities for kids and teens. One of the greatest challenges to our success is the variability in organizational capacity and program quality. We have a collective accountability to each other, the Boys & Girls Club brand, and, most importantly, to our Club members and communities, to provide a high-quality program experience that makes a dramatic and sustained difference in their lives. This is a mission-critical priority; otherwise, our vision cannot be realized. The focus here is two-fold:

- **Provide Club members with a high-quality Club Experience** that is safe and fun, leads to a sense of belonging, and develops the skills needed to achieve success in the 21st century.

- **Continue to learn and develop** practices and program models with demonstrated impact. Success will require the continued development of evidence-informed program models, staff practices, and organization systems and practices that lead to impact.

Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Define quality standards based on the principles of youth development, child safety, and our Club Experience research and data analysis
- Build evidence-informed program models
- Implement a program quality assessment process with rigor and accountability
- Provide state-of-the-art training for all Club professionals and volunteers — rated a no. 1 priority by Club leaders during Town Hall discussions
- Implement strategies to keep Club members engaged through high school
Mergers, Consolidations and Innovative Operating Models

To ensure strong organizations in every community, there may be instances in which it is beneficial to explore alternate arrangements, such as mergers, consolidations, shared services or other innovative operating models.

This can help strengthen organizations in terms of consolidating back-end operations, addressing financial situations, resolving staff or facility challenges, increasing ability to fundraise, etc. This is achieved through local Club volunteers and professionals working with other organizations in the shared pursuit of creating the best possible experience for youth in their community. These operating decisions are ultimately made between organizations. The development of innovative operating models within the Movement will allow organizations to grow a more sustainable Club presence with greater impact for youth. BGCA has identified criteria that present opportunities for organizations to consider a new approach to sustainability and growth. These include:

- Multiple organizations in dense markets
- Under-capitalized organizations and communities
- Geographic proximity
- Opportunities to maximize talent and efficiencies

BGCA will work with the leadership of local organizations along with other partners (such as community leaders or other stakeholders) to help them determine if an alternate operating approach is advisable and, if so, to identify the best approach. In cases in which it is determined that an alternate operating approach is optimal, BGCA is committed to ensuring a successful transition to the new operating arrangement so as to ensure seamless service for youth and to the community. BGCA will provide all involved organizations with ongoing support designed to meet the challenges unique to every situation, such as:

- Technical support to all organizations involved (due diligence, legal, financial, building, etc.)
- Comprehensive stakeholders assessment/analysis to pinpoint critical relationships that must be maintained
- Financial assistance (salary equity/supplements, capacity building) where needed
- Partnership with local boards to recruit and select new leadership where needed
- Design of unique post-agreement support models for each integration to ensure long-term sustainability and success. This includes the following organizational models and “how to’s”:
  - Staffing models (corporate and site level)
  - Integration of systems and processes (human resources, finance, member management, etc.)
  - Resource development models (including launching campaigns, funding the merger itself, etc.)
  - Board models (governing and regional or local boards)
  - Program models (rooted in the Club Experience)
  - Rebranding the new consolidated organization

BGCA will work with any organization that wishes to explore these opportunities. We will also bring these opportunities to local boards during times of transition and, when appropriate, during the strategic planning process.
2. STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONS

Driving impact and quality requires strong leadership, capacity and capability at every Club organization and at the national organization. This includes leadership at the organization and board level, as well as unit leaders and front-line staff. This is critical to the effective operations of Clubs, as well as to maintaining public trust and upholding the reputation of our brand within communities and the youth development space. Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Align strategic and operating plans with the Great Futures 2025 purpose, priorities and goal
- Cultivate world-class professional and board leadership
- Grow resource development capacity locally and Movement-wide
- Build organizational models that optimize program quality and impact
- Increase efficiency and capability through mergers, management agreements, resource sharing and consolidated back-office functions or other innovative models, as determined between organizations through the leadership of local Club volunteers and professionals.

