

# **INVESTING IN OUR YOUTH, STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMY**



## **A Measurement of the Economic Impact of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey**

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## Executive Summary

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey serve a diverse community of more than 87,000 youth and their families. Some 39,000 of the youth are registered members of the Clubs.<sup>1</sup> More than 400 people serve as board members. The Clubs provide some 300 full-time and over 1,000 part-time jobs for the residents of the State of New Jersey. Every day, tens of thousands of students end their school day by heading to the Clubs. These youth are able to make friends and engage in programming that ranges from the educational to the recreational. Without the Clubs, many of these youngsters would be without proper supervision and susceptible to negative influences. In some other families, a parent would have to stay home from work to provide such supervision but this would reduce the family's earnings and economic well-being. The Clubs are an important social asset serving such working families.

The value of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey also extends beyond the direct benefits enjoyed by parents and Club members. The regional community enjoys an important service by having these youths positively engaged and away from trouble and mischief after school.

While it is easy to appreciate the work of the Clubs in qualitative and emotional or social terms, it requires additional analysis to understand the monetary and economic value of these institutions. At first glance, the Clubs can be praised for the social benefits that they create in the state. However, by digging deeper, it becomes readily apparent that these social benefits create tremendous economic value in New Jersey.

This report provides an exhaustive enumeration of the many ways in which the Boys & Girls Clubs create economic value in the State of New Jersey. Many of these impacts include "positive externalities."

As non-profit organizations, the Clubs directly and indirectly serve various community stakeholders. There are three primary beneficiaries of these services: Club members, parents, and the communities.

Club members receive perhaps the greatest benefit of all from their participation in the Clubs. When compared with their peers who do not attend the Clubs, they are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to engage in risky behaviors resulting in juvenile arrest, teenage motherhood, or substance abuse. The exact mechanisms by which Club members outperform their peers are uncertain. The consistency of the trend suggests that membership in the Clubs may play a vital role in explaining

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the 2010 annual reports of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey as submitted to the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

the behavior patterns of the group. By having access to a safe and nurturing environment, these youth avoid negative influences. Moreover, special services provide additional support to Club members. For instance, tutoring programs give Club members a competitive edge in school which can generate long-term academic success.

While Club members receive the most from their participation, others benefit as well. Parents of Club members are able to be more productive since they do not have to supervise their children after school. Many parents are able to work or pursue further education as a result of the services provided by the Clubs.

Finally the larger community also receives significant benefit from Boys & Girls Clubs services. It is well known that juvenile crime peaks in the hours immediately following the end of the school day. Clubs provide the community with constructive afterschool options that go beyond recreation, to promote education, healthy living and good citizenship.

The Clubs' services have real economic value. Using data collected through stakeholder surveys and a review of publicly available information, this report places a monetary value on these benefits. The value of all these economic benefits is simply tremendous. This report focused on the following mechanisms and services through which Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey create economic value in the State:

- Impact of better education through higher graduation rates and improved lifetime earnings among youth who attend the Clubs on a regular basis.
- Lower teen pregnancy and motherhood rates which create economic savings.
- Reduction in youth crime rates and related savings for the community.
- Deterring students from pursuing self-destructive behavior such as smoking, drinking alcohol, and other substance abuse.
- Improved lifestyle habits which reduce obesity and related disease which could lower productivity and increase the likelihood of chronic diseases.
- The ability of Club programs to help parents work and attend school in order to upgrade their skills.
- Strengthening and promoting volunteerism in the region.
- Total employment and income impact of the Clubs through their annual expenditures, capital spending, and work of their volunteers.

For nearly all of these benefits, a monetary value was calculated. A summary of the analysis is presented below and categorized by the nature of the economic impact. Sections Two and Three of this report present the methodology developed and data used to calculate these values. Section Four provides additional statistics on qualitative questions asked in Club member and parent surveys.

### **An Overview of Economic Impact Areas and Their Multipliers**

One way to illustrate the impact of every dollar spent by Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey is to compare the aggregate budget of the Boys & Girls Clubs with the positive economic impacts that it generates in the community. This framework can allow for a cost-benefit analysis that cogently illustrates the tremendous value of the Clubs within the State of New Jersey based on the findings of this study.

