



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF GREATER ST. LOUIS

*50* Years of Building  
Great Futures

1967-2017

# MEASURING THE IMPACT

**2015** | Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis  
**OUTCOMES REPORT**

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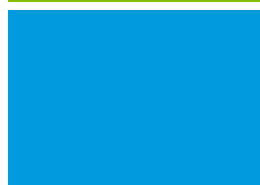
# 2015

## Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis **OUTCOMES REPORT**



# MEASURING THE IMPACT

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis (BGCSTL) 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 demonstrating our impact to stakeholders, engaging in continuous improvement and delivering high-quality programming and services. BGCSTL is proud to present this fourth annual outcomes report summarizing our 2015 findings.





# INTRODUCTION





In recent years, BGCSTL has made great strides in becoming a leader in outcomes measurement in the youth-serving sector, building the capability of our organization to collect and use data to gauge our positive 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 guides Clubs in helping youth achieve outcomes in three priority areas: Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles.

In 2011, Boys & Girls Clubs of America 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 continues to provide resources, training and technical assistance to enable local Club organizations to use NYOI effectively.

## **COLLECTIVE LEARNING, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

As BGCA completes the fifth year of NYOI implementation with 96 percent of nonmilitary Club organizations now participating, our measurement efforts remain focused on how well our Clubs implement the Formula for Impact and how much our young people are achieving as a result. Professionals at the local and national levels are in continuous learning mode, using the data to inform planning and operational decisions and make improvements to programs and services.

BGCA continues to enhance NYOI data collection and reporting tools and processes.

## **MORE ABOUT BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF GREATER ST. LOUIS**

For nearly 50 years, BGCSTL has been providing after-school, teen, sports and summer programs for youth ages 6-18 in the St. Louis City and County areas. The Clubs serve St. Louis youth at six locations (Adams Park Club, Ferguson Middle School Club, Herbert Hoover Club, O'Fallon Park Club, Hazelwood Southeast Middle School Club and Twillman Elementary School Club), operates the BE GREAT: Graduate program at Normandy and Roosevelt High Schools to help keep students on track to graduate, and the Mentor St. Louis Program within five additional elementary schools. The Clubs are open during hours that kids are most likely to need a safe place to go — after school and during the summer.

BGCA has made strategic changes and additions to the NYOI member survey, for example, to deepen our understanding of how Club members are faring in critical areas such as safety, school engagement and readiness for postsecondary education. In 2016, BGCA will add measures to gauge members' interest in science, technology, mathematics and engineering (STEM) and their readiness for future STEM careers. BGCA is also adding 21st century skill measures related to young people's ability to cope with challenges, work well in teams and set and pursue goals.

With BGCA nearly at scale with NYOI within its national federation of Club organizations, we are building a rich repository of youth outcomes data for a sizable number of Clubs that spans multiple years. This enables BGCA to analyze longer-term trends for matched cohorts of Club youth, as well as identify the practices employed by the strongest Clubs so that they can be disseminated throughout the Boys & Girls Club Movement. BGCSTL staff receive training to expand their subject matter expertise and facilitation skills.

Professionals at the local and national levels are in continuous learning mode, using the data to inform planning and operational decisions and make improvements to programs and services.



## MORE ABOUT BGCA'S NATIONAL YOUTH OUTCOMES INITIATIVE

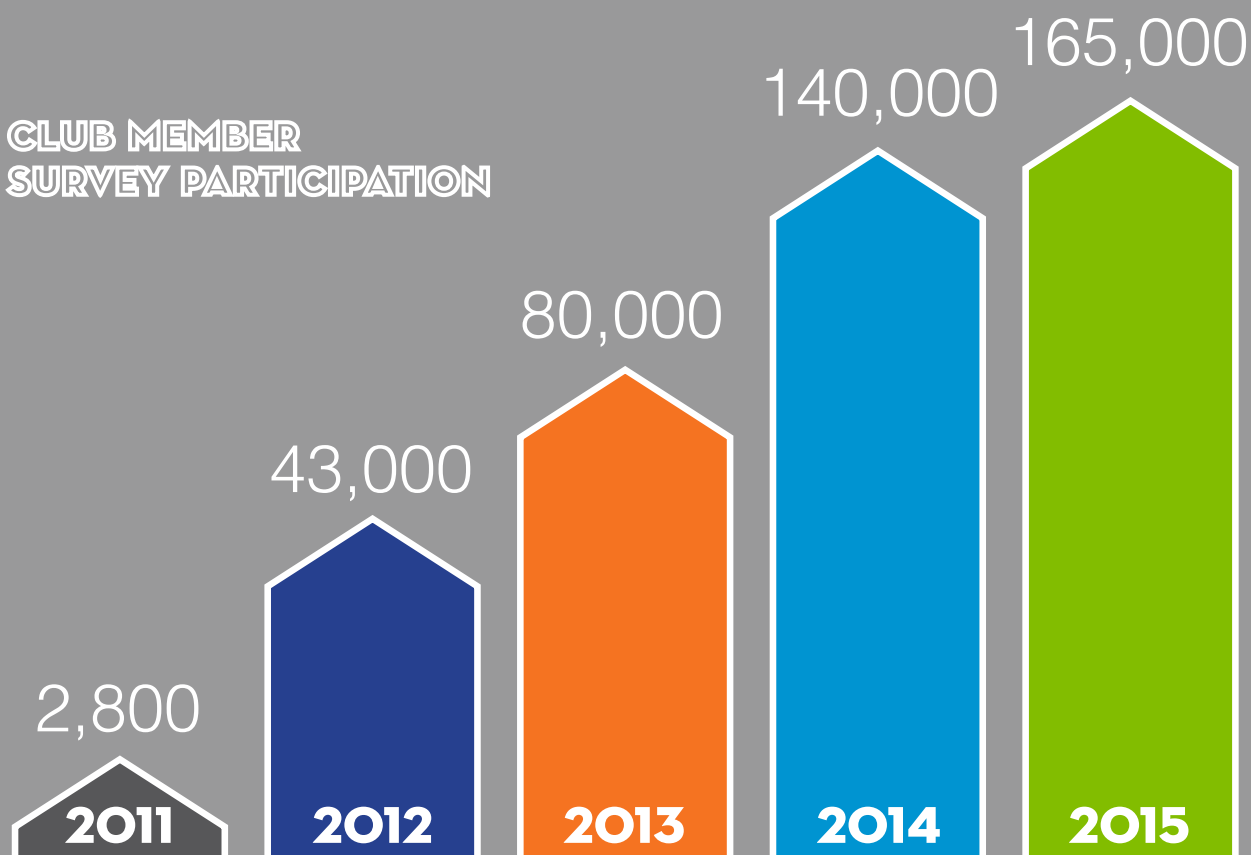
In NYOI, individual Boys & Girls Clubs collect data about their registered members' demographics, attendance and participation. Local data management systems feed data into BGCA's national system, allowing BGCA to compile data on the national population served by Clubs.

NYOI's other primary source of data is the Club member survey, designed to measure indicators of youth achievement in our priority outcome areas. Some survey questions replicate language used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey, allowing BGCA to compare Club youth outcomes to national averages. 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.

The NYOI survey also asks members about their perceptions of the Club. Their responses allow us to assess how well Clubs deliver a high quality experience that supports positive youth development. BGCA processes the responses from surveys completed in Clubs each spring, furnishes each participating Club organization with its members' survey data, then aggregates and analyzes the data to render national results.

BGCA field-tested NYOI and the Club member survey in 2011 with just 39 Club organizations and 2,800 respondents. By late 2015, 96 percent of non-military Club organizations were participating in NYOI. Some 165,000 Club members completed the survey in more than 2,500 Club sites in spring 2015, up from some 140,000 respondents in 2014, and more than twice as many respondents as in 2013.