3. ADVOCATE FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

To tackle the challenges facing youth in our nation, we must position Boys & Girls Clubs as America’s premier youth development advocate. This includes serving as a voice for youth and enabling youth to have a voice in communities and on a national stage. We will advocate for every community to provide access to high-quality, out-of-school-time programs and experiences that equip young people with the tools to succeed. BGCA will build expertise on relevant issues to prepare and support Club leaders in this work. Foundational to this priority is our success ensuring Clubs across the country are providing a consistent, high-quality program experience with strong leadership at the helm. When this occurs, we can increase our position as youth development experts locally and nationally. Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Implement a national and local campaign to build awareness
- Engage local and national stakeholders to advocate for quality programs that meet the needs of youth
- Build local and national partnerships to increase collective impact
- Increase government funding

Quality vs. Quantity

The balance between program quality and the quantity of youth served is also key to these discussions. Some have expressed the view that to increase quality we must limit the number of youth we serve. This is a long-standing tension that is embedded in our mission and vision. While it is more challenging to make deep connections with youth in larger sites, because of the number of youth served, the need for our services is greater than ever before. We must, therefore, rise to the challenge to navigate this balance to achieve the greatest outcomes for youth.

Our Great Futures vision calls us to provide a world-class Club Experience, while our mission is to enable all young people to reach their full potential. While quality and quantity are both critical to our mission, the plan prioritizes initiatives to increase quality at the forefront, with an acceleration of growth to follow. During initial years, while the focus is on program quality and strengthening organizations, plan targets aim for incremental growth. Significant growth is targeted for the latter years of the plan, as an outcome of improved quality and stronger organizations.

Professional and board leaders will strive to find the right balance for their communities as they align their local plans to Great Futures 2025.
4. REACH MORE YOUTH

As we pursue the first three priorities, we will aim to achieve incremental growth. Once we have achieved success in program quality and organization strength, and we’ve established Boys & Girls Clubs as America’s premier youth development advocates, we will be positioned for accelerated growth, in pursuit of the vision that every child growing up in America has access to a life-changing Club Experience. This includes establishing dynamic partnerships with public and private institutions locally and nationally. We recognize that no single organization can provide everything needed to enable youth to succeed, so Boys & Girls Clubs must step up as convener and facilitator to maximize communities’ collective resources and impact. As we address quality and advocacy, we will be poised for the next era of significant growth, with an aspirational goal of reaching one million youth daily by 2025. Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Grow teen membership and open Clubs that serve middle school and high school youth
- Build strong partnerships with schools
- Reach youth through innovative online initiatives and partnerships

Governance and Structure

Foundational to our Movement is the ability for Club organizations to directly meet the needs of the youth they serve within the model best suited for their communities. The strength of our 156-year success lies in our deep roots in local communities and our collective scale across the nation. Great Futures 2025 seeks to build on this strength while increasing the impact of what we know to be true — a high-quality Club Experience helps young people achieve life-changing outcomes.

The emphasis on program quality and training serves to strengthen Clubs’ abilities to deliver dynamic experiences and opportunities tailored to the needs of their youth and community. It builds on research-based principles of program quality and youth development, and increases consistency and quality in service in all Clubhouses across the country, regardless of size and scope. Through this approach, we can increase our impact and accelerate growth, thus assuring our continued relevancy, building credibility and providing a platform for advocacy.

To accomplish this, it may be necessary to review and update charter requirements to ensure that, as a Movement, we are holding ourselves to standards that enable our footprint of Clubhouses to deliver the services our young people need and deserve.

Our Movement’s federated model, in which autonomous Club organizations work together on behalf of youth, has served us well for over 100 years. Within that model, we may consider process updates to create more efficiency. There are opportunities to take full advantage of technology and communication tools that will enable more connection, engagement and faster decision-making.

During the coming year, we will engage in dialogue as a Movement to consider changes that will better enable all Clubs to serve youth and communities. No changes will be made without the full consultation and approval of the Club affiliates in our federation.
GOAL

BGCA’s research and analysis of NYOI data indicates that a high-quality Club Experience helps drive more positive outcomes for youth, and may increase their attendance, participation and retention. Clubs that can effectively demonstrate their impact are better positioned to secure more support. Great Futures 2025 is focused on delivering increased outcomes for America’s youth, so the main metric of success focuses on improving members’ perception of the Club Experience. More specifically, the goal is to increase the collective percentage of Club members reporting an optimal Club Experience to 75% by 2025.