For this calculation, we will consider the economic impact on stakeholders including Club members, parents, and the community. The six areas considered include the impact of the Clubs on increased high school graduation rates, averted teenage pregnancies and births, reduced juvenile criminal activity, reduction in cost of underage drinking, improved prospects for working parents, and regional output stimulus through productivity of regular and capital budget and volunteer labor.

#### **MULTIPLIER: Lifetime Gain from High School Graduation**



Boys & Girls Clubs provide a variety of academic support and enrichment services that help students succeed in school. Clubs within the State of New Jersey provide homework assistance and tutoring. Academic enrichment is also integrated throughout the Club during “high yield activities”, which are fun activities with a built-in learning goal. Moreover, beyond the direct academic enrichment provided by the Clubs, Clubs also provide members with positive role models and a nurturing environment that can help them improve decision-making skills. Such skills can help make sure that Club members make the right choices when it comes to their academic future.

Studies show that students who drop out of high school end up earning much less throughout the rest of their lives relative to their peers who end up attaining a terminal degree. Similar studies indicate that

those who drop out at some point tend to be less likely to complete college. Specifically, only 5% of those who ever drop out managed to receive a bachelor's degree, as opposed to 38% of those who never dropped out of high school.

The economic cost of dropping out of school is not limited to the inability to earn a high income job. High school dropouts face much higher rates of unemployment, live shorter lives, and depend more on government assistance than those who complete high school.

In a comprehensive study calculating the cost of dropping out of high school, one has to include all sources of differential costs stemming from lower pay, higher unemployment, shorter life expectancy, additional medical expenses, and government assistance. Finding an accurate basis requires estimating a reliable rate of dropout both at the state and county levels. Unfortunately, our existing database and sampling method does not yield this necessary information. **We must therefore concentrate on a partial—nevertheless instructive—calculation of the cost of not completing high school.**

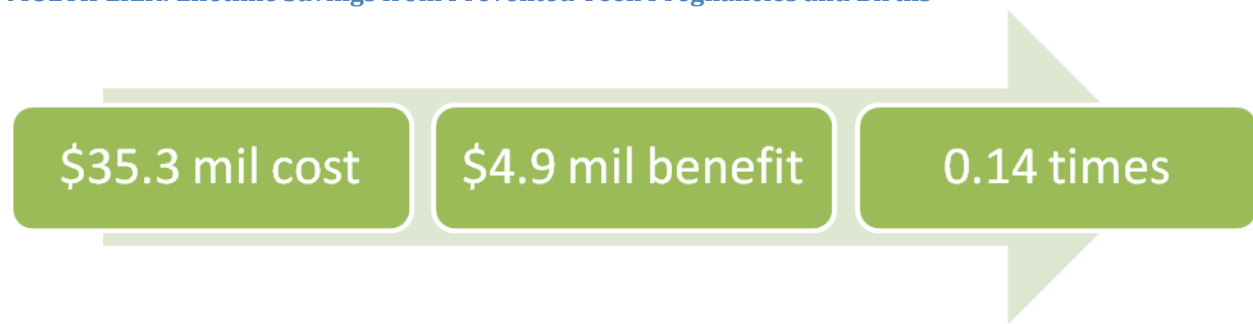
Given the pivotal role that the Clubs can have on the academic success of their members, this study quantifies the monetary benefit of such services. The first step in such a calculation is to compare the academic success of Club members with the general population across the State of New Jersey.

Percentage of students passing HSPA Statewide (ethnically adjusted to match the ethnic structure of the group in Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey)	Percentage of Seniors Attending Clubs Passing HSPA	Additional Number of Students Passing HSPA in Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey	Total Annual Increase in Annual Wage and Salary	Total Work-life Increase In Earnings
72.8%	98%	180	\$ 1,795,860 per year	\$ 51,327,180

In the most recent class of graduating seniors, the Clubs generated a positive economic impact of \$51.3 million through increased lifetime earnings of these graduates influenced by the services of the Boys & Girls Clubs. When compared to the annual budget of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey (\$35.3 million) this generates a multiplier of 1.45; in other words, for every \$1 spent by the Clubs, \$1.45 of increased earnings is generated through the increased lifetime earnings of impacted Club members.



