



Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains

Providing A Positive Environment for Youth

Resources for Youth Programming and Policy

DESCRIPTION

- Serves as the primary youth organization in the community
- Provides a safe, positive place for youth and offers academic, recreational and enrichment programs
- Works with other community organizations to serve youth and minimize operating costs
- Expanding its facilities to keep up with program growth and continue meeting community needs

Overview

The Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains is an affiliate of Boys & Girls Club of America (BGCA) and provides afterschool activities for youth at five different sites in Sevierville, Tennessee and surrounding communities. The Boys & Girls Club operates several out-of-school time programs to benefit youth, especially teens. The Club implements some of BGCA's national programs such as SMART (Skills Mastery and Resistance Training) Moves, a prevention and education program that addresses drug and alcohol use and premature sexual activity through a team approach; Passport to Manhood, which teaches responsibility and reinforces positive behavior in male youth ages 11 to 14 through small, interactive sessions; and SMART Girls, an equivalent program for middle school-aged girls. The Club also hosts the Teen Center program, which provides a safe, positive environment for teenagers on Friday evenings. The participating sites stay open beyond their regular hours to provide youth ages 12 and up with educational and recreational activities, even allowing youth to skateboard in the gym facilities, since Sevierville does not have a skateboard park. The Club's Friday Night Live program periodically brings Teen Center participants together from all five sites for an event. The Club charges small fees for these programs.

History and Development

The Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains began in 1988 as a branch of the Boys & Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley, a large Club that serves Knoxville, Tennessee and surrounding areas. Knoxville is a relatively large, industry-based community, whereas the Smoky Mountains region is much smaller, more rural and part of a tourist-based economy. The Club's leadership felt that the Smoky Mountains community and its youth had different needs that could be best served through their own club, so the Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains incorporated as an independent club in 1993.

The Club's initial budget was approximately \$90,000, which included United Way funds and revenue from a few small fundraising events, such as a golf tournament and an auction. Since its inception, the Club has put significant effort into expanding its special events and cultivating individual supporters to generate its own funds. The Club has also forged good relationships with local partner organizations and local government, which has brought greater financial support and organizational capacity. Club leadership also has been successful in bringing well-respected local government officials onto its board. Together these strategies have helped to increase the Club's current budget to nearly \$1.2 million.

January 2007

Financing Strategies

- Making Better Use of Existing Resources
- Maximizing Federal, State, and Local Revenue
- Creating More Flexibility in Existing Streams
- Building Public/Private Partnerships
- Generating New Dedicated Revenue

Financing

Building partnerships

The Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains is active in many types of partnerships. Perhaps most importantly, the Club is affiliated with the national BGCA office. As part of this relationship, the Club pays dues to the national office and receives significant support, both financial support and technical assistance. In 2006, the Club paid approximately \$11,000 in dues to the national office and received approximately \$150,000 in pass-through grants.

The Club also has been successful in fostering good relationships with local government. Club leaders have effectively communicated to local government officials that serving the community's youth, who might otherwise need city or county services, at a relatively low cost (approximately \$1,000 per child annually) makes good financial sense. The individual cities, counties and townships in the Smoky Mountains region provide funding for the Club each year and the level of financial support, and number of contracts for service, continues to increase every year. Local public funding currently accounts for about 16 percent of the Club's funding. The Club has also targeted influential city councilpeople and county commissioners to participate on its board in further efforts to build support for its programs.

Club leadership is always looking for potential partnerships and is willing to work with any organization with a similar interest. Some of the Club's other partners include 4-H, Boy Scouts, the local United Way chapter, the Rotary Club, and the Kiwanis Clubs.

Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains

2005 Budget

Local

City of Pigeon Forge	\$35,000
Sevier County Government	\$50,000
City of Sevierville	\$50,000
City of Gatlinburg	\$45,000

Private

Fundraising	\$390,137
Program Fees	\$239,904
Grants	\$124,558
United Way	\$78,644

Services and Sales

Nutrition Program, Child Care, Vending Sales, Mgmt. Fee	\$134,540
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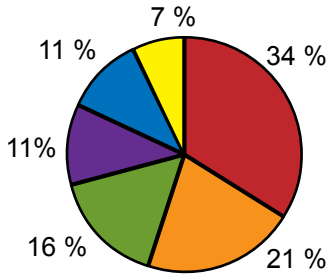
Total	\$1,147,783
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These relationships are less formalized but provide important benefits. For example, 4-H sends a staff member to the Club to run 4-H programs because the Boys & Girls Club has an available pool of youth. The Club contributes the space and materials for this program.

Generating new revenue

Since the beginning, the Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains has focused greatly on special events to raise private dollars for its programming. These events have been extremely successful, though they have entailed significant time and effort and required the Club to approach their long-time supporters again and again. Three years ago, Club leadership, including the executive director and board members, created an annual giving program with the intention of attaining a once-a-year gift from individual supporters at a pre-determined giving

Funding for The Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains 2005



Total Budget: \$1,147,783

- Fundraising
- Program Fees
- Local Government
- Grants
- Services and Sales
- United Way

level to raise more funds and increase the efficiency of the Club's fundraising efforts. The campaign has been successful so far. The Club still holds its most popular special events, but they now serve more as a benefit to the Club's supporters and there is less pressure to bring in substantial funds through these events. Funds raised by the Club and its board members represent about 34 percent of the Club's budget, more than any other source of funding.

Next Steps and Future Challenges

As the Boys & Girls Club of the Smoky Mountains continues to grow, improving and adding to its facilities is a priority. The Club is in the final stages of building a new facility at the Gatlinburg site, slated for completion in 2007. This new building will necessitate an extra \$140,000 annually to cover operating costs. The Club is also in the planning stages of building a facility at the Pigeon Forge site. The Club is planning this facility in conjunction with the school district. The district is building an intermediate school with a gymnasium, which the district will allow the Club to use, and the Club is building a facility next to the gym, which will eliminate transportation issues for children who attend the Club's programs. This project is on hold, however, because attendance at the school has dropped. The Jefferson County site has recently moved to a building owned by the Ruritan Club and has doubled its membership, which has raised some concern around operating expenses and being able to keep program fees low and keep scholarship funding available for

youth who might not otherwise be able to afford membership in the Club.

Keys to Success

- **Encourage entrepreneurial leadership.**
The Boys & Girls Club Board has been instrumental in moving the organization forward. Many of the Club's leaders have been involved for at least five years, if not more. They participate in a strategic planning process every year, which led to the development of an annual giving program when they saw a need for more consistent, flexible, and efficient fundraising.
- **Cultivate partnerships in the community.**
The Boys & Girls Club works well with many organizations in the community. Club leadership has been very proactive in seeking out mutually beneficial relationships and has not experienced the competition for funding that often exists in small communities.
- **Create flexible funding sources through fundraising.**
The Boys & Girls Club has always relied on private fundraising to help support its work. Club leadership recognized the importance of streamlining the Club's fundraising efforts, while maintaining very popular fundraising events, and created a new individual fundraising program which has greatly benefited both the organization and its supporters.



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