



20172018  
COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF THE FOX VALLEY



**GREAT  
FUTURES  
START  
HERE.**



## Dear Friends,

It was 5:30 in the morning on August 17th, 1998 when I drove up and parked in front of 117 South Locust Street in Appleton, the day the Boys & Girls Club of Appleton was to open for the first time. I remember that day well and how we all felt, but what I remember most is that as I looked out my windshield in those early morning hours, I saw two young children, perhaps no older than six or seven, playing on and near the railroad tracks that run by the Club. No parent in sight, no one to guide them away save me at that moment, no one to keep them safe. I knew then, as clearly as I know today, we were doing the right thing by bringing a Boys & Girls Club to our community.

Since that day, generous, kind and caring people like you have brought thousands of young people into the safety of our Clubs and into the lives of hundreds of the most caring and skilled adults in our community. An uncountable number of vulnerable children and youth are happier, more productive, more responsible, and more caring because of you. Inside these pages, you'll read some of the many stories of how your support has changed lives through the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley and its many community partners.

Today, that first small club that opened in 1998 has blossomed into nine different Boys & Girls Clubs and an array of important programs and services that reach 12,000 young people each year and now nearly 1,200 each school day.

Tomorrow, there is so much more we yet need to do. With 48 percent more low-income children living in the Fox Cities than 10 years ago, our challenge has only grown larger. Our community needs to do everything possible to make sure things get better for the abused and neglected, the forgotten and marginalized, the isolated, the lonely, the bullied, the ones who don't fit in, the kids who, through no fault of their own, face an uphill battle every day of their lives to reach their full potential.

Our kids need more safe places where they can be surrounded by people who care. They need more intensive services such as mental health counseling and educational opportunities in the computer sciences, engineering, and more. They need us to connect them with the most skilled and trained youth-serving professionals possible, and they need us all to care.

For me, as I reflect on our first twenty years as the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley, these years give me hope that our next twenty will be even better. To you and to all who have trusted us along the way to help change lives, thank you.

In deepest appreciation,

Greg Lemke-Rochon  
Chief Executive Officer





## Right From the Start

In 1998, no one was more eager for the Boys and Girls Club to open its doors in Appleton than ten-year-old Justin Dresang. Living across the street from the building that would come to house the Club, he and his group of friends were intrigued by all the activity happening within.

“We went to get a closer look and we could see inside all kinds of fun stuff going on,” Justin recounted of the day, a week before the Club opened, that he and his friends tried to get a sneak peek. “We knocked on the door and one of the staff members, Jenny, came to the door. We asked if we could come in and play.” The boys had to wait a week, but finally the big day came. “I was there the first day the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley opened,” Justin recalled.

The Club proved to be more than just a place for fun and games. “I was a shy kid,” Justin said, “so the Club gave me a lot of social skills and helped me get to know people.”

As it has been so often for so many young people, it was also a place of refuge. “I grew up pretty poor and we didn’t have a place to go to after school when my Mom went back to work,” Justin noted. “The Boys and Girls Club was a Godsend for us when both of my parents had to work — it was a safe place for my brothers and I to go.”

## A Safe Harbor

Jayzon was only seven years old when he moved to Appleton with his mom, a single mother, and his siblings. Almost at once, the Boys and Girls Club became a safe place where he could find friendly faces and have fun. “I honestly was just happy that I could come to a place and just be me,” Jayzon recalled of his early days at the Club.

Not long after joining the Club, though, Jayzon’s mother died. “If you knew me and my siblings at that time you would know our mom was everything to us,” Jayzon recounted. “She was the rock. She died and everything changed. Everything but one thing, and that’s the Club.”

There’s no overstating the impact such a loss can have on a young man. It is a permanent tragedy that alters a child’s life trajectory. But for Jayzon, the Club was his safe harbor. “I guess you can say the Club was one of the main things to keep me grounded,” Jayzon said. “If I didn’t have the Club coming up I honestly couldn’t tell you where I would be.”

Today you will still find Jayzon at the Club, but now he is an employee and mentor to kids who connect with him because his life’s journey is much like their own – filled with challenges that often seem impossible to overcome. These young people look to Jayzon as a respected leader and an all-important role model.

“The Club is a safe environment where you can come and make friends,” Jayzon notes. It’s always been that way. “It was a place I could come to and forget about everything outside and just be me.”