### CLUB MEMBER SURVEY PARTICIPATION



# THE OUTCOME-DRIVEN CLUB EXPERIENCE: HIGH-IMPACT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT





The true work of Boys & Girls Clubs—the heart of what we do—lies fittingly at the center of our Formula for Impact. To create the optimal Outcome-Driven Club Experience, Clubs provide high-yield activities and targeted programs, actively encourage young people to attend more frequently, and employ Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development.

The latter component emerged as critically important in a 2004-05 research effort conducted by the Search Institute and BGCA to identify quality strategies and practices that Clubs use to promote the positive, healthy development of youth. The findings showed that Clubs have the potential to increase their impact on young people when they make concerted efforts to implement five key elements in their operations.<sup>1</sup>

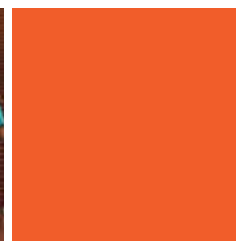
## FIVE KEY ELEMENTS FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

1. A Safe, Positive Environment
2. Fun
3. Supportive Relationships
4. Opportunities and Expectations
5. Recognition

Subsequent research conducted for BGCA highlighted the importance of **regular attendance** for achieving impact. A 30-month study published in 2009 found that youth were more likely to demonstrate greater positive outcomes related to Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles when they attended the Club at least 52 times per year. The positive effects were even greater when they attended 104 times per year.<sup>2</sup>

**523** members attending 52 days per year

**357** members attending 104 days per year



## STUDY HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF A HIGH-QUALITY CLUB EXPERIENCE

### CERTAIN STAFF PRACTICES LEAD TO A GREAT CLUB EXPERIENCE

Using data from the staff and member surveys, a **regression framework**<sup>3</sup> was used to estimate the strength of relationships between staff practices and member perceptions. The analysis methodology **controlled for** site, staff and member characteristics (race, gender, income level, family type, etc.), meaning these were factored out as possible influences. The statistically significant<sup>4</sup> findings show:

- Staff practices that are most likely to boost the Club Experience include knowing all Club members' names, employing positive reinforcement to manage behavior, and having planned activities and programs for all or most of each day.
- Club Directors who perceive that their staff members work well together, provide homework help for members, and actively engage parents are associated with higher optimal Club Experience rates.

- Youth development staff who receive basic program planning training and provide informal guidance to youth are associated with more members reporting an optimal Club Experience.

90%

feel staff pay attention to what's going on in their life

95%

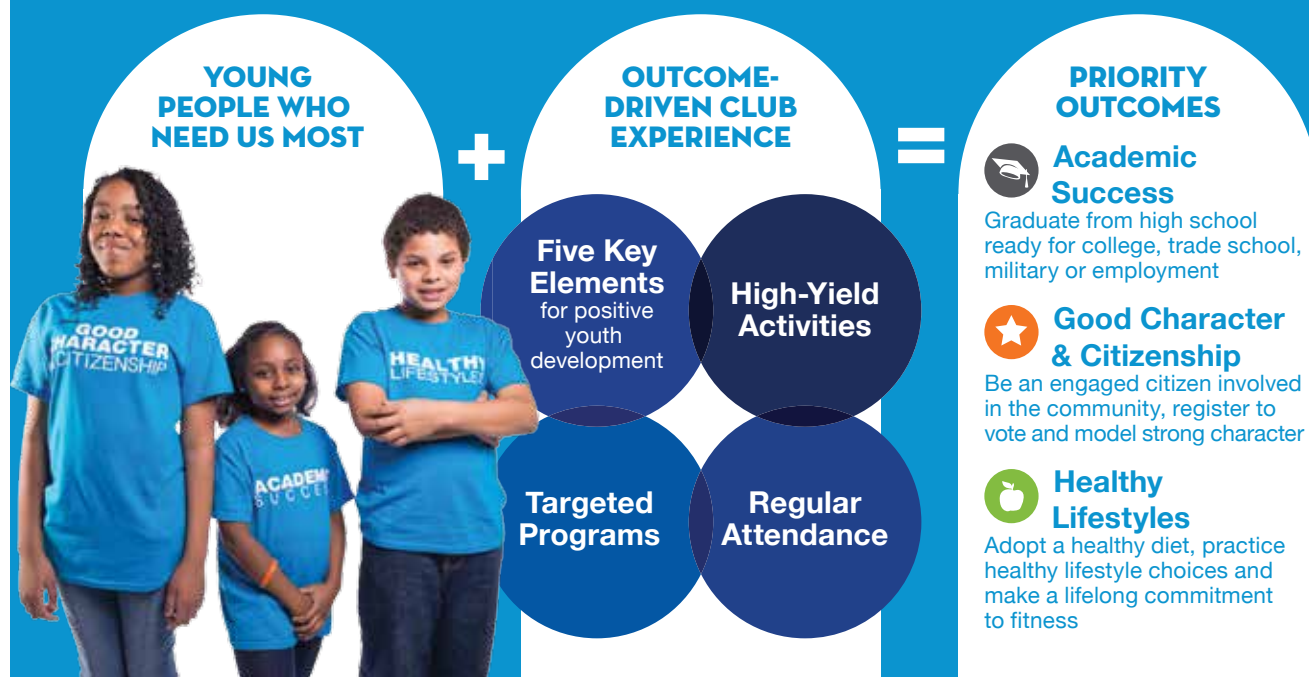
feel staff say something nice when they do something good

90%

feel respected by staff at BGCSTL

- Having staff who are trained in basic program planning and use positive reinforcement for behavior management is important for all components of the optimal Club Experience.
- Providing homework help is associated with teens aged 16 and older having an optimal Club Experience.

## OUR FORMULA FOR IMPACT



## A BETTER CLUB EXPERIENCE LEADS TO BETTER MEMBER OUTCOMES

The study further examined the relationship between how members perceive their Club Experience and the outcomes they achieve. The findings highlight the importance of two essential aspects of the Outcome-Driven Club Experience: the Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development and Regular Attendance.

For this part of the study, a similar regression framework was used to determine the effects of members' Club Experience while controlling for member and staff characteristics. Club members who rated their Club Experience highly were compared to Club members who did not rate their Club Experience as highly. Among regularly attending Club members, some key statistically significant findings are:

**97%** feel safe when they are at the Club

**91%** report they enjoy coming to the Club and have a good time at the Club

**95%** believe there is an adult at the Club who always wants them to do their best

**BGCSTL** made significant improvements in all nine areas related to a Positive Club Experience. The percentage of members rating BGCSTL as “Doing Great” with Overall Club Experience increased by 15% compared to other Clubs across the country that improved their overall “Doing Great” rating by 2%. This trend continued across all Club Experience areas with an 11% increase in the areas of Overall Safety and Fun.

## BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA



### OLDER TEENS (Ages 16 and Older)

**48%**

**less likely to have consumed alcohol** in the past month when they have an optimal level of fun

**18%**

**more likely to expect to attend college** when they experience an optimal level of physical safety at the Club

**18%**

**more days per week of being physically active** when they experience an optimal level of support from the Club staff



### YOUNGER TEENS (Ages 13 to 15)

**32%**

**less likely to engage in physical fights** when they experience an optimal level of physical safety at the Club

**19%**

**more likely to have volunteered in the community** when they have optimal levels of adult support

**35%**

**less likely to have skipped school** when they attend frequently (two or more Club visits per week)



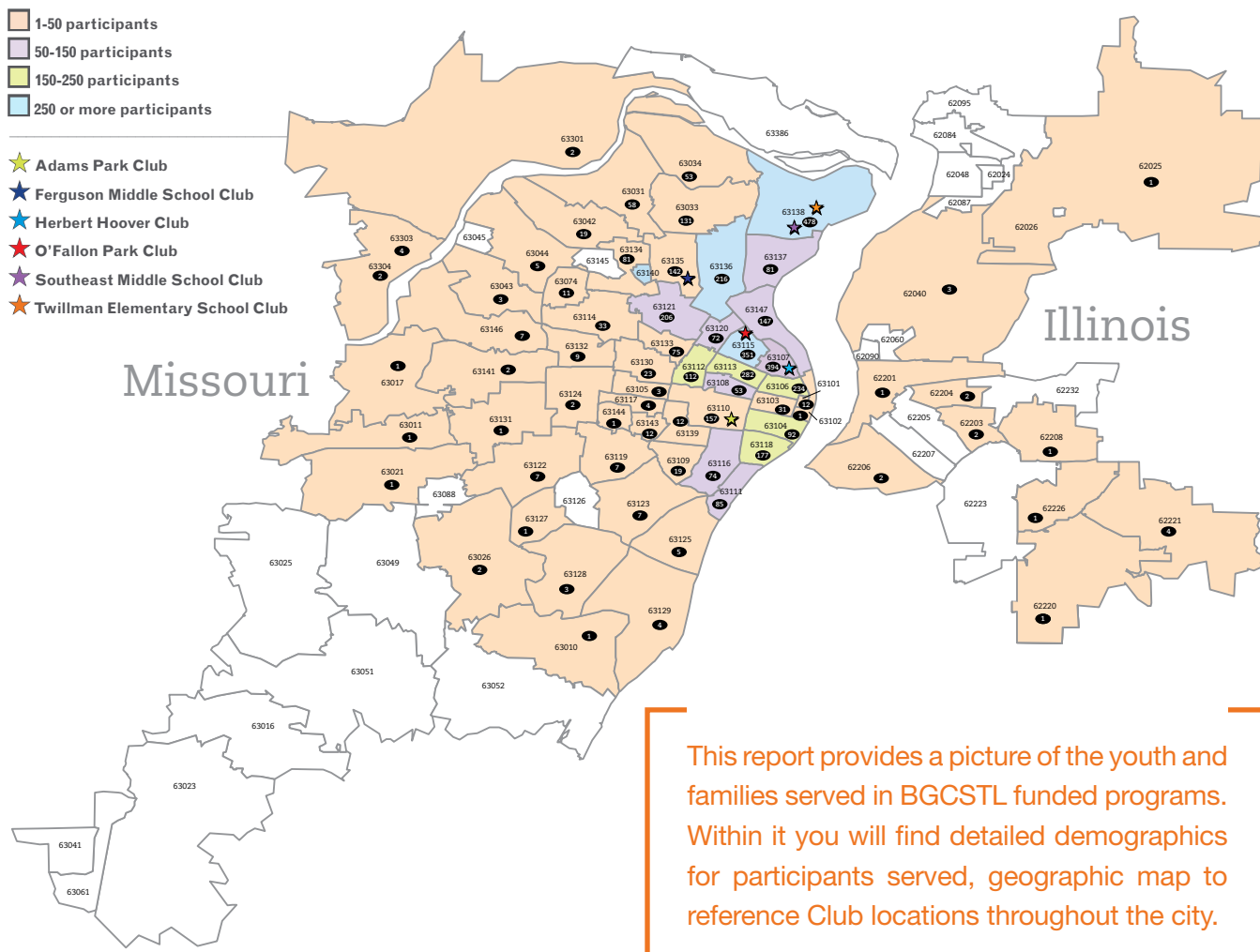
### YOUTH (Ages 9 to 12)

**15%**

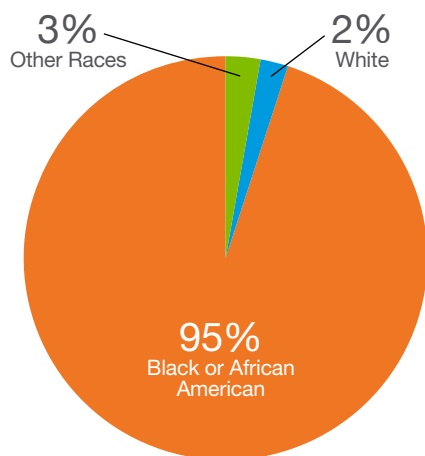
**more likely to be on track to graduate from high school** when they believe that Club staff have high expectations for them

# WHO WE SERVE

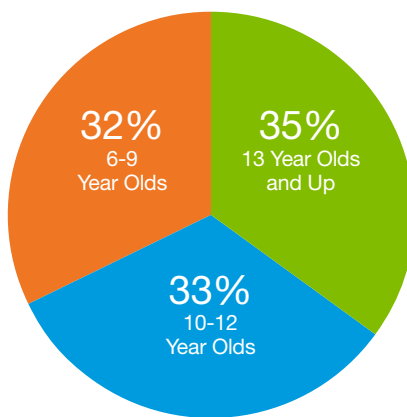
## BGCSTL'S PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY ZIP CODE



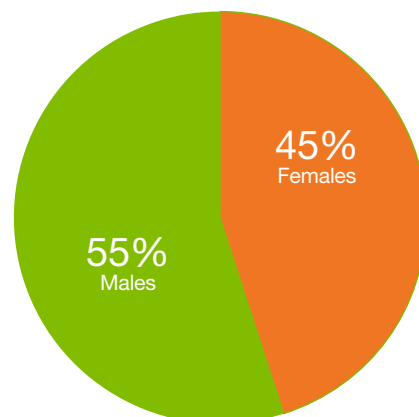
### MEMBERS BY ETHNICITY



### MEMBERS BY AGE

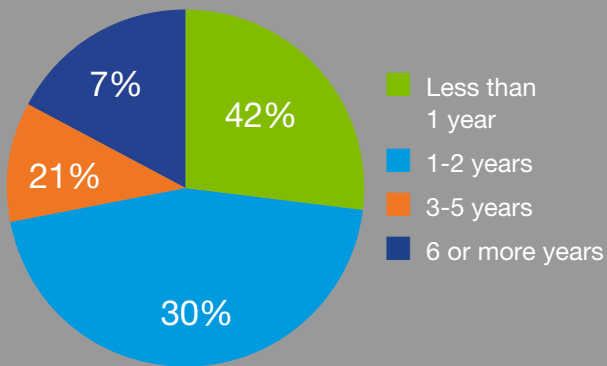


### MEMBERS BY GENDER





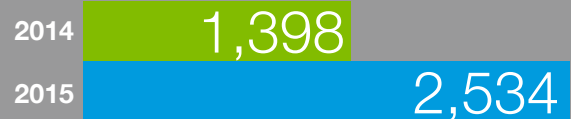
## REGISTERED MEMBER TENURE



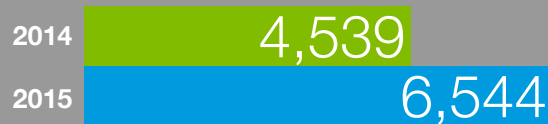
## REGISTERED MEMBERS



## YOUTH SERVED THROUGH COMMUNITY OUTREACH



## TOTAL YOUTH SERVED



## AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE



## OUR GREAT FUTURES 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.



# CLUB YOUTH ACHIEVE POSITIVE OUTCOMES ACROSS BGCA'S PRIORITY AREAS





## GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE GRADUATES

Graduating from high school matters greatly. High school dropouts are more likely to be unemployed, be arrested or incarcerated, and use public assistance subsidies and the public health system than high school graduates.<sup>5</sup> The overall national graduation rate is at a historic high of 82 percent.<sup>6</sup> But some groups, such as students from some minority groups or low-income families, continue to lag considerably behind.<sup>7</sup> While 87 percent of white teens graduate on time, only 73 percent of black teens and 76 percent of Latino teens do so.<sup>8</sup> Teens from low-income families graduate at a rate nearly eight percentage points lower than the rate for their peers overall.<sup>9</sup> Even greater disparities appear in college enrollment rates. While only 49 percent of low-income students enroll immediately in college after graduating high school, 80 percent of high-income students do so. That's a gap of 31 percentage points.<sup>10</sup>

BGCSTL believes that this a tragedy, both for young people and for our nation, as the health of our economy and our communities increasingly depends on a well-educated workforce. Young adults with bachelor's degrees earn more than twice as much as those without a high school diploma and nearly 59 percent more than those with high school diplomas.<sup>11</sup>

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis offers homework help, tutoring, educational enrichment and college preparation programs designed to support young people's academic achievement and facilitate their success. BGCSTL works to ensure that members stay in school and graduate from high school on time, ready for a post-secondary education or to embark on a career.

