



September 4, 2018

Dear Parents, Guardians & Community Members,

Last year, we were surprised to learn that a lawsuit had been filed naming Tacoma Boys & Girls Club in a claim of abuse from 1984, more than 30 years ago. There is no question that any allegation of harm to a child is a serious matter, and we were shocked and saddened to hear of allegations involving the Club.

When questions were raised last June about an incident at one of our Clubs in 1984, we immediately undertook an investigation to find out what happened. Despite our thorough search of our records, we found nothing that supported the claims made against us.

We strongly defended the case in court and were surprised and disappointed last week in the verdict against the Club. We are considering our options, but most importantly, will continue to focus on our primary mission, serving kids in our community.

We take the safety and well-being of the children we serve as our highest priority. All employees and volunteers undergo a thorough background check and training before they are ever allowed to work at any of our Clubs. We have policies in place around boundaries that we hold staff and volunteers accountable for, to ensure the safety of our kids. These policies and procedures are set and reviewed on an ongoing basis by an internal safety committee. They are evaluated using national best practices through Boys & Girls Clubs of America, as well as Praesidium, a national leader in youth safety. We have trained our staff and volunteers to support any child or adult who comes forward with concerns about sexual misconduct and to identify signs of abuse and to report it.

Staff, board and volunteers are committed to taking personal responsibility for a safe and healthy experience for each child during every Club activity. We will continue to devote the resources, time and attention to keep children and youth safe.

In the coming months, we must evaluate our capacity to provide program services, due to the financial impact of this lawsuit. We will be examining our budget and determining how best to avoid impacts to existing program services. Any financial decision we make that impacts our kids and programs will involve a thoughtful process including our Board of Governors and staff. Now, as always, we appreciate and value the support our community gives us to make our services to youth possible.

I am confident that our Club remains the safest place for youth in the South Puget Sound community. Please feel free to contact me, or anyone on our leadership team, at any time with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carrie Holden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Carrie Holden
President / CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of South Puget Sound
253.502.4600