



BOYS & GIRLS
C O U N T R Y
A Home for Children

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM FAMILIES

How much does the program cost?

We have a sliding scale fee and will meet with and work with the child's family or guardians to establish fees for the child's care. Families are asked to help in whatever way they can. However, no child is ever turned away because of his or her family's economic status.

How long do children stay at Boys and Girls Country?

We request a long term placement for children and teens, but there is no requirement. We are a place where children can grow up. Our average length of stay is three years, however many children live with us through high school graduation and higher education.

Where do children live?

Children live in cottages with other students on our main campus in Hockley, Texas, which is 35 miles northwest of downtown Houston. There are two students to a room with a private bathroom. They are raised by trained Teaching Parents in a family atmosphere.

Where do children go to school?

Children attend local public schools, either Waller ISD or an area charter school. We provide after-school tutoring and enrichment, along with on and off-campus activities for recreation and personal development including student council, sports, band, choir, and music, arts, summer camps, and church mission trips.

When may I see my child?

A visitation plan will be arranged for you and your child at placement. There are weekend visits scheduled approximately every six weeks.

Can siblings live together?

We enjoy the special relationship siblings have with each other. We have separate cottages for boys and girls, and for different age groups, so siblings may not always be able to live together. We will place each child in the best cottage for his or her individual growth. Siblings will be able to spend time together frequently through events and activities as well as be able to visit with each other on the campus or in cottages.

QUESTIONS (AND ANSWERS) FROM CHILDREN:

Is there any fun at Boys and Girls Country? Will I get to do things?

You do not have to worry about being active at Boys and Girls Country. If you don't already know what your skills and interests are, we will give you plenty of opportunities to find out! We have basketball, volleyball, dances, parties (including a special birthday party for you), music lessons, and much more. There is even a pool with a slide where students can go swimming with much supervision.

We also receive tickets for Astros and Rockets games, take field trips and have other fun outings.

In the summer, if you are 15 years old, you can work as an apprentice on campus and earn money. We can go to summer camp, mission trips, or take a trip with your cottage. Some of our cottage vacations have been to Disneyworld, the Grand Canyon, the beach, snow skiing in Colorado and camping at state parks.

We also participate in after school and community activities. Boys and Girls Country wants us to get involved in band, athletics, fine arts or whatever we are interested in. We also go to youth group at our cottage church.

Where will I go to school?

Boys and Girls Country students go to public schools in Waller ISD.

We ride the school bus back and forth from the campus, unless we have permission to stay after school for an extra-curricular activity. If we stay after school, Boys and Girls Country will send someone to give us a ride home. Car pool duty is assigned to a different "Teaching Parent" each day to complete van runs to the schools for those kids involved in after school activities. This will give you the chance to meet all the Teaching Parents.

Your parent or guardian will receive a copy of your report card each grading period. They will also be invited, along with your Teaching Parents, to attend any ARD or special school meetings scheduled for you.

Education is very important at Boys and Girls Country. You have to learn to succeed in school or you won't be able to find the best jobs later on. You will have a study hall each school night in your cottage, and you will be expected to do homework every night. Most kids who come to live with us are one or two grades behind the other kids their age, so we can use individual tutoring and Computer Lab to help us "catch up," and make good grades. All students attend at

least once each week. This is your chance to have staff help you in any way they can. The Education Director, as well as tutors, will be there during the week, Monday through Thursday.

At the end of each school year we hold an awards banquet where students are recognized for their achievements during the year. You will be allowed to invite two guests of your choice to this special dinner and fun evening. It is a favorite time of the year for all our kids and staff.

The schools in the Waller ISD are:

Evelyn Turlington Elementary (Kindergarten to 5th grade)

Schultz Middle School (6th to 8th grade)

Waller High School (9th to 12th grade)

What are the rules?

While it is not possible to make a list of all the “do’s and don’ts,” our basic rules are about safety, common courtesy and consideration for others, and the development of self-discipline.

A few are:

- No stealing, which means you cannot take things that belong to others, or borrow the possessions of others without permission.
- No physical violence, which means you cannot hit or hurt yourself, another kid or staff.
- No damaging of property, which means you cannot break destroy items or property belonging to others or property belonging to Boys and Girls Country.
- No running away or sneaking off, which means always remaining in the boundaries designated for you while on campus, or when off campus, staying in the supervision of the staff.
- No alcohol, tobacco or drugs, which means you cannot purchase, make, possess or use alcoholic beverages, tobacco in any form, or any substances that could be harmful either physically or emotionally. This includes non-prescription and prescription medications that are not for you. No medications, including vitamins, are to be kept in your room.
- No obscene language or gestures, which means no cussing, vulgar or inappropriate language, or physical gestures intended to embarrass, humiliate or anger another person. This also means you cannot use vulgar language in conversations, letters or have pornography.
- No sexual acting out, which means you cannot touch others in their private areas or allow others to touch you. There are severe laws and penalties we will discuss with you.
- No dating between Boys and Girls Country residents. We want to encourage you to develop healthy and age appropriate social relationships outside of campus.

What if I break a rule?

We believe in teaching kids to follow the rules, so if you break one, appropriate consequences will be given. Depending on the seriousness of the rule broken, the consequence will vary. At Boys and Girls Country we follow the rules too. If any resident commits a serious offense such as a theft, drug violation, runaway or assault, we know they have broken the law and we will notify the police. It does not always mean kids have to leave, but they have to pay the price for poor choices.

Boys and Girls Country does not utilize corporal punishment (swats) or personal restraints for behavior interventions.

How long will I stay here?

The length of time you stay at Boys and Girls Country depends on you and your family. We talk to you and your family about it when you first arrive and at least twice a year in your Plan of Service meeting.

About half of our residents live here two to three years and then go home or live with a relative. The other half grow up here and graduate from high school. For those who do finish high school here and join the College and Career program, we help you choose a career that is right for you and make sure you have enough money to attend college or a trade school. We have residents who come back and visit often who are in college now or in the military.

We work with your parent or guardian to be sure you get the training or education you need to get a good job and are able to support yourself. Each step of your future is discussed in your Plan of Service.

How will my guardian know if I am making progress?

As we previously mentioned, we will mail a copy of your report card to your parent or guardian each grading period, and should any ARD or special school meetings be scheduled for you, your parent or guardian will be invited and encouraged to attend. They are also invited and encouraged to attend the Plan of Service conference and will receive a copy of the results twice a year.

And of course, your parent or guardian is always welcome to call the teaching parents or Program Managers to discuss your progress.