For these reasons, BGCA developed an indicator to help us better understand the extent to which Club members are on track to achieve on-time high school graduation. The indicator uses data from existing research-based indicators already collected through NYOI.

Research shows that attendance, behavior and course performance are the greatest predictors of students not graduating high school on time. Chronic absenteeism negatively affects student achievement in all grades, and students who perform poorly in their courses are at much higher risk for dropping out. Another component of on-time graduation is matriculation through school. Retention at any time in a student's school life places him or her at risk of not graduating, and retention in the middle grades is particularly problematic.<sup>12</sup>

**57%** optimal/low risk – on track

**17%** intermediate/moderate risk

**26%** high risk – off track in school

Thus, BGCSTL calculates its on-track indicator for Club members in 5th through 12th grades using self-reported data on skipping school, grades on schoolwork, retention and member expectation of high school graduation. Members are considered to be off track to graduate on time if they report skipping school two or more days in the month before taking the survey, their grades are mostly D's or F's, do not expect to graduate from high school, or are two or more years behind grade level in school. Behavior is not included in BGCA's on-track indicator because NYOI does not collect self-reported data related to school behavior.

**99%** of teens expect to complete high school.

**90%** of teens expect to go on to post-secondary Education.

**89%** of members perceive school as being important or very important for their later life.

**96%** grades mostly A's, B's, & C's (self reported).

# CLUBS HELP KIDS STAY MORE ENGAGED IN SCHOOL

## KEEPING MEMBERS ON-TRACK TO GRADUATE – INTERVENTION PROGRAMS:

Mentor St. Louis – BE GREAT: Graduate – Normandy High School

### PROGRAM GOALS:

Academic Success, Good Character & Citizenship, & Healthy LifeStyles



### BE GREAT: GRADUATE FINDINGS

BE GREAT: Graduate is a comprehensive, targeted dropout prevention intervention designed to enhance youths' engagement with learning by providing consistent support from caring and trusted adults to develop the academic, emotional and social skills necessary to achieve academic success.

We were excited to introduce the "BE GREAT: Graduate" program in the Normandy School District in 2015. The program is meant to keep members on track to graduate, one of the areas in which Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis specializes. This program targets Normandy High School students who are identified by school staff as showing signs of disengaging from school such as poor attendance, behavioral issues and/or low grades.

The first year at Normandy High School was very successful. In 2015, the program served 150 unduplicated youth through school day intervention services, after-school enrichment opportunities, a summer learning academy and member support services provided by the program's Master's level Social Worker (MSW).

Members were engaged in one-on-one and group mentoring sessions (utilizing SMART Moves, Passport to Manhood and SMART Girls curriculum). Staff monitored course grades, course placement and school attendance, conducted weekly assessments to check for the warning signs of withdrawal from school and worked with the youth to develop an immediate intervention that focused on decreasing the negative risks while increasing the positive factors (i.e., confidence).

### PASSPORT TO MANHOOD SMART GIRLS

**Goal:** 75% of youth report increased knowledge of risky behaviors and responsible adulthood

**Survey Results:** 20 of 31 (65%) improved or maintained their knowledge

**Additional Findings:** 61% of female members feel they get along with other girls their age (26% increase); 81% of female members feel they can express themselves in a positive way (10% increase)

### PASSPORT TO MANHOOD

**Goal:** 75% of youth report increased knowledge of risky behaviors and responsible adulthood.

**Survey Results:** 22 of 42 (52%) improved or maintained their knowledge

**Additional Findings:** Self reports from male members showed: 74% increased self-image; 62% increased their self-esteem; 81% increased their self-confidence; 60% decreases their aggressive behavior; 69% decreased their involvement with law enforcement

### SMART LEADERS

**Goal:** 80% of youth report increased knowledge of risky behaviors and identify negative impacts of substance abuse.

**Survey Results:** 41 of 69 (59%) improved or maintained their knowledge

**Additional Findings:** 83% of members reported thinking about how their actions will affect others before they make decisions (12% increase)



Through the mentoring relationship, problem solving and persistence; staff are working diligently in partnership with the day school staff to keep the students on track through their crucial transition years. Understanding the complex challenges many of the members face during and outside of school was achieved with the guidance of our MSW who provided individual assessments to those most at risk and developed individual action plans to support them in overcoming their challenges. Additionally, we strategically identified key community partners to address issues such as trauma for those who need more in-depth interventions.

When comparing the last 2 quarters of the 2014/15 school year to the first 2 quarters of the 2015/16 school year; we found a 23% increase in the number of members who reached their individual goals of achieving a 90% attendance rate (increasing from 33% to 56% of participants).

BGCSTL also found a 13% decrease in the number of members who were suspended from school (decreasing from 24% to 11% of participants).

**93%** **believe there is an adult who believes that they will be a success**

A major component of the program is the celebration of successes and exposure to experiences that help to make real life connections to their future plans. Members have participated in special activities both on and off campus including attending sporting events, special celebration days at Herbert Hoover Club, and several trips to tour 5 local colleges and universities. Further, 4 weeks of the summer learning academy took place on the campus of and in partnership with the University of Missouri St. Louis. College Tours, job shadowing opportunities, and college overnight experiences are essential for life application of the lessons learned during their individual and group sessions. Trips such as these have become integral in helping members remain engaged in school, set academic goals, and create plans for life after high school graduation.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America's research shows that Club members who are on track to graduate tend to have high expectations for their future educational attainment. Of Club high school seniors who attend the Club regularly and are on track to graduate, 78% report having applied for post-secondary education and 64% report having applied to a four-year college or university.

We feel strongly that those members participating in the BE GREAT: Graduate program at Normandy High School who continue to attend the program through their senior year will have a strong likelihood of attending a post-secondary institution.

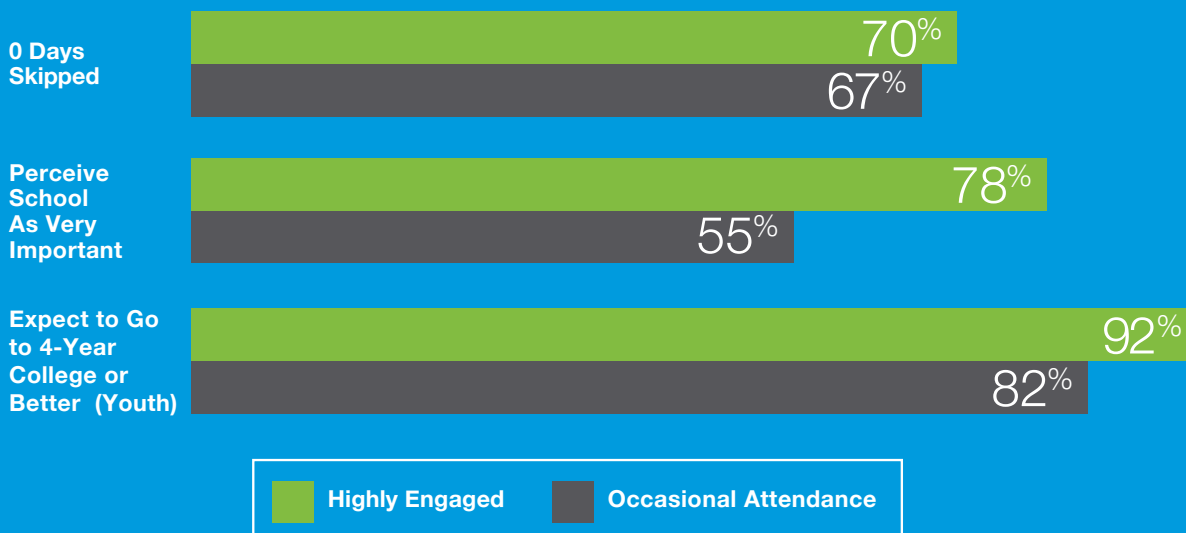
Once students make the transition into ninth grade, external research shows that earning good grades, passing courses and accumulating sufficient credits are all important for on-time high school graduation. A well-known study finds that by the end of ninth graders' first semester, course grades and course failure rates are good predictors of graduation because they directly indicate whether students are making progress in their courses and accumulating the necessary credits.<sup>13</sup>

Given this, we further examine how our adolescent members who attend the Club regularly are doing in terms of their schoolwork grades. Since 60% of Club members nationally qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches, it is useful to focus our analysis on regularly attending adolescent members from low-income families. We can compare their self-reported grades to those of youth nationally of the same ages and socioeconomic status using data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), administered annually to individuals ages 12 and older.<sup>14</sup>

Our comparison suggests that low-income, regularly attending Club members ages 12 to 17 are outperforming their peers nationally. About three-quarters of these Club members report earning mostly A's and B's in school, compared with 67% of youth nationally.