## A Calling to Serve

Jaime Kriewaldt discovered her passion for working with children early in life. Serving with AmeriCorps in inner-city schools as a young adult, she knew right away what she wanted for her career.

“I had the opportunity to work with an inner-city school,” she recalled, “and instantly fell in love with the kids!” That early inspiration planted the seed that would grow into a 16-year career with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley, eventually leading to her current position as Executive Director of Best Friends of Neenah-Menasha.

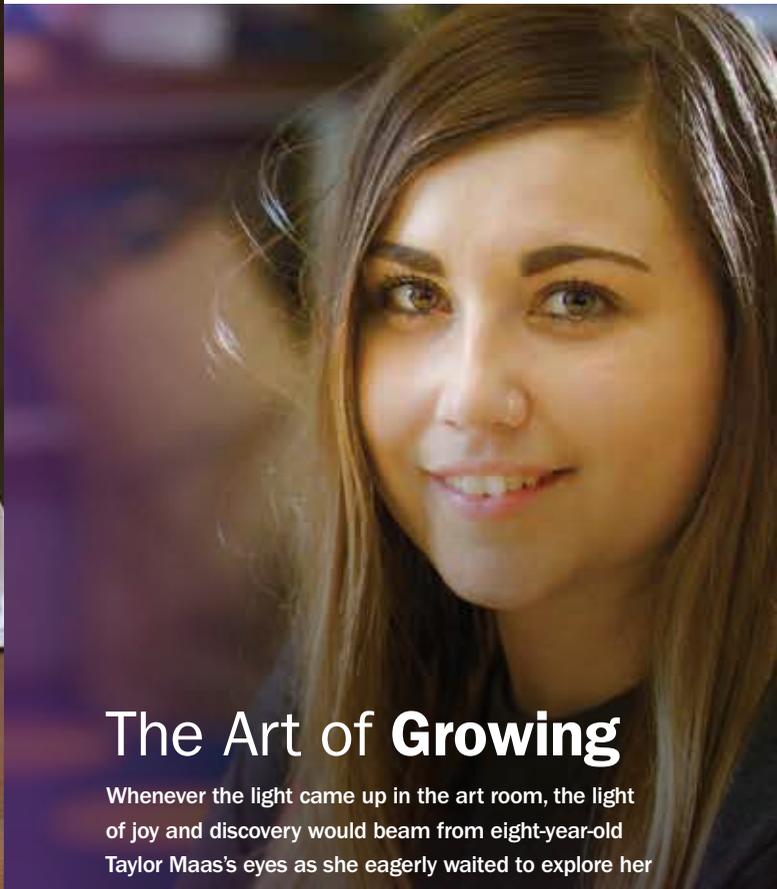
As part of completing a degree in human services, Kriewaldt chose an internship with the Boys and Girls Club of Appleton not long after it opened, and “instantly felt a connection to the mission.” While she worked to provide learning opportunities to kids, the Club helped her grow in her career, moving into a full-time position as Sports, Fitness and Recreation Coordinator and beyond.

“The training opportunities ... allowed me to grow with the organization,” she said of her Club career.

During her time with the Club, the organization’s importance to the community was evident to Kriewaldt. “From graduating on time, eating healthier, building confidence, to career development skills, the Club is impacting our future generations in so many ways,” she notes.

For Kriewaldt, the success of the Club in its first twenty years starts with its deeply held values, something attributable to the wonderful people who have been involved over the years.

“I will be forever grateful for my experience at the Club,” she said. “I have so many amazing memories.... The Club is like home!”



## The Art of Growing

Whenever the light came up in the art room, the light of joy and discovery would beam from eight-year-old Taylor Maas’s eyes as she eagerly waited to explore her creativity at sessions at the Boys & Girls Club of Appleton.

Taylor had a vision problem and was teased as “the girl with the eye patch.” But at the Club, she could be herself. There, she recounted, “I did not have to be known as ‘the girl with the eye patch.’”

Instead, she could focus on the things she loved. “I remember how excited I would get when those art room lights turned on,” she said. “I really believe that the art room at the Boys and Girls Club was what really got me interested in the arts.”

