



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF ANNAPOLIS &
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY**

November 30, 2022

Dear Friends,

The past few years have been hard on all of us, but it's been a uniquely challenging time to grow up. In some ways, this year's back-to-school season restored a degree of pre-pandemic normalcy: most places have lifted mask mandates, dropped COVID vaccine requirements, and relaxed rules on social distance and quarantines. While kids and teens continue to show resilience, we cannot underestimate the impact the last few years have had on them. Many of the pandemic's longer-lasting impacts remain a troubling reality.



In late 2021, the Surgeon General declared a public health emergency around youth mental health. According to 2021 data from a JAMA Pediatrics report, 1 in 4 youth have reported clinically elevated symptoms of depression and 1 in 5 have reported increased signs of anxiety. Concerningly, suicide is currently the third-leading cause of death for teens and young adults with 19% of high school students seriously considering it. Of the young people in need of mental health support, 60% are unable to access treatment.



Now, more than ever, kids need Boys & Girls Clubs. Throughout our history, safety has been our No. 1 priority; not just physical safety but the social and emotional safety of our kids and teens. Our data show that environments that are safe, positive, and inclusive are essential for young people's development. When kids feel safe, they're empowered to learn, connect with their peers, and explore their interests. At Boys & Girls Clubs, kids and teens can rely on a safe, consistent, and welcoming environment where they can focus on what's most important – being a kid.

Thanks to supporters like you, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County (BGCAA) is providing those safe spaces throughout our community. To ensure that we can continue offering these critical services, I need your support.

Boys & Girls Clubs provide youth mentorship and meaningful life experiences that boost youth self-esteem, build confidence, and contribute to healthy mental, emotional, and physical well-being. BGCAA is committed to doing even more. We are integrating trauma-informed practices throughout our organization, increasing staff training to include topics on trauma and mental health, supporting families, and building partnerships with mental health service providers.

Our goal is for all young people to receive emotionally safe support, so they are prepared for their Great Futures.

Franklin D. Roosevelt said it best: “We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.” At BGCAA we never take a single approach to helping young people. Whether it be through mentorship, structured programs, a healthy meal, or a relationship with a caring and responsible adult, providing a high-quality club experience is the key to strengthening a sense of belonging.



Our desire to reach those who need us most inspired us to go beyond BGCAA's traditional approach to youth development and take our mission on the road. Enter... *Club on the Go!* This mobile program allows us to strategically serve communities without access to a traditional Clubhouse. *Club on the Go* vehicles offer adaptable spaces, allowing staff members to vary programs and services. Since the summer of 2021, BGCAA's *Club on the Go* has connected evidence-based programming and mentorship to 2,164 children who might not otherwise have had the opportunity.



A parent whose daughters attend our *Club on the Go* program at Tyler Heights Elementary School stated, **“My girls love Club on the Go so much that I now take off on Thursdays so that I can be home to take them. They wake up on days that they attend the program excited knowing they will be able to go to the program.”**

It's feedback like this that inspires all of us at BGCAA to continue to do **Whatever it Takes** to ensure our members and their families have the resources and support they need. Every day, we see the positive impact the Clubs have on our members' lives.

Your generosity allows us to help our community's most vulnerable youth. Thank you for continually believing in us and giving so many kids in our community the opportunity to succeed.

With my deepest gratitude,

Lisa Lindsay-Mondoro, CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County

P.S. We cannot do our work without **YOU** and appreciate your support as we continue serving the kids who need us most. **Here's what your gift can do:**

- \$2000 delivers programming for one member for an entire year
- \$500 provides services for 15 kids for one week
- \$100 pays annual membership fees for four kids



Please donate using the enclosed envelope, or online by visiting
<https://donorbox.org/annualcampaign>

Thank you!