NYOI’s Club Experience indicator is a key measure of a high-quality Club Experience and serves as the main benchmark for Great Futures 2025. Strengthening the Club Experience will support all three priority member outcomes and may help increase the retention of members through their teen years. (For more information on the Club Experience, see the Great Futures 2025 Reference Guide). This goal speaks to the centrality of the member experience at the Club level. It says that we, as Boys & Girls Clubs, set the highest standards when it comes to the youth we serve. And it models what we teach our young people by affirming a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

As a Movement, we aspire to create a high-quality Club Experience for every young person who enters our Club doors. Practically, however, we have identified 75% as a collective goal for the plan, understanding the limitations of this metric. While achievable, this goal is aggressive and bold, representing a significant increase from where Clubs are presently. Currently, 37% of Club members collectively report having an optimal Club Experience. Among Clubs, we find a tremendous amount of variability on this indicator. Some Clubs have very small percentages of members who perceive their experience as optimal, while other Clubs have large percentages of their members reporting that their experience is optimal.

The Club Experience Indicator

The Club Experience indicator is a measure of quality from a Club member perspective, captured through the NYOI Member Survey. The Club Experience indicator provides information about members’ perceptions of the positive youth development experiences they have at their Club. The indicator examines seven components of the Club Experience: Sense of Belonging, Emotional Safety, Physical Safety, Fun, Adult Connections, Staff Expectations and Recognition. These components align directly with BGCA’s Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development.

On the NYOI Member Survey, youth respond to a series of questions about each component of the Club Experience. Each component is then scored separately based on the pattern of members’ responses. Members’ responses are categorized as optimal, indeterminate or insufficient. Optimal indicates that the members’ survey answers signal positive responses. It represents the experience necessary for members to fulfill their developmental needs and achieve priority outcomes. Each of the Club Experience components is then used together to create a composite rating of our members’ Overall Club Experience.

The Club Experience indicator is a tool to help improve the service we are providing youth. Clubs should use the insights it provides to inform their continuous quality improvement efforts and ensure they are providing their members with the best possible Club Experience.
STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Our plan calls for us to be very aggressive in the first years by focusing on the first two priorities — improving program quality and strengthening organizations — with a target of reaching 56% of Club members reporting an optimal Club Experience by spring of 2020.

While the Club Experience indicator represents a critical component of a high-quality Club program, particularly because it reflects the perceptions of the youth we serve, it is not the only factor, nor will it be the only measure of our success. We will measure the success of each component of our plan, with benchmarks along the way, and we will commit to continuous quality improvement.

The first step is to collect and share practices from the highest-performing Clubs. In addition to identifying Clubs with higher percentages of members who perceive their experience as optimal, we will also identify top-performing Clubs based on the evidence-based program quality standards being developed as part of the first priority of this strategic plan. These standards will be measured through on-site observation of staff practice, review of program materials, and staff training and professional development. Through this work, we will capture promising practices from top-performing Clubs based on characteristics such as the age ranges of members served, Club size and budget. BGCA has already begun collecting and sharing Club promising practices. We will help Clubs replicate these practices to improve their Club Experience. At the same time, BGCA will support the highest-performing Clubs so that they can continue to innovate. We will subsequently share their innovations with the Boys & Girls Club field.

Because of the primary focus on improving program quality and strengthening organizations, during the first years of the plan we will strive for incremental growth in average daily attendance. In the latter years of the plan, we will seek opportunities to reach more youth as a growth outcome from our focus on increased program quality, stronger organizations and youth development advocacy. Our aspirational goal is to reach 1 million youth every day.

Continuous Quality Improvement

While our collective goal for the plan is clear — 75% of Club members reporting an optimal Club Experience by 2025 — the underlying motivation is to enable all Clubs to adopt a continuous quality improvement mindset and system.

The Club Experience indicator is intended to be used for continuous quality improvement. It enables Clubs to gauge the types of experiences that members are receiving, to celebrate bright spots, and to identify growth opportunities. Because the indicator is aligned to the Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development, Clubs are able to relate the areas of improvement to youth development practices. This alignment lends itself to quality improvement and action planning that is tangible, actionable and directly linked to the mission of every Boys & Girls Club: to enable young people to reach their full potential. Additional tools, including a program quality self-assessment process based on evidence-informed youth development principles, will be made available to support continuous improvement.
Four guiding principles will drive the implementation of the plan:

1. Provide Club members with a high-quality Club Experience that is safe and fun, leads to a sense of belonging, and develops the skills needed to achieve success in the 21st century.

2. Continue to learn and develop practices and program models with demonstrated impact. Success will require the continued development of evidence-informed program models, staff practices, and organization systems and practices that lead to impact.

3. Advocate that every community provide access to high-quality, out-of-school-time programs and experiences that equip young people with the tools to succeed. BGCA will build expertise on relevant issues to prepare and support Club leaders in this work.

