



South Coast BC

LEARNING AND IMPACT REPORT

2024



BGC SOUTH COAST BC

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND INTENDED IMPACT

For over 85 years, BGC South Coast BC (formerly Boys and Girls Clubs of South Coast BC) has been giving thousands of kids a place to belong in their neighbourhoods across the Lower Mainland. Our Clubs open their doors to young people of all ages when they aren't at home or at school, where our trained staff and volunteers provide programs and services that help young people realize positive outcomes in self-expression, academics, healthy living, physical activity, job readiness, mental health, social development, leadership, and more. BGC's vision is for all children and youth to discover and achieve their dreams and grow up to be healthy, successful, and active participants in society. *We believe that opportunity changes everything.*

BGC South Coast BC developed and participates in an annual evaluation of impact with other Clubs across the country, using surveys and interviews of Club members to measure changes in participants as a result of their experiences in the Club. We use Learning & Impact Project data to prove and improve outcomes for participants in the areas of positive relationships, healthy living, lifelong learning, and leadership.

The findings in this report are from a mixed methods evaluation including a survey and in-depth qualitative interviews. The interview protocols and survey questions were designed to discover how children and youth who attend Club are developing in four key areas: positive relationships, healthy living, lifelong learning, and leadership.

To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having on children and youth?
2. What about our programming is contributing to this impact?

A committee of Club leaders identified five to six indicators (factors) for each key area. The four areas of impact and the 21 related indicators (factors) include:

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Connection
Belonging
Conflict resolution
Acceptance of self
Acceptance of others

HEALTHY LIVING

Choices
Nutrition
Physical activity
Positive outlook
Resilience

LIFELONG LEARNING

School readiness
Exploration
Creativity
Challenges
Goal attainment

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Identify
Influence
Confidence
Initiative
Cooperation
Self-regulation

HERE'S WHAT
WE DID TO SEE
THE IMPACT
OF CLUBS ...



QUANTITATIVE SURVEY DESIGN AND DEPLOYMENT

The National Member Survey assigns one item to each factor, producing a survey of 21 items. Each item is accompanied by four response options: “not at all,” “a little,” “some,” and “a lot.” The survey project was launched in January of 2022 with 79 BGC Clubs (93% of BGC Clubs in Canada) participating in the survey deployment and data collection.

SURVEY RESPONSE

For the 2024 Member Survey of BGC South Coast BC, there were a total of 567 respondents. The demographic distribution of those participating in the survey was as follows:

Age Range

- 61% 8 to 10-year-olds (n=346)
- 28% 11 to 13-year-olds (n=159)
- 7% 14 to 16-year-olds (n=41)
- 2% 17 to 18-year-olds (n=12)

Identify as Indigenous

- 6% (n=35)

