

CREATING THE MAGIC SOUP

Any one of us who finds ourselves in an adult life that is rich with emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual health while realizing our greatest potential, or greatest version of ourselves, benefited from [The Magic Soup](#).

So...what exactly is the Magic Soup?

INGREDIENT 1: PEOPLE

Imagine that when you are born, you are actually born into the Magic Soup's kettle. Most of the time, we have a mom and/or a dad in this kettle with us along with loads of amazing peripheral people - grandparents, aunts and uncles, teachers, coaches, neighbors, and 4H leaders. These people do two key things for us. First, they serve as role models. We, as infants and children, watch every move of each person in our kettle every day. We learn how to act and respond from the behaviors these people model for us. We watch how our father gets up every morning to go to work. We watch our mother talk about our neighbors and how she is kind and neighborly. We watch how our 4H leader structures every meeting with protocols and excellence. We absorb these behaviors in how we act, and it happens without us knowing it. Beyond being blessed with great role models, these people in our kettle coach and teach us every day. They show us how to properly brush our teeth. They teach us how to not only make our bed, but the importance of doing it every day because that is, "the right thing to do and the way we do things in this family." Our people show us how to fix things and how to use tools. They show us how to order food at a restaurant. They even coach us through tough situations with our friends. They coach us in dealing with our fears and how we navigate unknowns to push forward. Lastly, and this important, our people are goal-oriented. Everything that is being taught is getting us ready for an independent, productive, and healthy adult life. Our people know that they must eventually replace themselves with their children, and that they - as parents - must move us down a path to become the best version of ourselves.

INGREDIENT 2: PROGRAM/ACTIVITY

Not just any program or activity will satisfy the second ingredient of the Magic Soup, but a program or activity that allows us as children to practice what our people have been teaching us.

Our people understand that they must give us a chance to explore and sharpen our skills at a higher level by actually “doing it.” Our people understand that they must let us practice what it is like to be an adult. *So how do they do that?* Our people put us on sports teams, strongly encourage us to take karate lessons, and take us to the garage to let us build and create with tools that they showed us how to use. Our people let us tryout our growing wings - to attempt, to fail, to get up, to triumph, to struggle, to learn and adjust, and to prepare for our adult lives.

RECIPE INSTRUCTION: TIME

Lastly, when talking about the Magic Soup, we have to talk about the importance of time, and lots of it. We, as infants and children, must be in the Magic Soup throughout our young lives each and every day. We need to be exposed to great people, program, and targeted activities as many days as possible. Exposure to the Magic Soup is key because we have SO much to learn before we go off on our own and share the greatest version of ourselves.

It can be argued that if you do not have the Magic Soup, or are raised in a soup that lacks great people, program, and activity...your odds of succeeding in this world are slim to none.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington is uniquely positioned to be the Magic Soup for thousands of youth in this community. We have the people, programs, and activities all strategically designed with the correct intent to create the caring, productive, and responsible citizens we need in society. We are the Magic Soup for the child that immensely needs it, and for the child who just could use a little more. As our mission suggests, we are called to empower all young people - especially those who need us most. In essence, the greatest thing we can do is provide the Magic Soup for the youth in our community.

For a child, the Club can be the difference between making it in this world and struggling to make it day-to-day.