Greg Lemke-Rochon, the organization’s CEO, remembers Taylor’s enthusiasm for the arts. “The annual Talent Show was perhaps the highlight of the year in those early days,” Greg recalled. “Brittany Spears was all the rage and I remember Taylor, along with many of her friends, taking the stage to lip sync the latest Brittany Spears song. She was wonderful!”

Taylor has mentioned that one of her dreams as a young girl was to “one-day work at the Boys & Girls Club.” Today her dream has come true. In addition to being a commissioned artist, she serves as Unit Director for the Boys & Girls Club of Columbus Elementary School in Appleton.

“Without the Club, I believe that I would have fewer opportunities to take part in,” Taylor said of her experiences. “In addition, the Club created a safe place for me where I could hang out with my friends and truly feel comfortable in my own skin.”



## A Rising STAR

Kayla McNamara first learned how great it feels to make someone else's life better as a child while volunteering through her church. However, she had challenges of her own as a child and into her adolescence. Kayla grew up in a single parent home and, as she says, "...had no easy access to positive role models. I tended to rely on my friends for support, and they had the same problem. We were all a bit lost, and I think, wanted to be told that we matter, but none of us were getting enough of that." Now, as the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley's Director of Targeted Support Services, Kayla makes it her priority that "...every kid I get to come into contact with hears explicitly that they matter to the world and to our community and that the sky is the limit."

Kayla began her journey with the Boys & Girls Clubs when she started in a part-time support role in the Club's Center for Grieving Children back in January of 2008. "That experience opened my eyes," McNamara recalled. "It is what inspired my commitment to the Club." Kayla says that she learned quickly that "I get to come every day and

participate in small actions and activities that truly change the course of a young person's life. I care deeply about being a good person every day and being able to work here at the Club has allowed me to expand and think about new ways I can make other people's lives better."

Kayla is leading the development of a sorely needed new program called STAR to improve academic and developmental outcomes for Black and African American students in Appleton and Menasha schools.

Through it all, the Club has been instrumental in providing McNamara an opportunity to achieve her goals. "I see myself as a bit of a reluctant leader, it's not something I thought I wanted to be. But I've learned that I have a lot to give when it comes to developing programs, managing teams, and having a greater impact in our community. This is all extremely moving to me."

The Club has provided me the opportunity to develop my professional leadership skills while remaining extremely connected to work that is impacting so many lives," she noted.

# Striding Forward With STEM

Jason Dunahoo, market segment manager for Miller Electric, believes the Fox Valley needs more technical expertise and that our community's young people need greater access to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programs. When Miller Electric started a VEX Robotics program with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley, Dunahoo saw a path to that goal.

"I was looking for an opportunity to mentor and educate future generations," Dunahoo said. "When I heard about the Vex Robotics program I knew immediately it was the program for me."

Vex Robotics was started as a way to provide a unique STEM learning experience to kids that might not otherwise have the opportunity. The program started in 2012 at three locations and expanded to the Boys and Girls Club of Menasha in 2015. Team members get hands-on experience with robotics and associated technologies, take tours of Miller Electric's facilities, and get first-hand exposure to advanced technologies including 3D modeling and 3D printing.

Of course, the highlight is the robotics tournaments themselves. "We've had at least six teams qualify for competition at the state level," Dunahoo recounted. "Just this year we had a team that was part of the State Championship alliance and they were invited to attend the VEX World Championship where they actually won a couple of matches."

For Dunahoo, though, the most important successes of the program that involves 20 Miller Electric volunteers, come from its life-changing effect on the kids.

"The impact of this program is just amazing," Dunahoo said, recounting the experience of one young lady preparing for her senior year in high school. "She told me that before the robotics program she had no idea what she wanted to be when she grew up," Dunahoo said. After her two years in the VEX Robotics program her eyes were opened to a career in STEM. She is now planning on studying computer graphic design at UW Stout.

Stories like hers are common, according to Dunahoo.

"Every year I hear a story about a student whose whole demeanor turns around thanks to the robotics program."



## Growing Success

For U.S. Cellular, like so many of the Boys & Girls Clubs' other, generous corporate partners, investing time and resources into the communities it serves is part of the mission. But for Ali Hagerman, store manager for the cellular phone provider's Appleton West and Fox River Mall locations, the opportunity to help goes beyond her job – it's personal. "I can't have children of my own and I really found the Club as a great outlet," she explained. "It's a way for me to get involved in the kids' lives."

