Dear Boys & Girls Club Parents and Supporters:

A troubling news article was recently published regarding abuse allegations at various Boys & Girls Clubs across the country. For this article, Boys & Girls Clubs of America fully cooperated with the media to provide information and participated in an interview about the many safety requirements, standards and best practices that are in place at local Clubs. These efforts help ensure the safety of Club youth – underscoring our unwavering commitment to the protection and success of all kids and teens in this country.

Even so, the resulting article and the knowledge of people directly impacted was concerning and upsetting. With that in mind, our team at Boys & Girls Clubs of the Austin Area felt it was important to take some time to reinforce the fact that the safety and protection of the children we serve is our organization’s No. 1 priority inside all Club locations we operate throughout the Austin area. No child should ever be harmed, and our hearts go out to the victims of abuse and their families.

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Austin Area is dedicated to the highest standards of ethical behavior and integrity. We work every day to create fun, positive and safe Club environments where kids have every opportunity to be successful in life. As such, we strictly adhere to multi-layered safety requirements, standards and best practices reinforced locally and at a national level. Details about those policies and procedures are available online here:

- We have a zero-tolerance policy regarding inappropriate behavior of any kind on the part of any Club staff, volunteer or youth member
- Mandatory criminal background checks
- We are required to immediately report any incident regardless of severity to the appropriate authorities and then to Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Our Club has a board-led Safety Committee responsible for continually reviewing and updating our security measures
- Clubs are required to comply with mandatory annual safety assessments
- Locally and Nationally, we engage leading 3rd party safety experts on training, policies and resources
- Any employee looking to move to another Club MUST have a reference from the previous Club.

For more about the lengths to which BGCAA goes to protect the youth entrusted to our care, we would like to share this safety and security information, which outlines in greater detail the standards and procedures to which we strictly adhere.

Allegations like the ones mentioned in this article remind us yet again of the critical nature of our safety policies and practices here locally, as well as the significance of our resolute adherence to these standards by all members of our organization.

Research is clear that when kids feel safe, they have better outcomes in life, which is why we do the work we do – serving local youth who need us most to help them become productive, caring and responsible citizens of our community. We know that their great futures are ultimately built and dependent upon the foundations of secure Club environments. This is why the safety of our youth has always been and will always be our No. 1 priority.

For the Kids,

Misti Potter
CEO and President
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Austin Area