## BGCSTL ACADEMIC SUCCESS MEASURES

BGCSTL Club members who are highly engaged skip fewer days of school, feel more connected to school, and have greater post-secondary aspirations. For example, 78% of members who are highly engaged perceive school as very important compared with 55% of members who attend occasionally – a 23 point difference.



## ★ 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEADERS

As expressed in BGCA's mission statement, we are committed to developing our country's future generations of productive, caring, responsible citizens. Throughout Boys & Girls Clubs' more than a century of existence, they have worked to foster young people's integrity and good character, their ability to make positive life choices, their belief that they can bring about positive change in their communities, and their compassion and willingness to serve others.

In 2013, BGCA introduced another optional module in the NYOI member survey to examine members' concern for others and for their communities. More than 45,000 regularly attending Club members took this module in 2015. Of these, 87 percent agreed that when they make a decision, they try to think about how other people will be affected, and 84 percent said they believe they can make a difference in their communities.

The NYOI survey also asks Club members questions related to leadership. Among regularly attending members, 92 percent said they can stand up for what is right, even if their friends disagree. These findings suggest that Club members' *attitudes* reflect good character and citizenship, but what do we know about their *behaviors* related to this area? (See next page.)

**92% of members who attend the Club regularly say they can stand up for what is right, even if their friends disagree.**

Providing character, leadership and service opportunities for Club members is an essential part of the Club Experience. BGCA continues to encourage Clubs to implement small-group leadership development clubs for younger and older adolescents through Torch and Keystone Clubs.

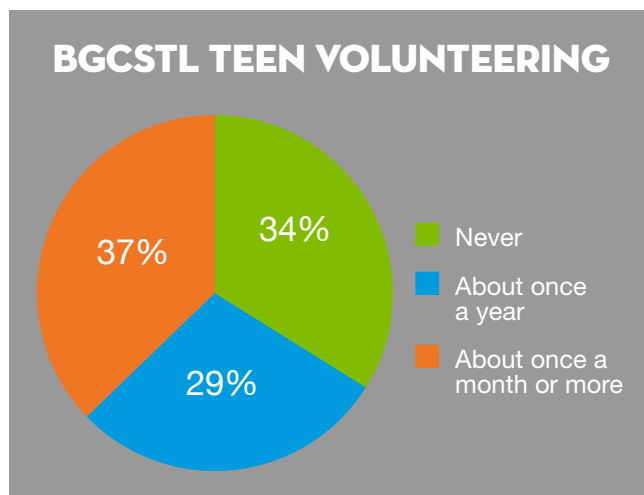
Members of all ages participate in year-round community service and more intensive service-learning activities through the Million Members, Million Hours (MMMh) of Service initiative.

In spring 2016, BGCA will provide all Clubs with a Service Learning Project Guide so that they can take service opportunities for youth to the next level.

For more than 60 years, Youth of the Year has been BGCA's premier recognition program, celebrating the extraordinary achievements of Club members. In the Youth of the Month/Year programs, young people showcase their talents, good character and leadership at local, state, regional and national levels. The Youth of the Year program now provides more leadership development opportunities and scholarship funding for many deserving young people. In 2016, BGCA will provide Clubs with new resources to strengthen their Youth of the Month and Junior Youth of the Year programming.

## CLUB TEENS VOLUNTEER MORE THAN TEENS NATIONALLY

In the 2015 survey, nationally 70 percent of regularly attending Club teen members indicated that they volunteer at least once per year, and 46 percent said they volunteer at least once per month. This is good news, because according to research compiled by Child Trends, volunteering in adolescence is associated with positive outcomes during the teen years and in adulthood.



Teens who volunteer are less likely to become pregnant or to use drugs, and are more likely to have positive academic, psychological and occupational well-being. Adolescents who are involved in community service or who volunteer in political activities are more likely as adults to have a strong work ethic, to volunteer and to vote. Volunteering is also associated with the development of greater respect for others, leadership skills and an understanding of citizenship that can carry over into adulthood.<sup>15</sup>

## TEENS WITH TENURE VOLUNTEER MORE

BGCSTL members who are highly engaged and those who have a longer tenure volunteer more. For example, 76 percent of members who have been with the Club more than two years volunteer at least once a year compared to 60 percent of those who have been with the Club less than 1 year, a 16-point difference.



BGCSTL continues to develop additional indicators to better measure core aspects of character that equip youth to live successful, productive lives. Young people's ability to navigate day-to-day challenges has been shown to be essential to their well-being.<sup>16</sup> The ability to work skillfully as a team member is highly valued in 21st century educational and workplace environments.<sup>17</sup> Goals are important for achievement of outcomes and help propel young people to persist in the face of challenges.<sup>18</sup> Goals and goal setting play a key role in self-regulation and motivation, and are associated with decreases in fighting, smoking, and depression.<sup>19</sup> Thus, in 2016, the NYOI member survey will feature new questions related to coping with challenges, teamwork and goal pursuit.

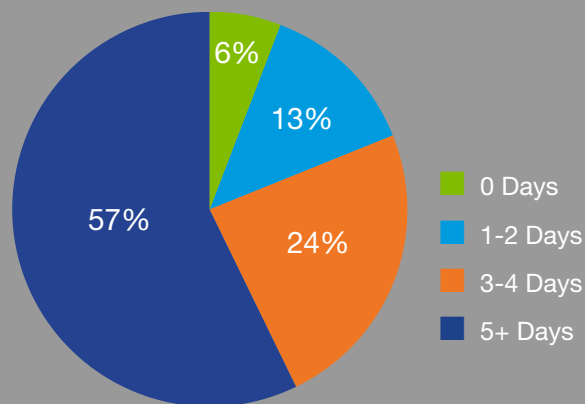
## A HEALTHIER GENERATION

More than a third of all young people in the United States are overweight or obese. The prevalence of childhood obesity has not changed in almost a decade.<sup>20</sup> The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans adopted by the American Academy of Pediatrics and First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! initiative recommend that youth participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 60 minutes per day.<sup>21</sup> Yet, most studies of physical activity among youth show that they fall short of this recommendation, and girls are even more likely to fall short than boys.<sup>22</sup>

With young people losing opportunities for physical activity in their schools<sup>23</sup>, Boys & Girls Clubs play an important role in providing a safe space to exercise, compete in team sports and play with friends. Clubs provide fun, creative ways for girls and boys of all skill and fitness levels to get moving.

In 2016, BGCSTL will work to increase physical activity and nutrition education for members and their families, provide healthy meals and adopt sustainable policies. Clubs will encourage youth and families to make a lifelong commitment to healthy lifestyles by involving them in educational experiences, physical challenges, garden projects, recreational activities and youth sports. BGCSTL will also identify and share new strategies with Clubs to engage female Club members in physical activity more often.

