



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF AMERICA**

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# Social Distancing in the Club



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**BACK-TO-CLUB**



## What is social distancing?

Social distancing refers to measures taken to restrict where and when people can gather in order to stop or slow the spread of infectious disease. In general, 6-feet of separation is the distance that should be kept between people interacting. The practice of social distancing slows down the rate at which people get sick. It is one of the most effective strategies to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

## Why do we need to ensure social distancing at the Boys & Girls Club?

The overall goal of social distancing is to increase the physical space between members and staff to reduce unintended exposures. Even if someone is not sick, or you do not know anyone who is, social distancing helps slow the spread of disease.

## Planning for Social Distancing in a Club

For social distancing to become a staff practice, thoughtful planning and coordination must occur to operationalize policies and procedures and reinforce the behaviors that will keep everyone safe.

Use the [social distancing calculator](#) to determine how many members you can serve based on programming space and CDC guidelines.

Select strategies based on feasibility given the unique programming spaces in your Club. Not all strategies will be feasible for all Clubs. For example, limiting hall movement options can be particularly challenging in some Clubs. Club Directors/Site Leaders are encouraged to think creatively about all opportunities to increase the physical space between members and limit interactions in large group settings.

Cancel field trips, assemblies, and other large group gatherings, if events were already scheduled.

Prepare your space. Social distancing guidance will support a 3-foot radius around each student, resulting in a 6-foot total distance between any two students.

Prepare your staff. Ensure staff understand the procedures you have in place for social distancing, health and safety. Remind them that they are expected to model the safety expectations to members at all times. Prepare staff to deliver a daily orientation to review the Club values and expectations and that they are trained on social distancing games and modifying pre-COVID Club games.

Ensure adequate supplies are available throughout the Club to promote the practice of good hygiene, such as tissues, hand washing stations and no-touch trash cans.

Establish daily staff feedback sessions. Ask staff and members how the day went, what's going well, and what isn't? Leaders listen and take action to make improvements. The practice of listening and acting will reinforce the staff and member's feeling of being heard, resulting in the engagement to be part of continuously improving the safety in the Club.



## Implementing Social Distancing in the Club

- **Stagger arrival and/or dismissal times.** These approaches can limit the amount of close contact between members in high-traffic situations and times. This may be difficult to enforce but setting the expectation and making the staggered arrival/departure part of parent online orientation will allow parents time to plan to ensure the safety of youth and teens. Refer to [CDC Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up Guidelines](#).
- **Designate a medical needs area that is discussed in the daily Club orientation.** For example, use the designated medical area for screening members who develop flu-like symptoms and another location for first aid or medication distribution.
- **Group members by age following CDC and local guidelines, creating family groups that remain together every day.**
  - Have staff move from room to room instead of members moving. This will prevent groups mixing with others in the hall and in other rooms. If a COVID case is confirmed in a group it can be isolated more easily.
  - Family groupings serve a consistent group of members and staff offering the opportunity to more closely control the environment through monitoring of symptoms and adherence to ill-student policies. For example, it is easier to enforce processes that do not allow members into the classroom if they become ill.
  - Staff can build routines with their family groups members to wash hands upon entering and leaving the program room, and create regular cleaning practices for desks, equipment, writing utensils, and other program materials.
- **Limit nonessential visitors** (volunteers for activities, mystery readers, cafeteria support) and **limit cross-Club transfer for special programs.** For example, if members are normally brought from multiple Clubs for a special program (e.g., music, robotics, Clubs), consider cancelling and delivering the special instruction in each participating Clubs.



- **Institute measures to physically separate or create distance of at least six feet** between all youth and staff. Space design should reflect considerations for both physical and emotional safety.
  - **Increase space between chairs/desks/tables.** Rearrange furniture to maximize the space between members. Turn furniture to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other) to reduce transmission caused from virus-containing droplets (e.g., from talking, coughing, sneezing).
  - Use mats, cones or tape to **designate individual spaces on the floor** in rooms that don't have tables or chairs (e.g. the gym).
  - When possible, and especially when young people will be in the same space all day, **divide your program space into at least 3 distinct areas** or zones (area for tables/chairs, area for comfy couches and chairs, and an area for active engagement) ensuring that furnishings allow youth to be at least 6-feet apart from one another.
  - **Ensure staff can see every youth** as they spread out across distinct areas or zones in the program space.
  - **Avoid mixing members in common areas.** For example, allow members to eat lunch and breakfast in their program room rather than mixing in the cafeteria.
    - If it is not possible to suspend use of common areas, try to limit the extent to which members mix with each other. (e.g., stagger lunch by group, segregate lunch and recess area by group, send a few members into the technology center rather than going as a group, suspend the use of lockers or only allow a small group at a time in locker area).
    - Restrict hallway use through staggered release of groups.
    - Try to avoid taking multiple groups to bathrooms at once (e.g., avoid having all groups use the bathroom right after lunch or recess).
    - Stagger playground use rather than allowing multiple groups to play together and limit other activities where multiple groups interact.
  