## MULTIPLIER: Lifetime Savings from Prevented Teen Pregnancies and Births



Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey play a pivotal role in helping youth avoid the serious consequences they will face if they become teenage parents. By providing youth a nurturing environment, life skills programming, positive peer support and caring role models, the Clubs help youth develop a sense of responsibility for their lives. Such support can help an at-risk teenager develop a sense better decision-making skills that can help them avoid risky behavioral that can lead to teenage parenthood.

According to recent studies, teen childbearing in the United States costs taxpayers at least \$9.1 billion annually at the federal, state, and local levels. On the national level, these costs include \$1.9 billion for increased public sector healthcare costs, \$2.3 billion for increased child welfare costs, \$2.1 billion for increased costs for state prison systems, and \$2.9 billion in lost revenue due to lower taxes paid by the children of teen mothers over their adult lifetimes.

In addition to the costs of teenage pregnancy that burden the taxpayers, it is important to consider the ways in which teenage parenthood changes the future life and prospects of the parent and the child. Teenage parents are less likely to complete high school and more likely to depend on welfare. The children of teen mothers are more likely to perform poorly in school and are at a greater risk of abuse and neglect. The sons of teen mothers are 13% more likely to end up in prison and are more likely to commit more violent crimes, and the daughters of teen mothers are more likely to become teen mothers themselves.

Female Club members between the ages of 15 and 19 who attend the Club more than 3 days a week	Rate of teen childbirth in the State of New Jersey (per 1,000)	Rate of teen childbirth among female Club members aged 15 to 19 (per 1,000)	Total number of teen childbirths averted	Estimated long-term cost saving for society and taxpayer for each teen birth averted	Total lifetime saving for taxpayer and society due to positive influence of Clubs
1,945	23	1.22	42 female teens saved	\$117,336	\$ 4,928,112

We consider the fact that the Clubs generate a positive economic impact of \$4.9 million through savings to taxpayers and society for every teenager in this most recent year who waited until they are older to have children. **Compared with the annual budget of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey, this generates a multiplier of 0.14; in other words, for every \$1 spent by the Clubs, \$0.14 is saved for taxpayers and the society on costs they would have incurred for teenage pregnancies and births on a yearly basis.**

It should be mentioned that teenage pregnancy and teen childbirth differ considerably across various ethnicities. We have not adjusted the rate of teen motherhood for the ethnic makeup of the club members and therefore the savings calculated is an underestimation of the actual saving that has taken place.

MULTIPLIER: Criminal Justice System Savings



Club facilities provide a safe haven for youth to escape the streets, meet with friends, and be part of a positive peer group. Club programs teach life skills, conflict resolution and focus on the development of character. Perhaps most important of all, caring adult staff and volunteers at the Club serve as role models, giving youth someone to turn to when they need help and guidance.

When a crime is committed, society and the victims pay a very high price through the cost of the harm itself and the costs to the criminal justice system that has to prosecute and manage the criminals. Juvenile crime, in particular, burdens the criminal justice system due to the fact that its prosecution and management have a more rehabilitative focus. As such, programs that can prevent such crime are creating a positive economic benefit through the cost-savings that they create for society.

Those who attend the Boys & Girls Clubs are in a safe environment after school away from temptations that can lead to criminal activity. Moreover, the greatest proportion of juvenile crime has been found to occur between 3:00 and 4:00PM. These are hours during which Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey provide a safe haven for youths who want to be secure during these times of the day.

In order to calculate the number of members saved from arrest, we found the difference between the arrest rate calculated from the parents' survey (1,270 per 100,000) and the rate of juvenile arrest in the State of New Jersey ( 5,861 per 100,000). We then applied the rate of difference between the two groups to the total number of Club members in the appropriate age category, who attend the clubs at least three times a week.

The economic benefit of reduced juvenile crime amongst Club members is presented below:

Total number of juveniles saved from arrest	Estimated annual cost of juvenile crimes per person arrested in the State of New Jersey (in 2011)	Total saving per year for the State of New Jersey due to impact of the Boys & Girls Clubs
667	\$45,769	\$30,527,923

The Boys & Girls Clubs reduce juvenile crime rates by providing Club members a safe, nurturing environment and access to positive role models. **The lower arrest rates among Club members generates a savings of \$30.5 million per year for taxpayers who support the criminal justice system. When compared to the annual budget of the Clubs, this generates a multiplier of 0.86; in other words, for every \$1 spent by Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey, taxpayers save \$0.86 on expenditures for the criminal justice system annually.**

#### **MULTIPLIER: Underage Drinking Reduction Benefits**



Boys & Girls Clubs use a team approach involving staff, peer leaders, parents and community volunteers to help youth develop resistance and refusal skills to avoid use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. This team approach assures that youth have a network of support to help them make responsible decisions and resist negative peer pressure.

