


# Our History

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg Inc. grew out of two teen drop-in centers established in the late 1960's: The Youth Action Centre of North Winnipeg and the Youth Action Project. In 1976, these two programs joined together to form a new organization known as the Winnipeg Youth Action Inc. and applied for membership in Boys and Girls Club of Canada. In 1977, Winnipeg Youth Action Inc. became a member of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada and changed its name to Winnipeg Boys and Girls Clubs Inc. In 2005, in keeping with newly revised membership requirements, Winnipeg Boys and Girls Clubs changed its name once again to Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg Inc.

Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg provide a safe alternative to the streets for children and youth. While all children and youth are welcome at our programs, our focus continues to be for children and youth that have traditionally had the least opportunity to access services and who experience the greatest need.

# Our Mission

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

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Programs are tailored to meet the diverse needs and interests of all our members. We believe strongly in offering supports and creating opportunities for personal growth so children can enjoy their childhood while preparing for responsible adulthood. This goal is accomplished through five core program areas promoting:

- ***Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity***
- ***Arts and Cultural Appreciation***
- ***Education and Career Exploration***
- ***Health Awareness and Life Skills Development***
- ***Leadership and Service to Community***

Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg has emerged as a competent, leading, community based youth serving organization whose focus is developmental as well as preventative. We have discovered that the best way to assist our members overcome the barriers they face is by increasing their resiliency - their ability to address issues and make good decisions for themselves. The best way to do that is by giving them the opportunity to relate to caring, interested people that are positive role models, and to increase their skill levels in critical areas of their lives. We find as their skill level increases, so does their self confidence and resiliency.

# *Our Core Values*

## Inclusion & Opportunity

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

## Respect & Belonging

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

## Empowerment

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

## Collaboration

- We work together with families and volunteers in each community, in partnership with government and other organizations, to create healthy community solutions to providing children and youth with what they need for optimal development.

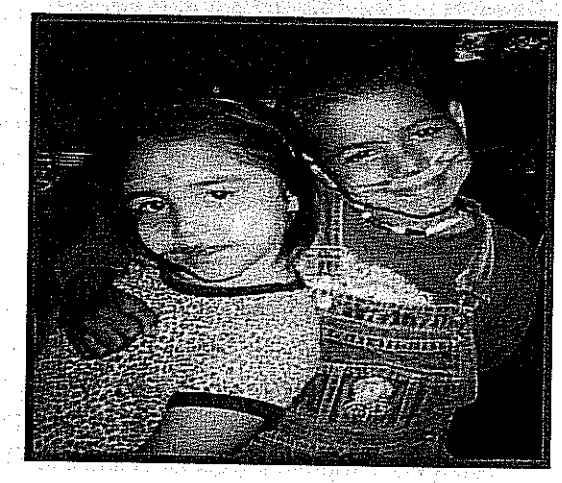
## Speaking Out

- We speak out on behalf of children, youth and their families to reduce disadvantage, enhance their lives and enable their voices and ideas to be heard.

# Services

## *Clubs & Programs*

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Winnipeg operates **seven full time drop-in centres and two satellite programs** that engage children and youth in safe, positive and supervised activities during non-school hours where members can have fun, learn and grow. A wide variety of activities are offered including recreation, sports, special events, cultural activities, computers, life skills, field trips, nutrition programs, educational activities, and a variety of personal development programs. Over 3,000 children and youth are served each year. There is no cost to participants.



The locations include:

- **Aberdeen Club:** 415 Stella Avenue
- **Dalhousie Club:** Dalhousie School, 262 Dalhousie
- **Freight House Club:** 4-200 Isabel Street
- **Gilbert Park Club:** Units 1 and 2, 35 Gilbert Avenue
- **Ryerson Club:** 10 Ryerson Avenue
- **Sister MacNamara Club:** 460 Sargent Avenue
- **Victor Mager Club:** 81 Beliveau Road
- **Winnipeg Harvest Club:** 1085 Winnipeg (Part Time Club)
- **Polson Club:** 491 Munroe (Part Time Club)
- **Norquay Club:** 132 Lusted Avenue (Part Time Club)
- **Administration Office** 929 Main Street Winnipeg R2W 3P2

The following are descriptions of some of the daily **ENHANCED** programming offered in the clubs.

## Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity

The Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity program area promotes physical fitness, participation in sports, positive use of leisure time and the development of social and interpersonal skills. All of our clubs provide times where youth can take part in sports and physical recreation activities. Formal programs include:

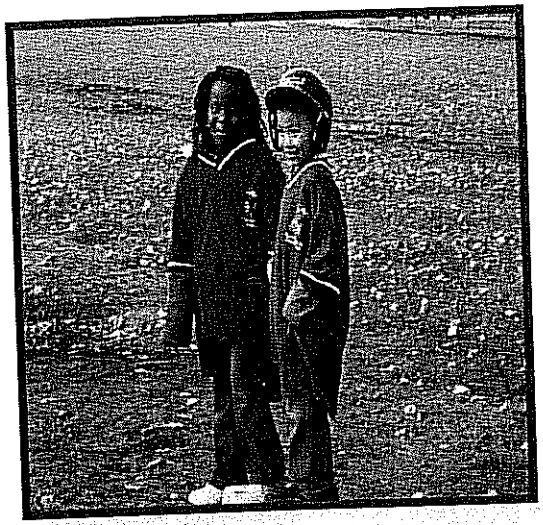
### SportsConnection



*SportsConnection* is a youth development program that increases opportunities for children and youth, especially those from economically disadvantaged circumstances, to:

- Have access to opportunities to play organized sport outside of school;
- Benefit from sport instruction and skill development;
- Promote physical fitness;
- Increase feelings of belonging and camaraderie;
- Provide an environment where young people can learn teamwork, sportsmanship and a strong work ethic while having fun in a positive environment.

Children attending our drop-in programs have participated in sport activities in the past, but the *SportsConnection* Program enables children to explore new sports and make the transition from participating in informal sports and recreation, to playing organized team and individual sports with skills-based instruction and ongoing mentoring.



The *SportsConnection* program strives to connect youth with sports at four (4) ascending levels of commitment on the part of the youth:

1) Exposure to Sports
2) Support with Sports Registrations
3) Delivering Organized Sport Programs with Community Partners
4) Support to Athletes with Promise to Play in Advanced Competition

In 2006, the *SportsConnection* program helped members participate in organized baseball, basketball, judo, swimming, wall-climbing, and boxing. The SportsConnection program is possible thanks to The Canadian Tire JumpStart Initiative, KidSport Winnipeg, The Royal Bank, Minnesota Twins Community Fund and the Bert Settler Memorial Fund.

**Girls Night Out**
Girls Night Out is a girls-only recreational sport and physical activity program that introduces girls and young women to new and interesting types of physical recreation activities in a safe and supportive environment, while developing friendship and building self-esteem. The purpose of the program is to increase participation in regular physical activity and encourage girls to take personal responsibility for their own health and well-being. The Girls Night Out Program is possible thanks to The Manitoba Moose Yearling Foundation, The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS), and the Aboriginal Sport Circle.

**Summer Camps**
We offer a variety of summer camp experiences for our club members. Camps are always are great source of fun, outside adventure and new experiences for at-risk youth who otherwise would not get a chance to enjoy a camp experience. Last year over 150 children and youth enjoyed camps that included over-night camps at Camp Manitou; a week-long camp in the Lake of the Woods; and 2 adventure-based canoe trips

## Arts and Cultural Appreciation



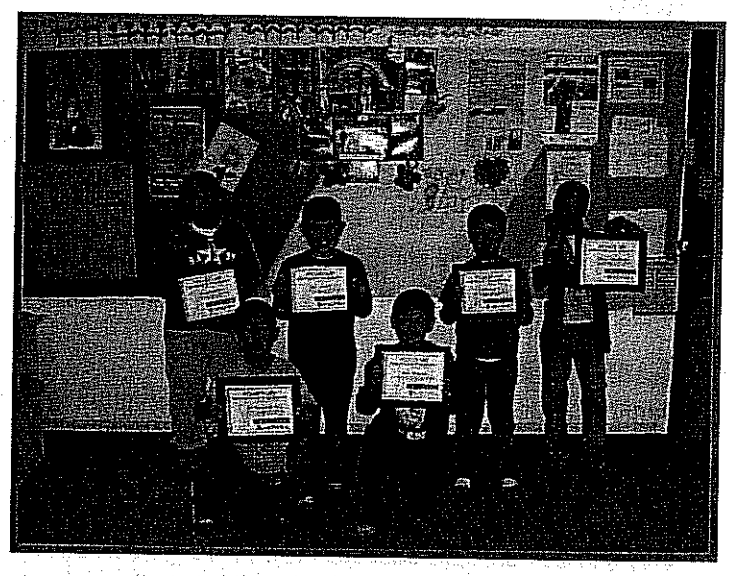
The Arts and Cultural Appreciation program area enables children and youth to develop creativity and cultural awareness through participation in cultural experiences, creating visual arts and crafts, and exposure to the performing arts. Formal programs include:

**ArtsConnection**
ArtsConnection is a multi-faceted arts program offering youth a chance to learn about the arts, develop new skills, and develop constructive relationships with peers and adults. The program connects youth with a variety of free arts workshops, including sketching, painting, photography, dance and drama. ArtsConnection seeks to support and nurture young people interested in the arts and help them develop new skills and movement towards greater challenges and expertise. ArtsConnection projects are supported by The Royal Bank, Canadian Tire, and Sears.

