



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF BLOOMINGTON**

NEWS RELEASE

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BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF BLOOMINGTON OPENS ITS DOORS TO ASSIST CHILDREN OF ESSENTIAL WORKERS

Bloomington, Ind. – As the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to unfold, this week the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington launched the Community Emergency Relief Camp (“CERC”) - a specialized Club program for children of essential workers.

“Guided and called by our mission, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington opened our Community Emergency Relief Camps to meet a portion of our community’s child care needs,” said Jeff Baldwin, Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington. “Through untold hours of research, discussion, and planning by our staff and Board of Directors, we began to serve youth and families of healthcare professionals and first responders by following all federal and state guidelines to ensure the safety of our kids, families and staff.”

Despite the uncertain times caused by the novel Coronavirus, the mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington remains the same: to empower all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as caring, productive and responsible citizens.

The Club’s Board of Directors and Staff have worked to create robust safety procedures and protocols for opening the CERC. Procedures and protocols follow all CDC and FSSA guidelines for re-opening childcare, which falls under essential service according to the Governor’s stay-at-home order. Lead staff at both IU Health and the Monroe County Health Department have thoroughly reviewed the Club’s plans, resulting in an endorsement of the plan

“We realize there are many children in our community that depend on the people, as well as, the programs and services offered by the Clubs” said Scott Johnson, President of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington Board of Directors. “While the focus of the CERC is on the children of the first responders responsible for keeping our community healthy and safe, the innovations in service delivery and safety practices that are being implemented will benefit all of the families we serve when we re-open our Clubs to the broader community.”

The Community Emergency Relief Camp was created as part of the community collaborative initiative “Commission for Kids” which includes the Community Foundation, MCCSC, The City of Bloomington, Bloomington Parks & Recreation, Cook Inc., IU Health, and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington, among

others. Parks & Recreation is also opening youth pods as part of the CERC program this week. Others plan to work towards opening youth pods in the weeks to come.

“We do not take this CERC endeavor lightly, or the responsibility that comes with it,” added Baldwin. “Safety has always been, and will always be, our top priority.”

More information on CERC programming, safety guidelines and operating protocols can be found online by visiting the Club’s website at bgcbloomington.org/cerc.

In addition to the CERC, the Club is providing programming through The Virtual Club for all kids - including homework help, tutoring, and mental health supports - and providing weekly food and supply deliveries to more than 75 families representing 200 kids - 20% of whom are not Club families. To learn more about what the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington is doing at this time with The Virtual Club, the Community Food and Supply Program, and the CERC - please visit bgcbloomington.org/fulfillingthemission.

While businesses of essential workers who are utilizing the CERC program are financially supporting the variable costs of the programming, the Club is still seeking funding from the community. That funding will go to support fixed costs, The Virtual Club that is open to ALL kids, and the weekly food and supply distribution program. Community partners and supporters who are interested in assisting the Club with their continued programming are encouraged to contact Leslie Abshier, Resource Development Director, via email at labshier@bgcbloomington.org, or give to the COVID-19 Relief Fund at bgcbloomington.org/relief.

About the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington:

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington is a local 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as caring, productive, and responsible citizens. The Club operates three units serving youth in Monroe County: Lincoln Street, Ferguson Crestmont, and Ellettsville. Offering low annual rates, the Club is a place where all local youth can safely learn, grow, and become the adults of tomorrow. Focusing on Academic Success, Healthy Lifestyles, and Good Character & Active Citizenship, programming at the Club is enriching and varied, led by professional staff and volunteers. To learn more about programs and events at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington or to make a donation, visit www.bgcbloomington.org, call (812) 332-5311, or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!

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