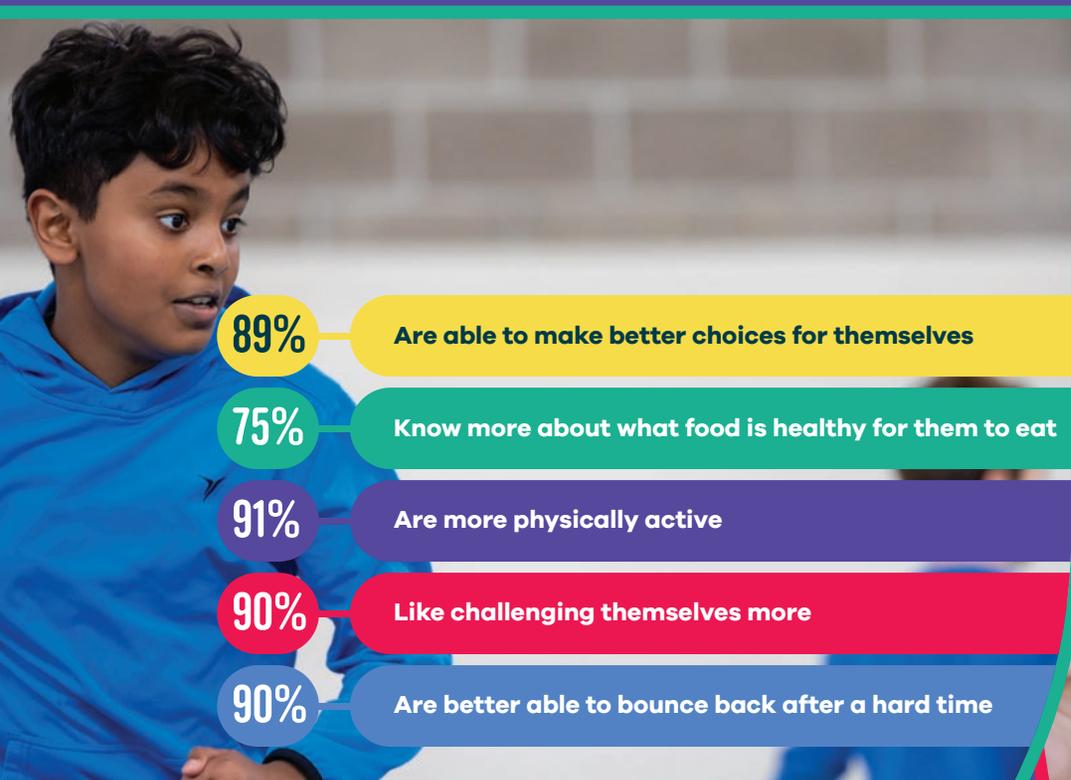
Gender Identity

- 45% Boy (n=255)
- 44% Girl (n=248)
- 2% Non-Binary (n=12)
- 1% 2-Spirit (n=3)
- 6% Other (n=18)

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

We held one-on-one, in-depth interviews with kids and youth who attend our Club programs. **Using in-depth, semi-structured interview protocols, we listened to our participants about the difference Club has made in their lives.** Our interview team included 6 staff who convened a total of 32 interviews, each between 30-60 minutes. We collected data using handwritten notes and Otter voice-to-text transcription app. We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. First, each interviewer analyzed their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Then, the interview team developed common themes from the full data set. We identified the insights and brought them forward in this report as findings.

BECAUSE OF CLUB, BGC KIDS AND YOUTH SAY THAT THEY ...



89%

Are able to make better choices for themselves

75%

Know more about what food is healthy for them to eat

91%

Are more physically active

90%

Like challenging themselves more

90%

Are better able to bounce back after a hard time

HEALTHY LIVING OUTCOMES

Kids and youth make healthy choices about nutrition and physical activity, and have increased positive outlook and resilience.



91%

Are better at helping out when it is needed

89%

Have a more positive influence on others

89%

Are more confident in their abilities

83%

Are more comfortable leading

90%

Work better with others

LEADERSHIP OUTCOMES

Kids and youth learn how to be leaders and have a positive influence on others, building skills for cooperation, self-regulation, confidence, and taking initiative.

BECAUSE OF CLUB, BGC KIDS AND YOUTH SAY THAT THEY ...



LIFELONG LEARNING OUTCOMES

Kids and youth experience educational success, develop curiosity and creative expressions, and learn how to challenge themselves and achieve goals.



POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP OUTCOMES

Kids and youth have enhanced connection to community, interpersonal skills, sense of belonging, and acceptance of self and others

HERE'S
WHAT WE
LEARNED...



FINDING #1 - BGC STAFF ARE OUR SUPERPOWER.

Key Insight: BGC Club Staff bring their unique personality and skills to work every day to come alongside kids and youth. The relationships they develop with our kids and youth at Club are foundational to all other impacts experienced.

DISCUSSION

Throughout the interviews, kids and youth shared how staff are there when they need them. They shared that staff listen to them and help them learn, they like them and give them chances. Staff give space for kids and youth to be their true selves and let them make mistakes and learn from those mistakes.