## Education and Career Exploration

The Education and Career Exploration program area enables youth to develop skills, knowledge and an attitude that will help them in school and employment. Formal programs include:

### Power-Up



Power-Up is a free after-school homework club for youth wanting a quiet place and helping hand with their homework. Students work with supportive "Homework Helpers" to set academic goals and create a plan for achieving those goals. The homework program is voluntary, but children and youth will be encouraged to attend and achieve success through a recognition system in which members earn "Power Points". "Power Points" are awards to members who have completed homework assignments or have tutored others. With these "Power Points", participants are then able to trade them in for school supplies, movie tickets, gift certificates, special outings and other goodies. Power Up will help enhance learning, improve study habits, foster independence and develop positive attitudes towards education and life long learning. The Power-Up program is possible thanks to the generous support of The Royal Bank, Fidelity Investments and the Goldeyes Field of Dreams Foundation.

### Step-Up

The Step-Up program helps teens (ages 14-18) explore the world of work, learn fundamental employment skills and gain initial work experience. It is an employment readiness program that supports the development of skills, knowledge and competencies that lead youth to careers and self-sufficiency. In addition, Step-Up seeks to improve participants' attitudes toward school and awareness of post-secondary education.

### Clean Machine

Clean Machine is a summer employment program for young people between the ages of 12-19. Youth in the program perform important work in the community while gaining experience for future employment. This program is funded by the City of Winnipeg



The ***Clean Machine – Streets*** program provides youth ages 12-16 with a structured first-time employment experience. The Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg provide uniforms, equipment and adult supervision for the youth to collect litter in the streets of Winnipeg. Crew workers are paid minimum wage. Length of employment runs from two to four weeks, although casual employment on short term contracts is also available.

The ***Clean Machine –Waterways*** program hires youth ages 16-19 to clean and remove debris from Winnipeg waterways including the Seine River and Omands Creek. Crew workers are paid minimum wage. Length of employment is usually either 4 consecutive weekends of 4 weeks, although casual employment on short term contracts is also available.

## Health Awareness and Life Skills Development

The Health Awareness and Life Skills Development program area develops young people's capacity to engage in positive behaviour that nurture their own well-being, set personal goals, and acquire the skills to live successfully as self-sufficient adults. Formal programs include:



### Fuel-Up

The Fuel-Up project provides healthy food and nutrition education for children attending Boys and Girls Clubs' after-school programs. The Fuel-Up program is designed to contribute to the personal development and nutritional well-being of children and youth. The specific outcomes for participants include reducing hunger, increasing access to healthy food, increasing awareness of good nutrition and healthy eating habits, and motivating youth to make good food and activity choices for a healthy lifestyle. The Fuel-Up project is supported by The Canada Safeway Foundation.

### Healthy Choices

Healthy Choices is a personal development program for youth ages 10-15. It is a mentorship where an adult role model works with a small group of young people to support their growth and engage them in positive non-school activities. The program is youth-driven in the sense that participants are actively involved in planning their own volunteer work, outings, and recreation activities. Participants can earn money towards supervised shopping trips if they can demonstrate success in performing volunteer service, trying new recreation activities, learning new skills and being a role model to younger children in the club. This program is possible thanks to generous funding from the Ma Ma Wi Chi Itata Centre.

## Leadership and Service to Community

The Leadership and Service to Community program area empowers youth to support and influence their club and community, sustain meaningful relationships with others, develop a positive self-image, participate in the democratic process and respect their own and others cultural identities. Programs are designed to be progressive in nature and youth are encouraged to finish one program before entering the next program in this program area, eventually participating in our youth council program. Formal programs include:

### Rotary Leadership Circle

The Rotary Leadership Circle program is a personal development program for youth ages 10-14 who have demonstrated leadership potential. During a six-week period in the summer, youth leaders are selected to carry out various neighbourhood and community service projects. Youth leaders who complete 60 hours of service can earn $200 towards a supervised shopping trip. The summer program is a joint program of the Winnipeg Rotary Clubs and the Coalition of Community-Based Youth Serving Agencies.