4. Establish dynamic partnerships with public and private institutions locally and nationally. Recognizing that no single organization can provide everything needed to enable youth to succeed, Boys & Girls Clubs must step up as a convener and facilitator to maximize their communities’ collective resources and impact.

Additionally, BGCA will work in partnership with local Clubs to support their work, share promising practices and find the best approaches to achieve success across the wide range of communities they serve.
Common Member Management System

During the past several years, there have been repeated requests for BGCA to support development of a common membership management system. As part of Great Futures 2025 and based on the need for consistent quality data, BGCA is developing a centralized member management system designed specifically for Boys & Girls Clubs. This endeavor aims to reduce the time and resources needed to secure accurate data, and will ultimately help us in pursuit of our shared mission. BGCA aims to have the first version of the system ready to pilot with a small number of organizations in the first quarter of 2018.

Given the high level of interest expressed by Clubs in the common member management system, the plan includes an aggressive schedule for onboarding Clubs. BGCA will provide resources and training to help Clubs prepare to migrate to the new system, starting in the fourth quarter of 2017. BGCA will continue to enhance the system and support Clubs in connecting to the new system throughout 2018, 2019 and 2020. Club professionals will be involved in every aspect of developing the new system to assure it meet the needs of every Club.

BGCA will develop the system at no cost to Clubs. Ongoing operating costs will be shared, and will result in cost savings for Clubs. The system will provide Clubs with improved efficiency, better training and support, and will significantly reduce their annual reporting burden. While we strive to develop a new system that all Clubs will want to utilize, participation is not currently a membership requirement.
The Importance Of A High-Quality Club Experience

KEY ELEMENTS FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
With 96% of local nonmilitary Club organizations participating in the National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI), we have meaningful data to measure progress and provide insights that accelerate learning and information-sharing. Recent NYOI data analysis affirms a central principle of our Formula for Impact: by implementing key elements for positive youth development, Boys & Girls Clubs can increase their positive impact on youth. The key elements are based on fundamental youth development principles and our own research conducted in partnership with the Search Institute. In NYOI, these youth development elements are measured through the Club Experience indicator. When Clubs implement the key elements, they create a Club Experience that provides:

• A safe, positive environment
• Access to fun and a sense of belonging
• Access to supportive relationships
• Meaningful opportunities and expectations
• Formal and informal recognition

HIGH-QUALITY CLUB EXPERIENCE
Our NYOI data indicates that strengthening the Club Experience drives more positive outcomes for members in our priority areas of Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles, and may help increase retention of members through their teen years. The Club Experience indicator is a measure of quality from a Club member perspective, captured through the NYOI Member Survey. It provides information about members’ perceptions of the positive youth development experiences they have at their Club in the areas of: Sense of Belonging, Emotional Safety, Physical Safety, Fun, Adult Connections, Staff Expectations and Recognition. When members’ survey answers signal positive responses, it indicates they are having an optimal experience that fulfills their developmental needs and helps them achieve positive outcomes in our priority areas.

1 Search Institute pioneered using social science research to understand the lives, beliefs and values of young people. Its research, expertise and resources, such as its Developmental Assets framework, help organizations, schools and community coalitions solve critical challenges in the lives of young people. BGCA partnered with Search Institute in 2004-05 on a comprehensive qualitative study of Club practices, the findings of which were synthesized into BGCA’s Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development.
IMPACT OF A HIGH-QUALITY CLUB EXPERIENCE

A high-quality Club Experience that meets young people’s developmental needs and features programs that target our priority outcome areas, such as Power Hour, Triple Play and Youth of the Month, will result in millions of resilient young adults who are:

- Globally competitive graduates with the skills for college- and career-readiness
- Able to make healthy decisions that lead to physical, social and emotional well-being
- Ready to become engaged citizens who serve the community and model strong leadership

When members report having an optimal Club Experience, they are more likely to achieve positive outcomes across our three priority outcome areas. For example:


Older Teens (16 and Older) with an Optimal Club Experience Are:

- 42% 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
- 21% less likely to ever skip school
- 19% more likely to expect to attend college
Youth (Ages 9 to 12) with an Optimal Club Experience Are:

42% more likely to believe that school work is meaningful

Younger Teens (13 to 15) with an Optimal Club Experience Are:

42% more likely to volunteer on a monthly basis
39% less likely to smoke marijuana
34% less likely to consume alcohol
31% less likely to get into a physical fight
16% more likely to be physically active five or more days per week
Youth Voice