The data show that kids and youth develop trusting relationships through consistent, long-standing relationships with our Club staff. This is the foundation of BGC's work in Clubs and creates greater impact in all other outcome measurement areas. Staff consistency and longevity in each Club, helps to form and strengthen relationships with Club members. In our interviews, kids and youth reported that they learn about relationships at Club, specifically through role modelling from staff. **Staff provide emotional support and guidance to kids and youth while being fair and fun.** The Club creates a strong sense of community through Club relationships, including moments of teamwork.

“ At the Club, I have real friends, and the staff guide us and help us grow. ”

SIGNIFICANCE

As an employer, BGC encourages staff to bring in their uniqueness and true selves to their work. The staff's willingness to listen, provide guidance, and create a safe environment where young people can express themselves freely is significant. By allowing kids and youth to make mistakes and learn from them in a trusted relationship, staff foster a sense of trust and acceptance, which is crucial for personal growth and development. This nurturing approach not only helps the children and youth build resilience but also strengthens their relationships with the staff, making them feel valued, understood, **and that they belong.**

BGC's everything is about positive relationships. Because Clubs are able to provide stable, consistent, trusting, positive relationships, kids and youth are able to then experience positive impacts in other areas. BGC intentionally recruits and hires staff who see kids and youth for their amazingness. BGC carefully selects, recruits our people, core training creates consistency, staff bring who they authentically are. Kids and youth can relate to specific/individual staff that they connect with - who they can better relate to.

FINDING #2 - BE YOU AT BGC.

Key Insight: Youth reported high mean responses to being able to bounce back through hard times and make better choices.

DISCUSSION

The data shows that BGC is a safe space where kids and youth are able to be vulnerable and are safe from judgement as they explore who they are, and who they are becoming. Club members learn to believe in themselves and grow their self-confidence through the flexibility that the Club offers and the freedom of self-directed programs where kids and youth explore the things that are of interest to them.

Club is the place where they get to show up as their true selves - including if they are having a difficult day and needing support, or having a great day and wanting to share it with Club staff. While younger kids are still developing this skill, the older kids that we interviewed who have been with BGC for more years, were able to express this concept in different ways that shows how BGC helps to support and empower them in their personal development.

“ It feels good to be yourself and not worry about what other people think. ”

SIGNIFICANCE

BGC is not about changing who kids and youth are - it's about seeing them, and supporting them to discover and stay true to who they are and are meant to be and to celebrate them. We want to be the safe place where they can be supported in being their true authentic self, free of judgement. Because Club is built on the foundation of positive trusting relationships, kids and youth feel comfortable showing up as their true self, and know they can explore their identity through opportunities that the Club provides. While Club focuses on being a space where kids and youth learn about accepting others, through the interviews we heard from participants about how they are also learning to accept themselves and to believe in themselves just as they are, not if they were different.

FINDING #3 - CHOICES CREATE GREATER IMPACT

Key Insight – Kids and youth experience greater positive impact at Club because of the sense of independence and autonomy they have through our unique self-directed approach to programs and activities.

“ It doesn't matter how old you are, we all learn together and cheer each other on! ”

DISCUSSION

The data show that the self-directed approach of Club enhances the positive impact of the activities and programs that Club provides. As you might imagine, BGC offers a variety of programs and activities that are age and developmentally appropriate. But in addition to all of those great offerings, Clubs offer the unique opportunity for kids and youth to choose how to spend their time, giving them autonomy in their choices including using their imagination and creativity, physical activity, safe access to technology, outtrips, cooking programs, and just “hanging with friends”.

The self-directed experiences at Club also provides kids and youth the opportunity to ‘fail safely’. This supports Club members in building their confidence and skills, through the offering of opportunities where they have choice in trying new things, using their imagination, discovering their interests, or furthering their curiosities. Through the qualitative interviews, BGC heard that kids and youth are shifting their mindsets to be more positive about feeling comfortable making mistakes and knowing that they can try again in the Club space.

