

An Update from CEO, Chris Woods

Dear Friends and Family of Boys & Girls Clubs,

It's hard to comprehend that a few short weeks ago, we were together celebrating Club member Faith Doctor being named our 2020 Thurston County Youth of the Year. So much has changed since then, especially for the Club members we serve, like Faith, who credit Club mentors with supporting her during a difficult period in her life.

Caring is at the core of what we do. Times like this are challenging for our staff because we care deeply about the health and safety of every youth we serve and their families. As the impact of this pandemic unfolds, I want to share how our Clubs and staff have responded to school closures and to ask for your continued support as we seek to provide urgent and thoughtful support in the community.

Programming During School Closure

Despite school closures, we continue serving kids who need us most. To do our part to "flatten the curve," Club programming and services now focus on providing emergency care to children of first responders, healthcare workers, essential community personnel, and Club parents who must work to maintain employment.

On March 18, our staff nimbly adapted and transitioned to offer full day programming for these families. New health protocols are now commonplace in our daily routine and youth from these families have access to a "Club experience" at four of our Thurston County branch locations.

We plan to operate Clubs as long as we are legally allowed and able to keep staff and children safe. We will act in a fiscally responsible manner to operate or close individual Clubs based on enrollment and community need.

Next steps for us include:

- Reaching out to city officials, law enforcement, and healthcare entities to assess options and our capability to best support their employees.
- Engaging in conversations with community partners to ensure our programs are maximizing efforts to provide necessary resources and information to families.

Our Financial Picture

Like many organizations, we can navigate uncertainty for some time, but not indefinitely. Our history of stewarding funds with integrity and care has proven beneficial in helping provide a continuity of care for those who need us most during the immediate crisis, but *we can't do it much longer without your help*

Plan now to attend our 2020 *Foundation for the Future Breakfast* on Thursday, May 28. Community support of this event through personal pledges and sponsorships is more critical than ever. The event helps raise over \$350,000 annually to maintain services. If needed (because of restrictions related to COVID-19), an online fundraising event may be utilized. Look for updates at bgctc.org or our [Facebook](#).

How You Can Help

Please consider investing in our mission, now more than ever! Consider the following options:

- Attend and donate during our [Foundation for the Future Breakfast May 28](#) or through our [website](#), should fundraising efforts shift online.
- Consider a [monthly gift](#) to provide a consistent foundation for the work we do.

My wife and I have lived in this community for over 40 years. We both attended elementary, middle, and high school in Thurston County and chose to raise our children here. Why? This community comes together to meet each other's needs and places a high priority on doing whatever it takes to help children be successful. Although we are facing a time like no other, I believe we will rise to the challenge of providing safe places for children to go during this challenge and in to the future.

While we don't know what lies ahead, be assured that Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County will continue its mission to inspire youth to realize their greatness. And in doing so, we help strengthen this community by supporting youth and families in every way we can.

Visit [BGCTC.org](https://bgctc.org) for regular updates and please contact us with questions.

Sincerely,

Chris Woods, CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of Thurston County