Ali says, "What makes me feel so good...is that I am making such an impact on a child's life!" Volunteering at the Club is a way to impact the lives of children and to create meaningful personal connections with them while helping them grow to meet their potential.

Hagerman began volunteering with the Boys and Girls Club in Oshkosh five years ago, and has been a volunteer with the Boys & Girls Club of Appleton for the last three years. Kids are "one of the most important pieces of the community," she said of her motivation for working with the Club, "and the more we can do to develop our youth, the more we are going to be a stronger community."

This year, Hagerman is working with Club kids on a "seeds to salsa" project, helping them learn self-reliance skills like gardening, maintenance and cooking. "With this project we started the seeds indoors with the kids...and will be working with them throughout the summer to grow, harvest and make salsa," Hagerman said. "When we started the seeds we...had the kids paint two rain barrels which will be used to water the plants."

These efforts are fun, practical, educational and rewarding, for the kids and the volunteers.

"It's always a blast to spend some time in the art room and get creative with the kids," Hagerman said of her time at the Club.

“The Center teaches us that we can all keep moving forward and we will be ok.” Libby Welhouse at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley’s 2018 Vintage in the Valley fundraiser.



## Hope & Healing

It was 2008 and Libby, then age 30, was living a charmed life. She and her husband, Chad, had successful careers, had just purchased a new house and were thrilled to be preparing to welcome a new baby daughter to join their young son. “We were very lucky,” Libby recounted. “We were on track to have anything and everything we ever wanted in life.”

That was her life before cancer.

Chad died in 2013, five years after his diagnosis. Libby’s journey with Chad through his cancer treatments and through his death was exhausting and overwhelming. She felt alone and unsure of how to move forward with her life. Most importantly, she wondered, how could she be a good mom to her two children, Griffen and Niah, in the midst of so much pain? A friend told her about the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley’s Center for Grieving Children.

At the Center, alongside other children grieving the death of loved one, Libby’s two children, Niah and Griffen, began their long healing process by learning how to talk about their feelings and share memories of their Dad. They each began to understand that death is a part of life and although their relationship with their Dad had changed, it would continue “in memory” for the rest of their lives. Now, after years in the Center, Libby observes: “I absolutely love when I see my son welcoming a new family and talking to a new child. He asks if he can show them around and help them... It’s an amazing feeling for a mom to see their child so kind and gentle and using their grief to help others.”

The program at the Center helped Libby find hope as well. “We joined the Center to help my kids,” Libby recalled. “Never did I expect it to be just as helpful and meaningful to me.... We share our stories, we express our frustrations, we laugh, we cry, we get angry and sometimes we just sit in silence.

No one chooses to go through the pain of losing someone in their lives,” Libby stated, “but the Center is there if you find yourself in need....The family at the Center helped me through it all.”



## 2017/18 Youth of the Year

Fitting in hasn't always been easy for Travis Thor. "At age six, I was bullied. I did not look or speak like other kids in school. I was four feet, four inches tall, weighed 40 pounds and had a terrible and noticeable stutter. I was the kid that did not fit in with anyone." Sam Hutchison, the Boys & Girls Club of Highlands Elementary School Unit Director at the time, was first to notice Travis' struggles. Sam reached out to help Travis feel safe and important. The Boys & Girls Club became a shelter, a place for him to find his voice and engage in the kinds of positive and rewarding activities that he would turn to more and more as he grew older.

Then, his life reached another crisis point. "I had many family difficulties...and at age 13 I was kicked out of my home after I found the courage to come out as gay. I was unprepared to deal with being cast out at that age by my family and friends and I was lost. I had nothing." Once again, it was a Boys & Girls Club team member who made all the difference. Kristin Griswold, Unit Director for the Boys &

Girls Club of Wilson Middle School, the person who Travis now calls his "best friend," was there when he needed someone to turn to. He says, "...the Boys & Girls Club gave me a place of safety, love, and acceptance. Boys & Girls Club staff greeted me with open arms, lifted me up, and made sure I could become the strongest version of me."

"The Boys & Girls Club has taught me great resiliency, self-confidence, and gratitude. Resiliency for when times are hard, knowing I have the strength to get through. Self-confidence as I learn to accept and take care of myself, and gratitude for learning to put others before myself. Today, I volunteer more than 100 hours each year, showing me that giving without expecting anything in return is always the best way to help my community and to make me happy."