- **Modify activities to provide a fun, engaging experience for members.**
  - Get members engaged in helping to modify their favorite games.
  - Leverage the **YD Toolbox** and [Asphalt Green](#) for activities. In the YD ToolBox, you will find that activities have been labeled to indicate if they meet social distancing guidelines or can easily be modified to meet them.
  - When choosing and modifying activities, consider the following questions:
    - Can this activity be modified to meet social distancing guidelines?
    - Where is this activity appropriate to facilitate? Inside/Outside? What room in the Club is optimal for this activity?
    - Is there adequate space to allow 6-feet of distance between all members and staff?
    - How many members can participate in this activity and meet social distancing guidelines?
    - What supplies are needed for this activity? Whenever possible, members and staff should have their own supplies and equipment. Avoid sharing equipment, and plan for cleaning time and wipe down throughout the day and after each activity.
  - Clearly explain and check for understanding to **ensure members know the new way to play** the game or participate in the activity. Members will be excited, and they will forget. Gently remind them of the new way of playing by modeling or explaining again how the game/activity has been modified to keep them safe. Ideas for modifications include:



- Designate clear boundaries.
  - Have members standing/sitting on colored spots or tape in designated areas.
  - Play sitting down if space is limited indoors.
  - Play the game while standing on one leg.
  - To modify a running game, have members begin walking around the designated area. Use movement modifications to make this more playful (e.g. a runway walk, slow-motion walk, zombie walk, etc.)
  - Play “soccer style” and kick a ball on the ground instead of tossing it.
  - If an activity or game is played with a large number of players, consider breaking into small groups to play.
- Establish a fun attention getter that signals members to stop what they are doing and pay attention so you can quickly get the group under control if they get excited.
- **Reinforce social distancing through visual and verbal cues.**
  - To reinforce physical social distancing practices consider establishing **visual reminders** and markings to indicate how members, staff and volunteers can comply. Products such as floor tape, floor signs, and wall signs provide essential reminders and examples.
  - To reinforce the practice of social distancing while members move through the Club, use floor tape lines or floor tape shapes such as dots or footprints to show members where to stand in line six feet apart.
  - To reinforce social distancing in the gym place lines of floor tape down to establish clear indicators of how to enter, exit and where to stand to play a game.
  - To reinforce the practice of washing hands, establish routines within the Club that provide cues that is hand washing time. Consider setting timers that play a fun song that the members have been part of choosing to indicate its hand washing time.
- **Implement measures to meet emotional needs of members.**
  - Provide a **cool down space** is available within the program space for when youth need time away from the group. You want to prepare this space to accommodate multiple youth if needed, ensuring they are able to be at least 6 feet apart.
  - Provide **cool down kits** with sensory-friendly manipulatives such as bubbles, play-doh and squishy balls in zip lock bags labeled with each young person’s name.
  - Create **group agreements** with youth and post in a visible space within the program area(s). Use these three questions to create your agreements:
    - How do you want to feel in our program space?
    - What will we do to have these feelings every day?
    - What will we do when there is conflict?
  - Hold a **daily member orientation** to review the agreed upon Club values, expectations and group agreements. It is a good idea to have the values and expectations posted around the Club to reinforce the members’ inclusion in the creation of the values and to have visibly available for reminders. Include the following messages:
    - Review how members and staff can remain healthy. For example, washing hands while singing the entire birthday song.
    - Create signage throughout the club that reinforces safety practices (e.g., washing hands, social distancing, etc).



- Explain to members how staggered times for bathroom use as well as eating times will keep them safe.
- Remind members where the medical needs area is located.
- Make sure all members know to not make any physical contact with each other.
- Explain why it is important for all members to remain in their designated areas.
- Ensure members know how to move throughout the Club safely.
- Keep in mind everyone is learning and there will be times when members forget; especially when they are having fun. Gently remind members that we need to keep our hands to ourselves, so we all stay safe and continue to have fun.

### **Implementing Social Distancing on Transportation**

- Institute measures to physically separate or create distance of at least six feet between all youth. This may include asking members to enter and exit the bus through rear doors, while allowing exceptions for persons with disabilities.
- Close every other row of seats.
- Increase fleet.
- Reduce maximum occupancy of buses and increase service on crowded routes as appropriate.
- Provide physical guides to ensure that youth remain at least six feet apart while on vehicles and at stops. For example, floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate where youth should not sit can be used to guide them.
- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions on transit vehicles to the extent practicable.
- Restrict routes between areas experiencing different levels of transmission.
- Clean, sanitize, and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily.