

Overview

Youth Center Profile

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago
- Incorporated 1902
- Chicago, Illinois
- 31 locations serving 17,000+ youths

Funding Sources

- City of Chicago
- Illinois Department of Human Services
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- United Way
- Illinois State Board of Education
- The Federal Government
- Various foundations
- Individual and corporate contributions

Program Needs

- Track attendance at each club
- Track attendance in select programs
- Aggregate data from all sites
- Produce program, site & overall reports
- Provide documentation for funding

KidTrax Adoption

- 1995

Key Benefits Gained

- Automated attendance & reporting
- Accurate data for planning & funding
- Complete member demographic profile
- Staff accountability
- Easier renewal of existing grants
- Millions of dollars in new/renewed grants

Quote

"KidTrax has given us more credibility with our various boards, funders and staff, helped us attract more grant money, and made us a better agency."

— Dennis Chudoba,
Senior VP of Operations

31 Sites, 17,000 Members, Complex Attendance Data: Chicago Boys & Girls Clubs Keep Track with KidTrax®

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago (BGCC) face a major challenge in maintaining attendance data. With 31 locations serving 17,000 youths in Head Start, after-school, and after-school daycare programs, BGCC needs detailed records for internal evaluations and grant preparation. Managers have automated the process with KidTrax, a membership tracking and reporting system. KidTrax scans barcoded ID cards to capture attendance data electronically and merges the information into a Web-based database for analysis and reporting purposes. This data has helped BGCC retain existing funding as well as attract new grants, bringing the agency's operating budget to \$15 million a year. "KidTrax plays a direct, or an indirect, role in every dollar we secure," says BGCC Senior VP of Operations Dennis Chudoba.

Scan at the Door

BGCC prints 3 KidTrax ID cards per club member. One card is given to the member for scanning at the door every time he or she enters or leaves the facility. The second card is maintained at the front desk to assist data entry for attendance of individual activities from the manual sign-in sheets (alternatively scanners can be placed in each activity room to capture this data). The third card is a backup in the event a card is lost or forgotten. Every night, attendance information is transferred to the KidTrax database and consolidated for use in generating reports by program, site, and more.

Reality Check

In 1995, when BGCC began using KidTrax, the transition from pencil-and-paper to scanner uncovered surprising inaccuracies in attendance and program counts. "We had been compiling our numbers manually and KidTrax showed that we had overestimated our membership as well as the number of teenagers we were serving," says Harvey Ortega, Director of Management Information Services. "That prompted us to start membership and teen recruitment drives, introduce new programs to increase average daily attendance, and take other steps to strengthen the agency across the board."

Help for Individual Sites

Today, KidTrax data provides vital feedback on usage patterns at each of BGCC's 31 locations to help measure each site's success in serving its population. Ortega produces KidTrax reports that track membership, attendance, and program utilization. These reports help establish goals for each site and ensure they are being reached. The numbers not only flag problems and aid in personnel evaluation, but also help dictate how staffing resources are allocated. In one case, a site with a waiting list of 75 received the funds to hire a lifeguard, a physical education director and an office secretary after KidTrax data proved the site was understaffed.

About KidTrax®

KidTrax is a comprehensive web-based youth and membership tracking system that combines ID cards, scanning technology, a middleware connection to school district databases, reporting, and a variety of other tools to assist in tracking, managing and analyzing participation in youth programs. The system automatically logs time and attendance information by scanning special ID cards when members enter and leave a facility, eliminating paper sign-in sheets and manual compilation. Reports identify key usage patterns to aid in program development and documentation for funding requests.

About nFocus Software™

nFocus Software is the leading provider of tracking, testing and training products for the public sector with over 3,500 customers worldwide. The company's KidTrax product is the #1 youth tracking and membership management system. Customers include Boys & Girls Clubs, Police Activities Leagues, The Salvation Army, U.S. Army, GEAR UP and Weed & Seed programs.

nFocus Software™

6245 N. 24th Parkway
Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602.954.9557 phone
602.954.9559 fax
sales@nFocus.com
www.nFocus.com

Instant Data Collection for Funders

In addition to providing valuable information for internal use, KidTrax has become an essential tool for documenting individual facility and agency-wide performance for BGCC's funding sources. The system's 200 built-in reports can be produced with a few clicks. Now the data can be easily shared with the agency's board of directors and the other separate fund-raising boards that support 8 of the agency's sites. "Board members like seeing the numbers and knowing exactly how their dollars are impacting the young people in their neighborhood club or the community at large. It motivates them," Chudoba notes. The agency uses KidTrax data on facility usage (based on attendance records) and user demographics (based on information gathered when members enroll) to make quick work of grant applications.

New Computer Labs and More

In 2004, BGCC received a \$175,000 grant from the Beaumont Foundation to equip 7 of the agency's clubs with their first-ever computer labs. The grant was received, in part, because KidTrax enabled the agency to provide data showing how many youths would benefit at each site. In 2006, the organization was able to add a computer lab at 2 more sites. Similarly, KidTrax data helped the agency's Logan Square Club on Chicago's Northwest Side secure \$750,000 from the Newmark Foundation. These funds included \$100,000 for operating expenses related to violence prevention and gang outreach plus a \$650,000 endowment. "KidTrax alone didn't get us these grants, but it gave us the data we needed to get them," says Chudoba. "If we were still taking attendance manually, we would not be able to answer many grant application questions accurately or credibly."

Case Management Capabilities

KidTrax is enabling 11 BGCC clubs to qualify for approximately \$1.2 million in annual funding under Teen REACH, a program established in 1998 by the Illinois Department of Human Services to help reduce youth violence, substance abuse, and crime by providing supervised after-school activities. This qualification is made possible by an add-on KidTrax case management module that is required by the Illinois Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs in order to receive Teen REACH funding. The module allows individual sites to monitor the grades, behavioral problems, truancies and other law enforcement incidents such as arrests and probation violations with hundreds of at-risk youth.

Small Investment, Big Returns

The KidTrax system assists BGCC in a myriad of other ways. Individual sites use the data to aid program planning; in one example a site began preparing for an upcoming surge in 8- to 10-year-olds after seeing that its largest population was in the 6- to 7-year-old age group. Managers use the system to flag expiring memberships and proactively solicit renewals. Agency administrators use the system's data on gender, age, ethnicity, income level, family structure, etc., for various programming purposes. With an initial investment of about \$4,000 per site for the KidTrax software, front-door scanner, and online training, the system quickly pays for itself. KidTrax not only reduces the cost of the old manual processes, but it provides new value through the flexible, easy-to-use reporting capabilities. "KidTrax gives us the attendance accountability we need for funders," Chudoba notes. "This is crucial to our ability to continue to finance our programs and serve the youth in our community."