"I can show the younger generation that no matter who you are and whatever you want to be, you can always do it – just by being you. This realization would have never come to me without the help and support of the Boys & Girls Club."

## Great Futures 2025: A Call to Action

Since the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley first opened its doors in 1998, the organization has been a vital part of the fabric of the communities it serves, shaping, changing and saving lives in service to young people and their families. As the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley approaches its 20th anniversary, it looks to become even more transformational at a time when our kids and our communities most need us to do so.

We believe that all children deserve an equal opportunity to reach their full potential. Unfortunately, the disparity between socio-economic groups in terms of upward mobility and what most see as success in life – a post-high school education, a well-paying job, upward career path, a stable home life – is as wide as it has been in a century. Here in the Fox Cities, there are over 12,500 K-12th grade students living in low-income homes, a 48 percent increase in the past 10 years. If the trends hold, most of these children will still be in low-income situations as adults. Limited incomes cut children off from opportunity, most importantly the opportunity to reach their full potential.

An Optimal Club Experience is safe, fun, and supportive, helps kids feel a sense of belonging, gives them many opportunities to learn and explore, and recognizes them for their efforts. The experience is often life-changing. Young people who receive an Optimal Club Experience are more likely to be on track to graduate from high school on time, they are more likely to avoid drugs and alcohol, and they are more likely to handle conflict in positive ways. In brief, an Optimal Club Experience significantly increases the odds that young people will reach their full potential.

Our Great Futures 2025 plan focuses on providing transformational experiences for kids and teens by restoring the foundational tenets of equality and opportunity — a belief that all young people deserve an equal shot at reaching their full potential. By working together with our friends and partners, in shared commitment to excellence on behalf of our community's children, we can continue to make Great Futures possible for all youth, especially those who need us most.

### OUR GREAT FUTURES 2025 OBJECTIVES:

- New locations to serve more youth
- More intensive programs and services
- Increase the number of youth we serve to 1,700 each school day
- Lower our adult : member ratio to 1:10 to drive quality
- Train and develop the most talented, committed and skilled team of youth development professionals



## Our Great Futures 2025

**Purpose:** To help the communities we serve become great places for ALL kids to grow!



BY THE NUMBERS

# 11,655

Total youth served in 2017

# 1,108

Club members served on average each school day.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF THE FOX VALLEY

**Members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley score higher than national averages in:**

**TEAMWORK**

- Listening to others
- Contributing to group needs
- Organizing groups

**SHOWING CONCERN FOR OTHERS**

- Helping people in need
- Thinking of others when making decisions
- Helping when they see a problem



## Academic Success

# 82%

of Club members report getting “mostly A’s or B’s” in school.

# 98%

of Club members are on track to graduate on time.

## Healthy Lifestyles

# 215,652

free and nutritious meals and snacks served, up 15% from 2016.

## Good Character & Citizenship

# 54%

of Club members volunteer at least once per month.

# 1,670

Club members took part in character and citizenship programming.

## Youth & Family Services

# 5,918

individual, family and group counseling sessions provided to 1,285 young people.

## THEN

# 1998

The first area Boys & Girls Club opened in Appleton.

# 115

young people participated in the Club's first summer program in 1998.

# < 100

In 1999, an average of less than 100 members participated in the Club each school day.

# 600

In 2000, the organization enrolled 600 members.

## NOW

# 7.2 million

The estimated total number of hours of service we have provided.

# 50,000+

youth have been served since opening.

# 9

The number of locations we currently have.

# 4,500

young people enroll as members each year.

# 2,000+

youth take part in the summer youth development programs each year.

# 2nd

Today, we are the second busiest Boys & Girls Club organization in Wisconsin.

# \$12.46

Economic Benefit: Return of \$12.46 for every \$1 invested in the programs<sup>1</sup>.

# 1,100

young people take part in the Club each school day. **Our goal is to grow this number to 1,700 by 2025.**

<sup>1</sup> (Eisenberg, Daniel and David Hutton. "Estimating the Return on Investment for Boys & Girls Clubs." University of Michigan: Population Studies Center, Institute for Social Research, 2015.)