### 1 HOUR OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



### HEALTH-RISK BEHAVIORS: HOW CLUB TEENS COMPARE TO TEENS NATIONALLY

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBS), administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), monitors health-risk behaviors among U.S. youth and young adults. The CDC fields the survey every two years with students in ninth through 12th grades in high school classrooms. In the NYOI member survey, BGCA uses some questions from the YRBS in order to compare Club members' survey results with national YRBS results.

Since the inception of BGCA's NYOI member survey, Club members in ninth through 12th grades have scored better than the YRBS national average on a number of health-risk behavior measures, including abstention from alcohol, marijuana and cigarette use. The pattern is similar this year when we compare our 2015 data for our high-school-age Club members to the YRBS national averages.



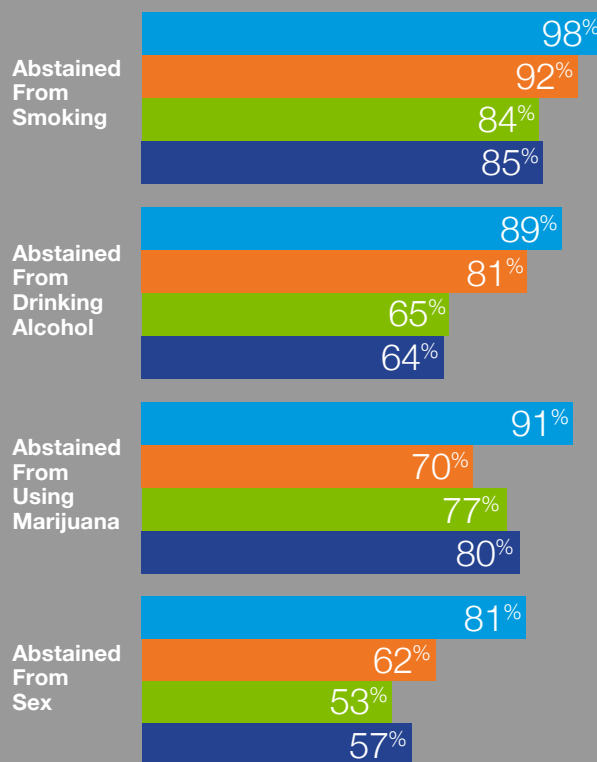
Teens who stay connected to the Club as they get older seem better able to resist high-risk behaviors than teens nationally at the same ages.

We see this pattern of widening gaps in abstention rates as Club and national youth progress through high school for almost all health-risk behavior indicators included in BGCA's NYOI survey and the CDC's YRBS survey. Other external and BGCA research has found that participation in quality afterschool programing leads to reduced engagement in risk behaviors, among other positive outcomes.<sup>24</sup> Our NYOI data suggests that members who stay involved with their Boys & Girls Clubs throughout their teen years are reaping some of those benefits.

For this reason, BGCSTL is committed to increase teen membership, engagement and tenure. In 2016, BGCSTL will focus on increasing our capacity to deliver the optimal Club Experience and deepen our impact with teens. To drive engagement, BGCSTL will design and deliver new and enhanced teen programs, offer teen-specific training opportunities for staff, facilitate the cultivation of local strategic growth partnerships, and provide resources and tools to support local teen marketing and outreach efforts.

## HOW BGCSTL TEENS COMPARE TO TEENS NATIONALLY

- BGCSTL's Highly Engaged Teens
- BGCSTL Teens
- U.S. YRBS
- Missouri YRBS



Generally, BGCSTL Teens who are highly engaged are more likely to abstain from high-risk behaviors than their non-Club counterparts nationally. Among our population of Club members ages 13 and older, members who attend more often and are highly engaged are even less likely to smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, use marijuana and engage in sexual activity.

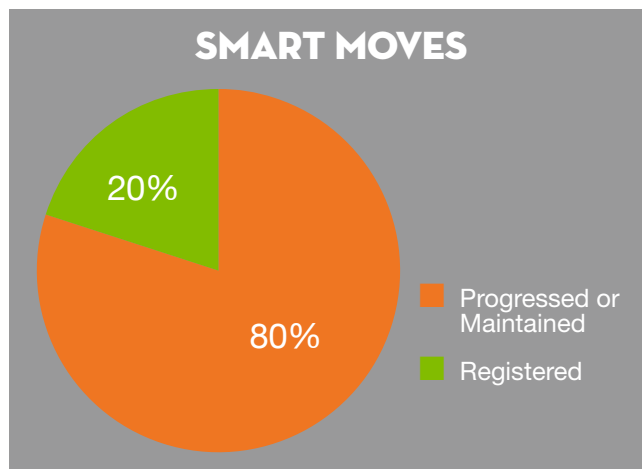
## SMART MOVES

For ages 6-18, the SMART (Skills Mastery and Resistance Training) Moves program is a nationally acclaimed prevention program originally developed in the 1980s with help from prevention specialists and Clubs around the country. Newly revised in 2011, the program incorporates the latest information and approaches that BGCA has learned about effective prevention. Participants will be exposed to various activities designed to hone their decision-making and critical-thinking skills, as well as learn how to avoid and/or resist alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and premature sexual activity.

**Members Served in 2015:** 1,454

**Goal:** 80% of youth report increased knowledge of risky behaviors and can identify the negative health impacts of substance abuse

**Key Findings:** 80% of members participating in our SMART Moves programs improved and/or maintained their knowledge of risky behaviors and the negative health impacts of substance abuse.



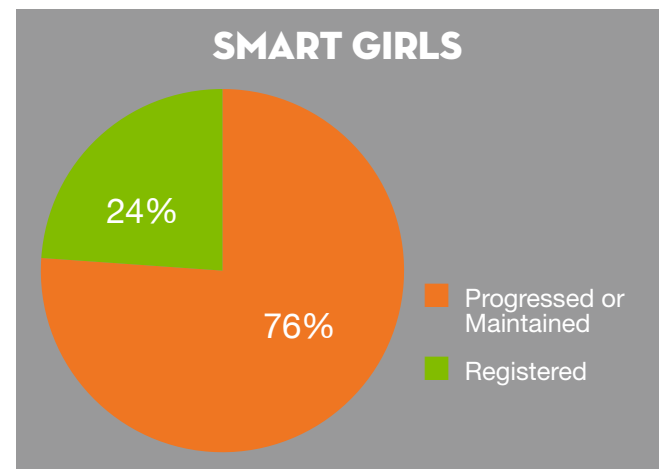
## SMART GIRLS

For ages 6-18, SMART Girls is a small-group health, fitness, prevention/education and self-esteem enhancement program designed to meet the developmental needs of girls in three age groups. Through dynamic sessions, highly participatory activities, field trips and mentoring opportunities with adult women, Club girls explore their own and societal attitudes and values as they build skills for eating right, staying physically fit, getting good health care and developing positive relationships with peers and adults.

**Members Served in 2015:** 780

**Goal:** 75% of youth report increased knowledge of risky behaviors and responsible adulthood

**Key Findings:** 76% of members participating in our SMART Girls programs improved and/or maintained their knowledge of risky behaviors and responsible adulthood.



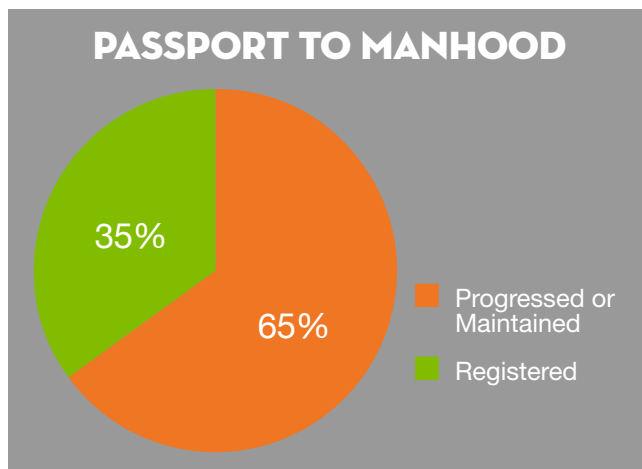
## PASSPORT TO MANHOOD

Passport to Manhood promotes and teaches responsibility in Club boys ages 8-17. Passport to Manhood consists of 14 sessions, each of which concentrates on a specific aspect of manhood through highly interactive activities. Each Club participant receives his own “passport” to underscore the notion that he is on a personal journey of maturation and growth. Passport to Manhood represents a targeted effort to engage young men in discussions activities that reinforce positive behavior. Passport to Manhood is an excellent complement to SMART Girls.

