



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA**

Fact Sheet: Torch Clubs

GOAL: To instill qualities of tolerance, civic responsibility, community involvement and leadership that promote an appreciation for the responsibilities of citizenship and the democratic process in adolescent members.

WHY: Younger adolescents need positive group experiences that help them cultivate good character and effective leadership skills so they can become civically engaged and caring citizens.

WHO: Boys & Girls Club members ages 11 to 13

WHAT: Torch Clubs are chartered small-group leadership and service clubs for boys and girls. The program is a powerful vehicle through which Club staff can help meet the special needs of younger adolescents at a critical stage in their development. Torch Club members learn to work together to plan and implement activities in four areas: service to Club and community; education; health and fitness; and social recreation.

Through service activities, Torch Club members identify Club and community needs, develop programs and activities and actively participate in their community. These activities also provide experience in the democratic process. Above all, they give young people a chance to contribute something of value to others. Examples of Torch Club service activities include:

- peer mentoring programs
- adopt-a-grandparent programs
- food and clothing drives
- community clean-ups and beautification projects
- environmental awareness campaigns

Torch Club members also take part in educational activities that focus on personal development. These activities develop socialization, problem-solving, communications, goal-setting and decision-making skills. The objective is to have teens develop a moral compass and value qualities such as honesty, justice, fairness and respect for self and others.

WEB SITE: A Torch Club Internet community, Torch Club Corner, is online at <http://groups2.bgca.net>, providing Clubs with charter and program materials and other resources for advisors.

CONTACT: Kelvin W. Davis, Senior Director, Character and Citizenship,
(404) 487-5762, kdavis@bgca.org
Eve P. Respass, Assistant Director, Character and Citizenship,
(404) 487-5804, erespass@bgca.org