As we aim to promote a high-quality Club Experience for youth and teens, the concept of youth voice is critical to our success. When youth development professionals hone practices that deepen relationships with young people, the result is increased opportunities for youth voice and ownership in the Club program. Youth voice enables youth to act as agents of their own development. Fostering youth voice involves finding ways for young people to actively participate in shaping decisions that affect their lives, with adults and an environment that provides support and safety for decision-making. By integrating youth voice into the Club Experience, we generate opportunities for leadership and responsibility, and help prepare youth to positively and productively engage with their community. Incorporating youth voice into program practices, experiences and opportunities looks different based on the developmental needs of young people at various ages. These practices enhance the Club Experience, increase overall engagement and support retention of members into their teen years.

BGCA has been able to identify links between certain staff practices and members’ perception of the Club Experience through the NYOI Staff Survey. BGCA developed and validated the survey over three years by partnering with Hanover Research and the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. Our analysis of the combined data from the NYOI Member Survey and Staff Survey shows that certain staff practices enhance the quality of the Club Experience, and, in turn, that a high-quality Club Experience drives more positive outcomes for members. By improving the Club Experience, we are positioned to increase our collective impact on young people.

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- Ready to become engaged citizens who serve the community and model strong leadership

BGCA has been able to identify links between certain staff practices and members’ perception of the Club Experience through the NYOI Staff Survey. BGCA developed and validated the survey over three years by partnering with Hanover Research and the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. Our analysis of the combined data from the NYOI Member Survey and Staff Survey shows that certain staff practices enhance the quality of the Club Experience, and, in turn, that a high-quality Club Experience drives more positive outcomes for members. By improving the Club Experience, we are positioned to increase our collective impact on young people.

3 Hanover Research provides custom research and analytics that helps clients in the corporate, education and healthcare sectors make informed decisions, identify and seize opportunities, and heighten their effectiveness. BGCA collaborated with Hanover to combine existing NYOI data with additional data collected through a new Club staff survey tool.

4 The David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality empowers education and human service leaders to adapt, implement and scale research-validated quality improvement systems to advance child and youth development. The Weikart Center provided BGCA with technical expertise to refine and validate the Club staff survey instrument developed by BGCA and Hanover Research. It is currently collaborating with BGCA to field-test its program quality assessment system in Boys & Girls Clubs.
Overview of the Great Futures 2025 Planning Process

The planning process was designed to provide as many opportunities as possible for Club board and professional leaders to provide input and to build consensus.

- **JANUARY 2015**: Planning Commission, comprised of National Area Council and President’s Advisory Council members, meet.
- **MAY 2015**: Initial draft of strategic direction shared with the Boys & Girls Club Movement.
- **APRIL 2015 THROUGH FEBRUARY 2016**: Town halls conducted at Area Council meetings to solicit feedback about the strategic direction.
- **DECEMBER 2015**: BGCA Board of Governors holds a strategic planning workshop to explore implications of the strategic direction for Boys & Girls Clubs of America services.
- **FEBRUARY 2016**: Planning Commission reviews feedback and establishes direction for the Boys & Girls Club Movement through 2025. BGCA conducted a webcast for Club professionals and volunteers with the opportunity to ask questions.
- **MAY 2016**: Great Futures 2025 strategic direction shared with the Boys & Girls Club Movement.
- **JUNE 2016**: BGCA Board of Governors Strategic Planning Committee holds a retreat to provide direction to BGCA services to support Great Futures 2025.
- **JUNE 2016 THROUGH JANUARY 2017**: More than 85 town halls took place at Area Council meetings across the country. General sessions, learning teams and feedback discussions facilitated for Regional Leadership Conference participants.
- **AUGUST 2016**: Planning retreat with 19 emerging leaders within the Movement conducted.
- **SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 2016**: Focus groups with local board members conducted at Regional Leadership Conferences.
- **DECEMBER 2016**: Discussion with more than 80 Club leaders and board members facilitated at Major Metro Conference.
- **JANUARY 2017**: Planning Commission reviews feedback on draft of strategic plan.
- **FEBRUARY 2017**: Great Futures 2025 Strategic Plan, comprised of a Strategic Direction document and an Operational Framework document, disseminated to the Boys & Girls Club Movement, to provide Club organizations with ample time for review and discussion with local stakeholders. Organizations are asked to affirm the strategic direction before or at the National Council meeting at the National Conference in May.