SIGNIFICANCE

While BGC provides structure in programming and activities, we see the importance of kids and youth experiencing choice in what they want to participate in. As kids and youth spend most of their weekly time at school, which is curriculum based and specific, at Club they get to experience a structured, organized, and supervised space where they have choice and independence in how they would like to spend their time. **We know that kids and youth are developing their social and emotional skills in different ways and at their own pace, and Clubs become that safe space where they can try new things, fail safely, and try again.** Often overlooked, or unrecognized, we know that this development is a process that we can support by offering a choice of positive, developmentally appropriate experiences, activities, and opportunities.

FINDING #4 - BGC IS LIKE A SECOND HOME.

Key Insight – Club kids and youth describe Club as a ‘second home’ grounded in fairness, respect and boundaries.

DISCUSSION

Kids and youth experience the safety and support of their Club as a ‘second home’. BGC understands that concept might mean different things to different kids. The data show that whether it is an extension of their home and support that they receive, or the only place where they experience that support, **Club is a safe place where kids and youth feel fairness, and where they experience respect and consideration through kindness and thoughtfulness.**

An important part of the Club’s safety is that Club staff teach and reinforce boundaries among kids and youth regularly. Through role modelling of family dinners, casual check-ins and conversations, and a stable regular touchpoint—kids and youth shared the various ways that Club has felt like a second home to them. Through qualitative interviews, kids and youth at different ages and at different points of longevity with their connection to Club, were able to express that their Club was a go-to space that felt like a second home.

“ Club feels like one big family, and the staff show us how important it is to support each other. ”

SIGNIFICANCE

Club is unique in that it is not trying to be something it isn’t—it is not trying to be ‘school’ or to replace the family. Clubs are places that kids and youth, and families are choosing to be a part of, whether that is an extension of other supports in place, or because of a lack of same.

Every kid deserves to have a place where they get to be themselves that is consistently there for them in their neighbourhood. Club comes alongside kids and youth in their growth and development and continues to be a place that is stable and supportive and there for them when they need. This stability and genuine connection for kids and youth becomes the foundation for where they can experience positive outcomes in positive relationships, lifelong learning, leadership and healthy living behaviours.

FINDING #5 - LEARNING IS HAPPENING, WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING IT!

Key Insight – Club kids and youth experience Club as a place they want to be, that they are choosing to be part of, without necessarily realizing that it is a place where they are growing, learning, failing, and succeeding on the path to lifelong learning.

DISCUSSION

The data show that Clubs are helping kids and youth embrace learning and develop skills to support learning throughout their lives. In the safe space of Club, kids and youth are supported by staff to plan for their futures and to set personal goals. They are encouraged to think about different paths and opportunities, and through their qualitative interviews they share how they are supported to be creative and share their ideas. Kids and youth feel supported by their Club to be committed to doing well in school and they express an openness to learn.

Throughout the interviews, kids and youth shared that **Club is a place where they can be supported in their ongoing learning**. They know that they are in progress and are committed to continually doing better. Staff support this by recognizing potential in kids and youth and supporting the development of positive self-image in them.

“ I feel like I am a better version of myself because of Club. ”

SIGNIFICANCE

BGC understands that individual development in kids and youth is a journey of lifelong learning, and not just a checklist to be completed. The flexible and self-directed approach of Club provides opportunities that continuously adapt to the development of the kids and youth it serves. While Clubs are not focused solely on homework help, or educational achievements, the focused outcome of lifelong learning and developing this interest in skill in kids and youth is brought to life in Club spaces, programs and staff role modelling.

When Club kids and youth experience this approach to lifelong learning, they are open to new opportunities and see their growth and potential as ever evolving and not something static. They are open to change and to growth in ways that go beyond textbooks and academics, but also in their personalities and attitudes to new concepts and skill development.