### Youth 4 Kids

Youth 4 Kids (Y4K) encourages youth to help others by volunteering at their neighbourhood Boys and Girls Club. The Y4K program is an opportunity for youth to help others, gain volunteer experience, learn new skills, assume new responsibilities, have fun, and challenge themselves to reach personal and team goals. Youth volunteers are responsible for a wide variety of club activities. Examples include supervising arts and crafts projects, helping with the use of computers, playing sports and games with younger children, cleaning and organizing the club, preparing meals and snacks, making signs and calendars on computers, and more.

### Torch Club

A Torch Club is a small group of youth members concerned with service to the Boys and Girls Club and to the community. Social recreation, leadership development, and education form the basis of group development and

individual growth. Boys and Girls club members 11-14 years of age are eligible for membership. Each Torch Club elects it own officers who plan and implement recreation activities and community service projects. An adult advisor provides the necessary support and guidance that the Club needs. Torch Clubs are chartered with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada.

**Leaders in Training**

The Leaders in Training (L.I.T.) program was developed to allow teens the opportunity to participate in outdoor camps in a role that had more responsibility and would shape them into potential leaders in camp and beyond. The youth participate in training throughout the year to develop both hard skills (i.e. kayaking, wall climbing, high ropes, camping) and soft (i.e. patience, how to talk to kids, leadership and teamwork). The reward at the end of the program is fun, new friends, opportunities and for some of the youth, jobs at various camps. The L.I.T. program starts in January and meets once a month until June. Our camps start in July.



**Helping Hands**

Helping Hands is a collaborative effort of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg, Rossbrook House and the Centennial Neighbourhood Improvement Association to revitalize the Centennial Neighbourhood and provide employment opportunities to local youth. Helping Hands is designed to strengthen relationships and support among community members, complete revitalization projects within the Centennial Neighbourhood, expand opportunities for local youth to earn money and do constructive activities during non-school hours, increase local job skills through works and service-learning experiences, increase youth confidence and feelings of competence and connect residents with other supports as required.

**Youth for Eco-Action**

Youth for Ecological Action (YEA) is a hands-on, adventure-based project designed to motivate youth to share their gifts and talents while learning about food security and sustainable development. YEA is funded by Heifers International and Manitoba's Environmental Youth Corps Initiative.

**Youth Council**

Two representatives from each club are chosen each year to sit on the Youth Council where they have the opportunity to: develop interpersonal and communication skills, design and implement projects, represent the youth perspective regarding the Boys & Girls Clubs program design, events and practices, and act as youth ambassadors for the agency. They also advocate on behalf of members of the Boys & Girls Clubs, Board of Directors and management, and take part in projects that are designed to expose them to different learning experiences i.e. opportunities to travel to different parts of the country to take part in youth conferences. The youth council receives financial support from Wawanesa Insurance Company, Sears and the Platinum Jets.

**"You guys seem to know everything that I am going through, and let me do everything I like to do. Club has helped me so much!" Club Member**

## *Other Programs*



***Personalized Employment Preparation (P.E.P.)*** is a program designed to help unemployed youth ages 16 to 29 in gaining full-time employment. P.E.P. consists of a four week session of in-house pre-employment skills

training, academic skills upgrading, and a 200-hour subsidized work placement.

In 2003 the Personal Employment Preparation Program developed a program that is more in tune with the participants that are being referred. The program has an individualized approach and when necessary initially concentrates more on life skill development rather than employment skills.

***Voices: Manitoba's Youth in Care Program*** is group of youth between the ages of 12-24 who provide support, encouragement and advocacy for youth-in-care and youth who are leaving care. Their goal is to raise awareness of the challenges youth-in-care face and improve conditions for those in care. Voices has produced a guide book for youth in care, has produced public information videos dealing with experiences youth have had while in care, and produces and hosts a weekly radio show on the University of Winnipeg radio station (CKUW 95.9 FM).The program won an award for its radio program this past year.

***Youth Recreation Activity Worker Program*** offers a certificate program for young adults from low-income communities. The goal is to train and employ young adults as Recreation Technicians. The program is a joint initiative of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg and Red River College. Numerous agencies in the Coalition of Community-Based Youth Agencies offer practicum placements for the students and credits in the program can be transferred to Red River's Child and Youth Care Worker Diploma program.