The average cost of underage drinking per year for each youth equals \$1,880 in 2011 price levels. Our study shows that the average cost of a drinking problem per Club member in that age category is a third

of this amount, or \$627 per person, in the age group of 10 to 20 years old. This suggests a savings of \$1,253 per youth 10 to 20 years of age as the positive economic impact of the Clubs in the State of New Jersey. Using a savings of \$1,253 per youth in this age category, we calculated a total positive savings in terms of \$33,582,906 for all the Clubs in the State of New Jersey. The details of this estimated cost is presented in the following table.

Cost of underage drinking per youth aged 10 to 20 per year in the state of New Jersey	Cost of underage drinking based on our findings per Club member per year in the same age group	Savings per youth of the same age category per year due to impact of Boys & Girls Clubs	Total number of Club members between ages 10 to 19	Total savings due to better youth behavior and habits regarding underage drinking among Club members
\$1,880	\$627	\$1,253	26,802	\$33,582,906

Underage drinking cost the citizens of New Jersey \$1.5 billion in 2010. These costs include medical care, work loss, and pain and suffering associated with the multiple problems resulting from the use of alcohol by youth. Our study shows that for every dollar spent on Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey, taxpayers save \$0.95 in reduced underage drinking cost to the state.

#### MULTIPLIER: Parental Earnings



During the school day, parents are free to work or pursue higher education. However, when the school bell rings and children leave the classroom, parents face a difficult and heart-wrenching decision: to continue working and leave their children with potentially inadequate supervision or to stop working and reduce their family's earnings. Both outcomes have their own dangers; however, the Boys & Girls Clubs help parents to avoid this difficult dilemma. Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey allow parents to continue being productive in the afternoon while having the satisfaction of knowing that their children are adequately supervised.

The vast majority of parents whose children attend the Boys & Girls Clubs are working parents in the community. Without the Boys & Girls Clubs to supervise their children after school, many would have to reduce their own work and income. This loss of income hurts the parent and the community that loses their productivity.

The economic impact of helping these parents to continue working by providing low-cost, high-quality after-school supervision for their children is presented below:

Total number of families served by Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey	Percentage of parents who strongly believe that Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey enable them to keep their job	Total number of parents who are able to work due to the Boys & Girls Clubs in the State of New Jersey	Average annual salary of those keeping their jobs due to Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey	Total annual earnings generated by parents due Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey
24,068	43.4%	10,445	\$ 30,627	\$ 319,899,015

Through a survey of parents, the study determined that \$319.9 million of additional annual earnings are generated for the parents of Club members who can continue working. Compared with the annual budget of the Clubs, this generates a multiplier of 9.1; in other words, for every \$1 spent by the Clubs, \$9.1 of earnings are generated by parents who can keep their jobs due to the services of the Club.

#### MULTIPLIER: Statewide Output



The economic impact of social interventions resulting from the services provided by Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey represents a broad category of economic value created by the organization. Such social interventions are an important aspect of the value created by a nonprofit. However, just like any other organization providing services or producing goods, the Clubs composing the Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey create tremendous business activity through their operating and capital expenditures in the region that can be measured in terms of output, employment, and tax revenue.

The combined operational budgets of all the participating Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey total nearly \$35.3 million. These expenditures support jobs both within the organization and beyond in companies that provide services to the Clubs. In addition there has been \$3.7 million additional capital expenditure in the year of this study.

