

At Boys & Girls Clubs of King County, we recognize that it is our moral imperative to dismantle systemic racism. We must ensure the safety and dignity of all kids and families that depend on us every day.

We know the recent news headlines are a symptom of a more significant problem — one that cuts across every aspect of society. It affects our schools, our criminal justice system, and other institutions that serve young people and their families.

We recognize that we play an essential role in the national and local call for action on racial injustice and equity. We realize the impact of systemic racism on the lives of youth. We believe young people should feel safe, have access to opportunities, and understand their value -- not just at the Club, but everywhere in our society.

Our mission compels us to support youth in reaching their full potential. We focus on identifying and helping eliminate barriers that prevent the full participation and advancement of some groups in this country, particularly Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other persons of color.

Our priorities regarding barriers to opportunity and advancement are two-fold and focus on internal and external actions.

Internal: We have an established team of diverse leaders from across Boys & Girls Clubs of King County staff. The team's mission involves using the principles of race, equity, and inclusion to evaluate and guide internal policies, practices, and training, and procedures. The team's mission also guides how we approach our work with youth, families and communities in eliminating disparities, and implementing an inclusive process throughout the organization.

External: We condemn any act of racism or discrimination. We stand for safety, health, dignity, and equitable opportunity. We advocate for youth and encourage young people to harness the power of their voice.

We believe:

- All young people should be afforded the guarantee of fair treatment, access, and opportunity.
- There are historically marginalized, underserved, and underrepresented populations.
- Systemic racism has a traumatic impact on young people.
- Our mission compels us to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation and advancement of some groups in this country, especially Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other persons of color.
- The essential work that is needed to dismantle oppressive and unjust systems is complex and requires intentional and decisive action nationally, locally, and within organizations.
- Addressing systemic injustice cannot be accomplished by a single organization.
- It is only through a collective effort that we can create a future that is equitable and accessible to all.

The principle of equity goes beyond formal equality. It fosters an inclusive environment that either minimizes or removes barriers within communities.

EQUALITY: Everyone receives a pair of shoes

EQUITY: Everyone receives a pair of shoes that fit

The depth of action required in the days ahead may feel overwhelming. Still, there's one thing that makes the difference when it comes to re-defining what great futures look like in our community and making those possible – our youth.

We exist to level the playing field for kids and see every child's potential. To help young people realize that their feelings and opinions matter, they must find their voices and stand up for what's right – with character, empathy, and conviction.

We are here for the families that need us most because our community and the world need them most.

We must actively respond to the issues impacting our young people, their families, and our community. These include police violence and inequities in access to educational and workforce opportunities experienced by Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC).

As allies and advocates, we will combat racism and inequity. We will provide equitable, inclusive experiences to all young people. We will lead our organization with inclusivity and diversity. We will do whatever it takes.