## REACHING MORE YOUTH, CHANGING MORE LIVES

To reach more young people, we must continue expanding our clubs and services into the neighborhoods and communities that need us most and remain totally committed to ongoing continuous improvement work that allows us to reach our full potential as an organization. To transform even more lives, we need to:

- Expand services and programs so more kids can participate
- Make improvements to existing spaces to continue offering a safe place for youth
- Add room to accommodate more kids, programs, staff, and volunteers

Our first twenty years give us a lot to celebrate, but in so many ways our work is just beginning. Stick with us, there's lots more to come!!



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017

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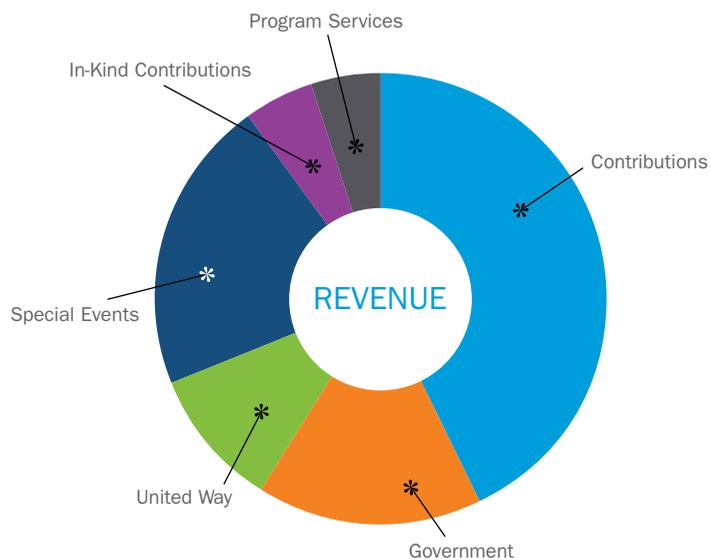
**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF THE FOX VALLEY

## FINANCIALS

### FISCAL YEAR JANUARY 1, 2017 - DECEMBER 31, 2017

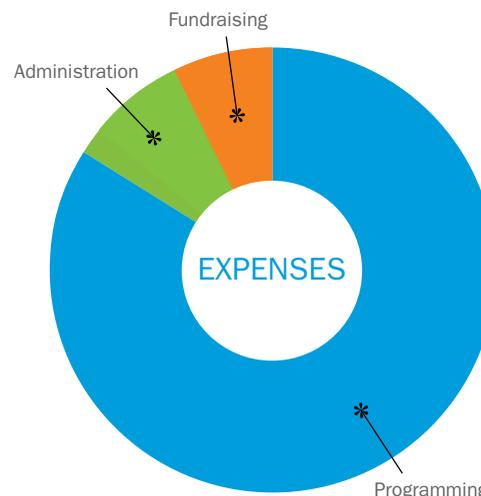
#### REVENUE

Contributions .....	43%
Government .....	16%
United Way .....	10%
Special Events .....	21%
In-Kind (non-cash) Contributions .....	5%
Program Services .....	5%
Total Revenue .....	\$4,089,937
Net Assets Released from Restriction .....	\$381,819
Total Support and Other Revenue .....	\$4,471,756



#### EXPENSES

Programming .....	84%
Administration .....	8%
Fundraising .....	8%
Total Expenses Before Depreciation .....	\$3,744,713
Total Expenses .....	\$4,138,206





# BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE FOX VALLEY

## HEADQUARTERS

160 S. Badger Ave. | Appleton, WI 54914  
(920) 731-0555

### Our Boys & Girls Clubs

Boys & Girls Club of Appleton  
& the CLUB Teen Center of Appleton

Boys & Girls Club of Menasha  
& the CLUB Teen Center of Menasha

Boys & Girls Club of  
Badger Elementary School

Boys & Girls Club of  
Columbus Elementary School

Boys & Girls Club of  
Foster Elementary School

Boys & Girls Club of  
Highlands Elementary School

Boys & Girls Club of  
Kaleidoscope Academy

Boys & Girls Club of  
Little Chute Elementary School

Boys & Girls Club of  
Wilson Middle School

### Youth & Family Services

160 S. Badger Ave. | Appleton, WI 54914  
(920) 731-0555

Center for Grieving Children  
Counseling  
Runaway & Homeless Youth  
STAR  
Truancy Intervention

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