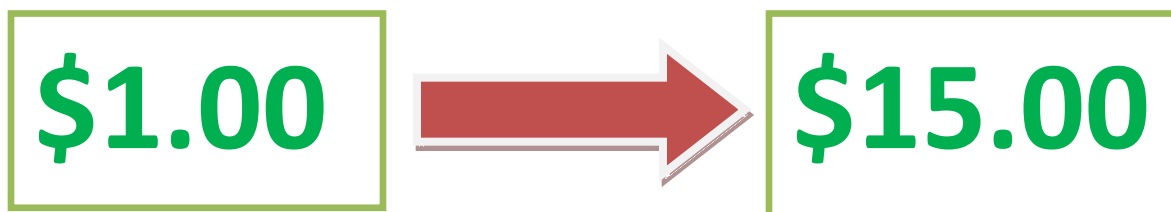
Our research also looked into the economic impact of volunteerism and goes further than many similar studies to attempt to estimate the output, job creation, and tax impact of volunteers' work. It is true that volunteers do not receive monetary compensation for their work and, as such, do not pay any direct tax from financial compensation that they do not receive. Based on the survey, we estimate that volunteers devoted some 342,650 hours of work to the clubs during the year.

Our study showed that through these regular business activities of the clubs some \$88 million dollars worth of regional output is created and through the process an equivalent of 1,050 full-time paid jobs are created.

**The direct, indirect, and induced regional output created through the expenditures and volunteer labor of the Boys & Girls Clubs totals \$88.0 million across the State of New Jersey. When compared to the budget of the Boys & Girls Clubs, this results in a multiplier of 2.5.**

#### **MULTIPLIER: Total Economic Impact**

Taken separately, each of these economic impacts is nevertheless impressive. But when the economic impacts are summed together, the results are all the more impressive.



**For every \$1 spent by the Clubs, Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey generate \$15.00 of positive economic impacts for the community. This tremendous rate of return is a testament to the vital role the Clubs play in shaping the lives and futures of Club members and their parents.**

Beyond the value of social services provided by the Clubs, Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey stimulate the economy through their budgetary and capital expenditures or volunteer programs. Similar to a private business, Boys & Girls Clubs in the state spend money on payroll and suppliers, thereby helping to stimulate the economy. Volunteers also further this productive capacity through a donation of labor that has similar productive qualities as a monetary donation.

**The important issue is to translate this overall calculation of a combined multiplier into the overall monetary impact of the Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey. Remembering that our total annual expenditure was \$35.3 million, a multiplier of 15.00 indicates an annual monetary impact of nearly \$530 million by Boys & Girls Clubs in terms of income generations and savings to the tax payers in the State New Jersey.**

### **Important but Unquantifiable Impacts of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey**

In addition to the variables for which we were able to calculate specific monetary values, there are several areas where dollar estimates of the impacts were not calculated, but for which there are significant economic implications.

Many people in the United States, including youth, suffer from a lack of exercise and poor nutritional habits which can often lead to obesity or chronic conditions such as diabetes. These negative lifestyle choices have severe health consequences that reduce one's length and quality of life.

Data on childhood obesity is just as troubling. A 2005 research brief by Thomson Medstat Research found that the national cost of childhood obesity in terms of medical costs was \$11 billion for children with private insurance and \$3 billion for those with Medicaid (Par. 4). On a per capita basis, this means that the cost is \$3,700 per obese child on Medicaid and \$6,700 per obese child with private insurance. Accounting for inflation, the national cost for those with private insurance is \$12.75 billion or \$7,767 per capita in 2010. Similarly, in current dollars, the cost is \$3.48 billion or \$4,289 per capita for those with Medicaid.

Nutrition and physical exercise can help youth remain healthy. Many youth across the country who have poor nutrition and lack sufficient physical activity are overweight and obese. As a result of this, they face serious, costly medical problems. Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey encourage physical exercise and good nutrition through their routine programs. The student survey found that a significant proportion of

students report that through exercise in clubs they managed to maintain or reach healthy weight. The following table shows the details of our estimation.

Total number of registered Club members who attended the Clubs at least three times a week	Percentage of Club members who have maintained or reached a healthy weight through participation in the physical activities during the last six months in Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey	Estimated number of Club members who have maintained or reached a healthy weight through participation in physical activities at the Clubs
35,737	63.2%	22,586

It is important to note that this study shows that 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the registered Club members said that they managed to maintain or reach a healthy weight as a result of participating in physical activities while they are in the Club environment. This is a tremendous achievement that directly contributes to setting and strengthening the foundation of healthy living among the members of the Boys & Girls Clubs at young age. The findings of this study support some of the findings that have been obtained from a recent study of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America on the impact of its Triple Play Program.<sup>2</sup>

Another benefit for which a specific monetary value could not be found is the impact of the Club on parents' educational attainment. Some parents try to upgrade their skills through formal programs while their children are in the after school program. Such activities can allow the parents to become more productive and eventually earn more in better professional positions. Due to a lack of published data, a specific monetary value could not be placed on this benefit; the table below presents data on the number of parents who are upgrading their skills as a result of the Boys & Girls Clubs.