**Members Served in 2015:** 876

**Goal:** 75% of youth report increased knowledge of risky behaviors and responsible adulthood

**Key Findings:** 65% of members participating in our Passport to Manhood programs improved and/or maintained their knowledge of risky behaviors and responsible adulthood.



# FINDINGS FROM IMPACT STUDIES





# INVESTING IN BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS PAYS DIVIDENDS FOR YOUTH, FAMILIES AND OUR NATION

A new study commissioned by BGCA finds that every dollar invested in Boys & Girls Clubs returns \$9.60 in current and future earnings and cost-savings to American communities. As a nationwide federation, Clubs spend \$1.4 billion annually on operating costs, resulting in \$13.8 billion in lifetime benefits to youth, families and our society.

In 2015, BGCA engaged researchers at the Institute for Social Research and the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan to conduct a national study to estimate the **return on investment** (ROI), or the benefit-cost ratio, of the services Boys & Girls Clubs provide to youth and their families. The ROI analysis examined how the costs required to provide Club programming compare to the long-term benefits for youth and families in economic terms.

## HOW THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED

The study provides the first national ROI estimates for Clubs. It is also the first study of this type to take advantage of the wealth of data available through BGCA's National Youth Outcomes Initiative.

To estimate a benefit-cost ratio, researchers examine program costs and lifetime economic benefits.

In BGCA's study, the researchers included the program and management costs from all local Club organizations and BGCA national headquarters.

To estimate lifetime economic benefits of overall Club impact, the research team compared Club member NYOI data to comparable national data sets<sup>25</sup>, adjusting for demographic and socioeconomic factors. Overall, researchers found that Club members have higher physical activity and grades, and lower cigarette, marijuana and alcohol use, as compared to matched comparison samples.

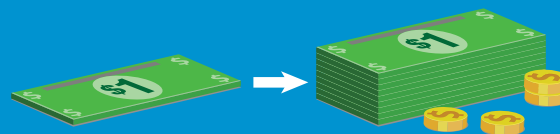
The researchers also estimated impact on parental earnings, using results of a previous local Club ROI study,

in which 36 percent of parents strongly agreed that Clubs allowed them to keep their jobs.<sup>26</sup> These findings from Club parents are corroborated by a national survey of parents in which 55 percent completely agreed and 28 percent agreed that afterschool programs help them keep their jobs.<sup>27</sup>

## RESULTS SHOW CLUBS ARE A SOUND INVESTMENT

Overall, BGCA's study found that...

**EVERY \$1 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.

These local-level economic benefits translate to substantial economic benefits for our nation and society as a whole. Clubs spend \$1.4 billion annually on operating costs,<sup>28</sup> resulting in \$13.8 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 savings for society by helping to prevent costly expenditures for health care, public assistance programs, and criminal justice system involvement and incarceration.

The study indicates that Boys & Girls Club services and programs produce tremendous value for youth, families and their communities. The long-term economic benefits associated with those services are considerably higher than their costs. Investing in Boys & Girls Clubs pays dividends to society by helping young people reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

## ESTIMATING ROI OF TWO NATIONAL PROGRAMS

The study also produced benefit-cost ratios for two BGCA programs. Project Learn is a Club-wide program strategy that reinforces and enhances the skills and knowledge young people gain at school during their time at the Club. Triple Play is a suite of programs that increase Club members' daily physical activity, teach them good nutrition and help them develop healthy relationships.



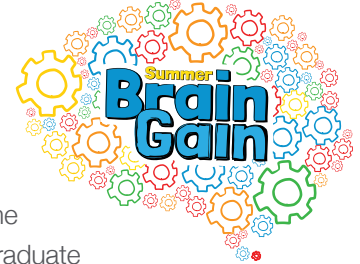
To calculate program expenses, the research team used information about the costs of staff and volunteer time, facilities and supplies provided by Boys & Girls Clubs in Georgia, a state in which wages are close to the national average. Researchers used outcomes findings from previous evaluations of the two programs to quantify their benefits (see pages 30 and 31). They found that:

- Project Learn generates an estimated \$18,000 in lifetime benefits from improved grades, yielding a return of \$8 on every dollar invested.
- Triple Play produces estimated lifetime benefits of \$270 by increasing physical activity, for a return of \$1.40 on every dollar invested.

BGCA complements its outcome measurement efforts with formal, third-party evaluation of programs to identify the essential components of high-quality implementation and ensure that program design and content achieve desired outcomes.

## SUMMER BRAIN GAIN

The phenomenon called the “Summer Slide”—the detrimental effect of the summer months on children’s learning, particularly among underserved youth—is well understood as a result of two decades of research. Because of inequities in access to summer learning opportunities, low income youth are less likely to graduate high school and enter college.<sup>29</sup> To help address this among Club youth, in 2013 BGCA launched Summer Brain Gain, a program that promotes and sustains learning in members of all ages during the summer.



In the program’s first year, BGCA and Metis Associates began an evaluation of Summer Brain Gain to inform curriculum refinement, program implementation and staff training. The 2013 evaluation focused on formative evaluation of the program’s pilot. Such studies identify areas of improvement in program implementation that might lead to better participant outcomes.<sup>30</sup> The 2014 effort combined formative evaluation with measurement of youth outcomes related to math, reading, literacy and 21st century skills.

In 2015, Metis conducted a third, more rigorous evaluation of Summer Brain Gain’s modules for elementary-age youth to measure program effectiveness and impact.<sup>31</sup> Metis combined strategies gleaned from the previous formative evaluations with measurement of youth outcomes related to math, reading, literacy and 21st century skills in a **randomized control trial**.

Such studies compare outcomes from control and treatment groups in an attempt to show a cause-and-effect relationship between a program and its outcomes,<sup>32</sup> and are critical for establishing an evidence base for a program's effectiveness.

Fifty-five Clubs agreed to participate in the evaluation. Of these, 28 were randomly assigned to a treatment group, meaning they would conduct Summer Brain Gain with elementary-age youth. The other 27 were assigned to a control group, meaning they would not implement Summer Brain Gain or any other summer learning program during the study period.

### Key Findings:

- Overall, Summer Brain Gain 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>33</sup>
- Summer Brain Gain participants in fourth and fifth grades had notably higher gains in math than control group youth, and participants in first through third grades had slightly greater gains in early literacy than control group youth. These gains, however, were not statistically significant.
- The study did not find that the curriculum had a demonstrable impact on participants' 21st century skills or interest in reading.
- Prior Club implementation experience appears to be associated with greater implementation fidelity, completion of program components, higher youth engagement and greater growth in early literacy and math.

The outcome findings may have been influenced by some attrition among the treatment and control sites and variation in how the treatment sites implemented the program. As with Metis' previous evaluations, BGCA will use the 2015 evaluation results to further enhance existing Summer Brain Gain curriculum materials, develop new content and refine its guidelines for effective program implementation.



Participants in the Triple Play family of programs, which strive to improve the overall health of members ages 6 to 18<sup>34</sup>.