FINDING #6 - AM I THE LEADER?

Key Insight – Club kids and youth can identify leadership qualities but are not self-identifying as leaders. This may be developmentally appropriate.

DISCUSSION

Club kids and youth are thinking about what it means to be a leader at BGC, but not quite self-identifying as leaders. They can identify the qualities of leaders, including that they portray those qualities, but they stop short of identifying themselves as a leader.

Through our qualitative interviews, we identified a disconnect where kids and youth identify Club staff as leaders, but do not see themselves or other kids/youth as leaders. While kids and youth know what it means to be a leader, they are not yet feeling like they have become leaders themselves. We suspect this may be because of the language that is used with our staff such as 'Activity Leader', but also perhaps that kids and youth developmentally appropriate may just want to be participating in programs, and not necessarily in charge or responsible.

Our quantitative data shows that our year over year survey results demonstrates how Club kids and youth showed higher response rates across all areas of Leadership outcomes, and that those who identify as a girl showed to have a significantly higher rating in those same outcomes.

SIGNIFICANCE

As Leadership is one of BGC's four domains of impact, it is an integral part of the outcomes that Clubs focus on developing. Our quantitative data shows significant rates in Leadership outcomes which is interesting to note conversely to qualitative interviews where kids and youth are not verbally identifying as leaders. This creates an opportunity for Club staff to bring to life what it means to be a leader for different ages and levels of responsibility. Kids and youth identify with leadership skills and qualities such as being kind, listening, helping others, knowing right from wrong, but yet they do not call themselves as leaders.

“ I know right from wrong because I have been going to Club so long. ”

WHAT WE WILL DO IN RESPONSE



IN RESPONSE TO THE DISCOVERIES OF THE EVALUATION, BGC SOUTH COAST BC WILL BE WORKING ON NUMEROUS WAYS TO EXPAND, AMPLIFY, AND DEEPEN THE IMPACT OF CLUBS. THE FOLLOWING ADJUSTMENTS, STRATEGIES, AND EXPERIMENTS ARE SOME OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT RESPONSES WE WILL MOVE FORWARD.

STAFFING

- Exploring the needs of children who require more emotional, or behavioural support and creating a specialised role at Club for a staff person whose work it is specifically to support these kids and youth.
- Create regular Activity Leader positions at each Club, where applicable and possible, to increase the tenure and consistency in staffing. Some Activity Leaders would want to have their career at BGC at that position and have regular dependable work hours with benefits and support from BGC.
- While we focus on increasing our numbers of kids and youth in Clubs, we want to be intentional with our staffing ratios to ensure that there is time and space for those meaningful connections.
- Continue to provide strong onboarding training for all Club staff so that they
- approach their work aligned with BGC's mission, vision and values.

PROGRAMMING

- Continue to offer a wide range of intentional programming, where kids and youth can continue to learn about different identities and different interests.
- Consistency of program offerings in a Club, and across Club locations.
- Continue to provide choice and self-directed age-appropriate programming.
- Create opportunities for Activity Leaders to be involved with program ideas to ensure that we continue to offer new, interesting, and engaging programs.
- Continue to create an environment of respect and fairness and conflict resolution learnings.
- Finding the balance of structure and consistency with programming across all Clubs (ie. calendars and schedules, parent / guardian communication) while also continuing a self-directed approach. Give kids and youth something to look forward to.
- Explore how Club can be a place where intentional work is being done with kids and youth on goal setting, lifelong learning, etc.
- Create a Leadership Program, where kids at different ages can feel connected and step into the identity of being a leader.

EXTERNAL

- Create opportunities for external connections in Club communities where kids and youth are experiencing healthy living in new ways (ie. cooking, physical activity)
- Externally communicate about our self-directed approach to programming with parents / guardians and external stakeholders as part of the uniqueness of BGC.
- Sharing communication about how every neighbourhood needs a Club.



South Coast BC

www.bgcbc.ca

