

GREATFUTURES 2025

A Call to Action on Behalf of America's Youth



Jim Clark, President and CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of America



Boys & Girls Clubs have been an integral contributor to American society for more than 150 years. Through times of war, unrest, national grief, natural disasters and similar challenges, Clubs have always been there for our

nation's children, especially those who need us most. Today, we stand on the shoulders of past Club leaders, staff, volunteers and members ... those who positioned this Movement to create a transformational impact when Clubs and the services they provide are most needed.

Six years ago, the Great Futures Impact Plan provided the direction to take Clubs from outcome-intended to outcome-driven. It advanced the central role Clubs play and allowed them to create quantifiable, life-changing impact for youth. It defined a theory of change, the Formula for Impact, which identified key components of the Club Experience and aligned outcomes to three priority areas: Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles.

It also laid the groundwork to develop the National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI). Our Movement always strongly believed the Club Experience was key to providing

youth with more opportunities and unique experiences to achieve great futures. NYOI validated that belief by accurately measuring the impact Clubs make on young people, and identifying opportunities to improve outcomes. As a result, Clubs are better equipped to make considerably more impact on young people and communities. Our Movement's collaborative efforts allowed us to successfully execute The Great Futures Impact Plan, which ends this December. Now, we will chart the next phase of our collective progress through Great Futures 2025.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

During 2015 and 2016, a National Planning Commission – made up of local executives and local board leaders on the National Area Council Committee and President's Advisory Council – convened to set a Movement-wide direction through 2025. They concluded the very fabric of the American Dream to be at risk ... and that Boys & Girls Clubs are uniquely positioned with the scale, experience and capacity to lead a transformative change for our nation's youth.

Great Futures 2025 focuses on providing kids and teens with transformational experiences by restoring the foundational tenets of strong youth development – a belief that all youth deserve an equal opportunity at success and the American Dream. Unfortunately, that dream – that anyone can succeed through hard work and education – is becoming more difficult to realize.

Inspire and Empower Club Youth to Achieve Success

Champion Opportunities for All Youth in America

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Great Futures 2025 is guided by a purpose statement: “Inspire and empower Club youth to achieve success, and champion opportunities for all young people in America.” The entirety of Great Futures 2025 is centered on fulfilling this purpose statement, which should be viewed as a continuum.

At one end, the focus is to achieve our vision for youth currently served by Clubs: those we know and influence through membership and community outreach. At this end, our emphasis is on programming and opportunities provided through the Club Experience.

At the other end lies our mission: our aspirations for all youth, especially those who need us most. Here, the motivation is to advocate for youth in every community to enable success for all young people. As Clubs increase capacity to inspire and empower young people, we will expand efforts to champion opportunities for all youth.

NYOI data shows that a high-quality Club Experience helps drive positive outcomes for youth, and may increase attendance, participation and retention. Strengthening the Club Experience will support all three outcome areas and may help retain more members through the teen years. Clubs that effectively demonstrate impact are also better positioned to secure more support. By 2025, the Planning Commission looks to see 75 percent of members reporting an optimal Club Experience.

FOUR PRIORITIES

Great Futures 2025 will be implemented through four strategic priorities, which will provide direction to give members a life-changing Club Experience. Priorities 1 and 2 focus on achieving our vision for young people currently served by Clubs, with an emphasis on quality programming and stronger organizations.

1. STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONS – Driving impact and quality calls for solid leadership and capacity at every Club and BGCA, including among executive and board leaders, unit directors and front-line staff. To that end, we are investing in unit director training sessions, to train 1,200 unit directors in 2017, and 1,500 more in 2018. Additionally, we are developing digital job aids and training programs for full- and part-time staff.

2. INCREASE PROGRAM QUALITY – One of the greatest challenges to success is variability in capacity and program quality. To achieve greater outcomes and consistently deliver relevant, engaging experiences, it is critical for every Club to have a high level of program quality. Success will require ongoing development of evidence-based program models, staff practices, and systems that lead to impact. This is mission-critical. Without it, we cannot realize our vision.

Priorities 3 and 4 emphasize advocacy and growth. A strong Boys & Girls Club brand, it should be noted, is foundational for success.

3. ADVOCATE FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT – We must position Clubs as America’s premier youth development advocate. As a Movement, that means communicating with elected officials at all levels to ensure they know our mission, and can thus prioritize it and the needs of America’s kids. That includes making them aware of NYOI data, sharing how Clubs positively impact thousands of communities’ economies around the country, and reminding them of our well-established success in preparing young people for the future. We will also encourage all communities to give young people access to high-quality, out-of-school-time programs to furnish them with resources they need for long-term success.

4. REACH MORE YOUTH – In pursuing the first three priorities, we will aim for incremental growth. Once we have achieved success in program quality and organization strength, and established Clubs as America’s premier youth development advocates, we will be positioned for accelerated growth. This includes establishing dynamic partnerships with public and private institutions locally and nationally.

Great Futures 2025 focuses on what Clubs have done well since 1860 – deliver quality experiences, build stronger communities, advocate for youth, and serve kids wherever they need us. It does not presume every organization has capacity to focus on everything at once. Each organization is unique, and the plan is designed to meet Clubs where they are.

Our Movement’s enduring success is based on Clubs serving the unique needs of their kids and communities. Great Futures 2025 honors this service, while focusing on our shared priorities to provide America’s youth with even greater futures.

For more information, please visit BGCA.net/GreatFutures2025.