***Coalition of Community Based Youth Serving Agencies*** The Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg is a founding member of the Coalition, a group of 16 local youth serving and community based agencies that work together to address issues of at-risk youth. Formed in 1995 the Coalition shares resources and provides joint projects and programs that benefit children and youth including summer camps, community outings, leadership development programs, and an annual professional development conference.

***Volunteer Services*** Annually, over 500 volunteers and students provide nearly 10,000 hours of their time to Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg. They are involved in the direct delivery of programs for children and youth, as well as policy and financial decision making at the board and committee levels. Volunteers help with administrative/clerical tasks, fundraising, campaigns, special events and projects.

Children and youth benefit from the many hours of field work and work experience training provided by students of local high schools, colleges, universities and private/non-profit training programs.

Volunteers really are a part of every aspect of Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg and their contribution is crucial to the agency. Without our volunteer resources, we could never provide the quality or quantity of programming we do.

# Outcomes

Our database captures information on individual member's attendance and the activities they participate in. We also profile each member considered to be at risk because of situational or behavioural issues. In 2001 we were able to compare certain high-risk categories to identify the following outcomes.

### Members of an Inner-City Club involved in gang activity

In 2000 we had 112 members identified as at-risk for involvement in gang activity. In 2001, 21 of the 112 no longer attended the clubs. 17 members continued to display behaviour that indicates gang involvement. We are not sure of 4 members still attending. 8 of the 112 members are in correctional institutions. ***62 of the 112 members no longer demonstrated behaviour that would indicate involvement in gang activity.***

### Members involved in fire setting

In 2000 we had 36 members identified as fire setters or potential fire setters (playing with fire). In 2001, 8 of the 36 no longer attended the clubs. 4 members continued to display the behaviour. 6 members still attending we are not sure of. ***18 of the 36 members no longer display fire-setting behaviour.***

### Suicidal Behaviour

In 2000 we had 31 members identified considered at-risk of committing suicide. In 2001, 6 of the 31 no longer attended the clubs. 7 members continued to remain at risk. 1 member still attending we are not sure of. ***17 of the 31 members are no longer considered to be at-risk.***

### Members displaying socially withdrawn behaviour

We define socially withdrawn behaviour as:

1. Noticeable lack of interaction between individual and peers
2. Noticeable lack of interaction between individual and adults
3. Lack of participation in activities
4. Erratic attendance
5. Lack of commitment to joining activities

*Members displaying this behaviour are considered to be at great risk of being victimized or involving themselves in criminal behaviour or unhealthy life styles.*

In 2000 there were 117 members that displayed *socially withdrawn behaviour.* In 2001, 43 of the 117 no longer attended the clubs. 24 members continued to display the behaviour. ***50 of the 117 members no longer display socially withdrawn behaviour.***

### Attendance of adolescent females in clubs

In 1998 there were 496 female members aged 12 and older. In 1999 there were 488 aged 12 and older. While the adolescent female membership was declining, the male membership was growing.

Our research indicated that this decline was typical of female participation in youth programs across North America. We noticed that male members dominated most of the club activities. Female members appeared to be hesitant to get involved in activities such as computer games, sports, and table games.

In 2000 we started a program we named *Girls Night Out* in two clubs. We started by restricting participation to female members only and featured activities that we knew would be of interest to our female members. We encouraged input from the participants into special activities they would be interested in pursuing as well as exposing the participants to computers and table games with out the male membership present.

We found that the involvement of female members in recreational activities increased as well as their willingness to involve themselves in new experiences.

**In 2000 the membership of females aged 12 and older rose to 594 members.** We were able to get project funding to expand the program to all six of our clubs **and in 2001 the membership of females aged 12 and older rose to 636 members.**

## SCHOLARSHIPS

**In the past five years, 53 youth have received scholarships through the Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg. 20 of the students received scholarships through the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada Future Shop 'Future Leaders Scholarship' program, 1 through the newly created Doug McDonald Memorial Scholarship and 32 through the VOICES - Manitoba's Youth in Care scholarship program.**

- Calculating these outcomes has been a labour intensive task that given our limited human resources, we cannot continue indefinitely.

- We have researched the North American literature and identified best practices that was in turn introduced and adopted by the Coalition of Community Based Youth Serving Agencies. With financial assistance from The Winnipeg Foundation the list of best practices was refined and developed into a program assessment and development tool. Rather than calculating outcomes each past year, we believe that putting our limited resources into achieving and adhering to the best practices we will be the most effective way of guaranteeing effective programming and enabling positive change in our members.

- Those interested in a copy of the Best Practices document, contact the Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg or the Coalition of Community Based Youth Serving Agencies.

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