Total number of families served by Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey	Proportion of families with at least one parent able to pursue further education or training due to Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey	Total number of parents who have upgraded their skills due to the services of Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey
24,068	20.4%	4,910

Although an exact monetary figure could not be calculated, intuition leads one to believe that helping 4,910 adults upgrade their skills will result in a long-term increase in earnings across the community. Such increased earnings not only help these families live more economically secure lives, but they also improve the State's tax base.

<sup>2</sup> For more information see "Promoting Healthy Lifestyles: The Impact of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America Triple Play Program on Healthy Eating, Exercise Patterns, and Developmental Outcome." 2009, Philadelphia, PA.



Upgrading skills have significant economic impacts on the lives of families that Boys & Girls Clubs serve. Retraining and acquiring new skills are some of the most important steps to reduce unemployment, particularly structural unemployment in many parts of the state. **This study shows that Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey contribute towards creation of healthy people, productive workforce and lower cost of healthcare nationwide.**

### Qualitative Findings from Student and Parent Surveys

Although the primary purpose of the surveys distributed to parents and students was to determine the economic impact of the Clubs, both surveys included more general questions on topics that may be of interest to Club management and stakeholders. Section Four of the study presents this data in detail.

The Club member surveys indicate that students are satisfied with their experience at the Clubs. Moreover, it is clear that they are benefitting from their participation. A brief summary of some of the key findings are as follows:

- Club members indicate a very positive attitude towards participation in Boys & Girls Clubs programs. A very strong majority (73.0%) like the programs in which they participate at least most of the time. An additional 24.5% like participating in the programs sometimes, while only 2.5% never enjoy their participation.
- A very strong majority (73.3%) of respondents feel that the staff is able to at least help them with their homework most of the time in the Power Hour program.
- Nearly 9 out of 10 respondents (87.4%) feel safe when they are at the Clubs at the very least most of the time. The vast majority (69.0%) feel safe always.
- The vast majority of Club members have strong attendance records. 87.5% of respondents indicated that they miss 10 days or less of school. Some 67.5% of the members have missed school less than 5 days, which is a remarkable record of attendance.
- Three out of every five respondents (61.4%) indicate that they would always recommend the program to their friends while an additional 31.1% would recommend the program sometimes. As such, over nine in ten Club members are generally satisfied with the services they receive at the Clubs Boys & Girls Clubs. This is a very promising rate of satisfaction.

The results of the survey distributed to parents are similarly encouraging. Parents are generally pleased with the Clubs and it seems that they serve their needs well. A brief summary of the findings are as follows:

- By far, the greatest challenge for all families when it comes to providing for their school age children is the cost of care. 67.1% of families served by the Clubs consider the cost of care as the greatest challenge they face. As such, programs such as the Boys & Girls Clubs that provide high-quality cost-effective services are critical to this community.
- Nearly all parents (96.7%) agree or strongly agree that their children are in a safe environment when they are attending Clubs Boys & Girls Clubs. This level of unanimity in the response is particularly noteworthy and shows the extent to which parents have faith in the safety of the Clubs. Club management should be proud of this outcome.
- Parents are well-positioned to assess changes in their children. The survey included various questions designed to understand how Club member behaviors have changed since attending the Club.
  - Club attendance has made children more confident in themselves. 88.1% of parents agree or strongly agree that their children have become more confident since going to the Clubs.
  - The majority of parents (79.3%) also observe that, since attending the Clubs, their children get along with their family better.
  - 70.4% of parents either agree or strongly agree that they have observed that their child's performance has improved in school since attending the Boys & Girls Clubs.
  - The majority of parents (68.9%) have observed that their child's grades have improved since attending the Boys & Girls Clubs.
  - Parents generally report that their children have made better choices when it comes to choosing foods and drinks since attending the Boys & Girls Clubs. The majority of respondents (62.4%) agrees or strongly agrees that such better choices have been made by their children.
  - The vast majority of parent respondents (80.2%) agree or strongly agree that their children have shown more interest in regular physical exercise since attending the Boys & Girls Clubs.