### Increased time spent engaging in physical activity

35%

**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%

**made improvements to their eating habits**, compared to only 21 percent of control group youth

52%

**ate breakfast more often** by the end of the study, compared to 38 percent of control group youth.

### Improved their eating habits

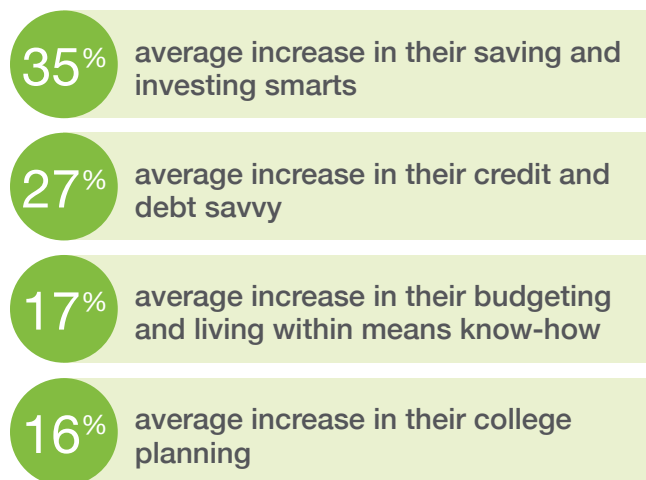
44%

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

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM PAST EVALUATIONS OF BGCA NATIONAL PROGRAMS



Club youth who completed this program, which builds the financial management skills of members ages 13 to 18, had a<sup>35</sup>:



Participants with spending money showed significant behavior improvement upon completing the program: 79 percent (an increase of 11 percent) said they started saving money and 43 percent (an increase of eight percent) said they were sticking to a budget plan.

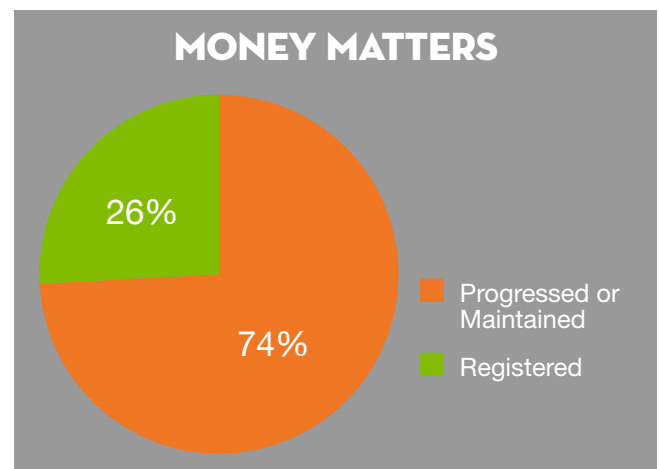
## MONEY MATTERS

For ages 6-18, Money Matters is a financial literacy program designed to help youth gain useful knowledge and skills on various aspects of money management, including managing a checking account, budgeting, saving, investing, entrepreneurship and paying for college.

**Members Served in 2015:** 1,364

**Goal:** 70% of youth report increased understanding of the consequences of personal financial decisions

**Key Findings:** 74% of members participating in our Money Matters programs improved and/or maintained their knowledge of what it means to be financially responsible.





## 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>36</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 and productive use of out-of-school time
- Disengagement from gang-associated behaviors and peers

## SMART LEADERS

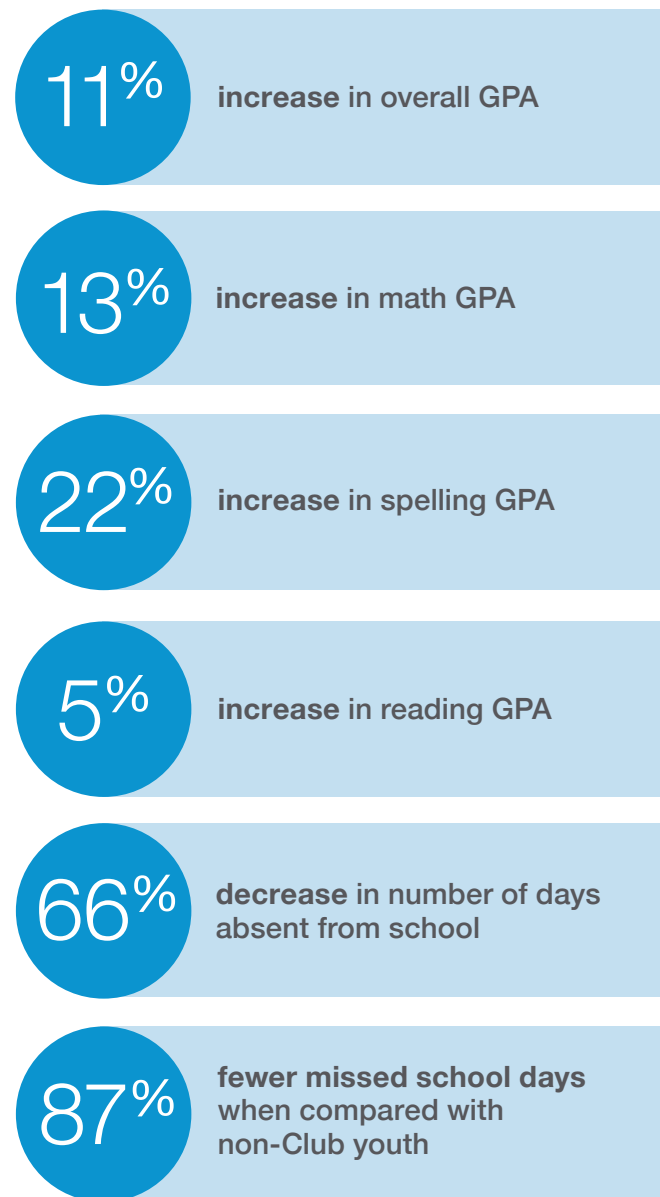
This “booster” program is for teens who have completed the Stay SMART component of the risk-behavior prevention program SMART Moves.

Participants experienced<sup>31</sup>:

- Less alcohol use than their peers
- Less marijuana use than their peers
- Reduced cigarette use
- Lower overall drug use and increased drug use knowledge

## PROJECT LEARN

Participants in this Club-wide program, which reinforces and enhances the skills and knowledge young people learn at school, had significantly better academic outcomes than Club youth who did not participate in Project Learn and non-Club youth<sup>37</sup>:



## **MAKING EVERY DAY COUNT: BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS' ROLE IN PROMOTING POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR TEENS**

Few evaluations have examined the overall impact youth development programs have on teens, especially during their critical transition from middle to high school. This study of young teens' entire Club Experience found that youth were more likely to demonstrate greater positive outcomes when they attended the Club at least 52 times per year. The positive effects were even greater when they attended at least 104 times per year. Young teens who attended the Club more often were more likely to report the following outcomes<sup>38</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 the future)
- 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

BGCSTL is pleased to present our fourth annual outcomes report—*Measuring the Impact of Boys & Girls Clubs*—to our valued partners and supporters.

The 2015 report presents many promising, positive findings that help us advance our measurement goals on the local and national levels:

- Demonstrate our collective impact on young people;
- Use what we are learning to continue improving our services; and
- Increase and deepen our impact on youth.

We remain focused on building Club organizations' capacity to use their data for organizational performance management, assessment of program quality, and more effective reporting to funding sources and other stakeholders.

BGCSTL and its Club affiliates are increasingly leveraging this powerful measurement data to inform our longer-term organizational goal setting and strategic planning and more effectively fulfill our mission:

*The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis (BGCSTL) is to inspire and enable youth ages 6 to 18 to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens.*



# CONCLUSION



## ENDNOTES

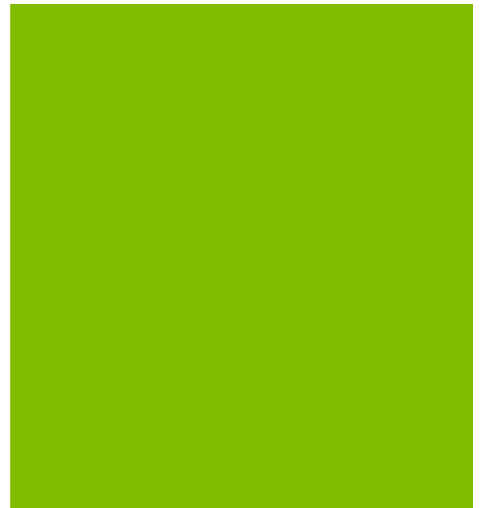
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