



## Welcome to Raise the Grade!

### Program overview

*Raise the Grade* is an out-of-school program of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada (BGCC) that aims to help youth in grades 7 – 12 gain the skills they need to be successful in school, work and life.

Through hands-on learning opportunities, a specific focus on personal interests and goals, and supportive relationships with mentors and volunteers, young people who participate in RTG (Raise the Grade) are supported to achieve:

- ✓ Graduation from high school
- ✓ Insight about their personal interests and how to pursue them
- ✓ Sufficient credits and grades for PSE, including apprenticeship, college and university
- ✓ Career aspirations that match their personal interests and goals

*Raise the Grade* is:

- ✓ **Academic Support**  
Homework support, working with the young person, liaising with their schools and families and tracking their progress.
- ✓ **Life Afterschool**  
Youth explore their interests and gain insights into their skills, career options and the educational steps to reach them
- ✓ **Tech Centres**  
Designated room with computers, high speed internet, hardware and software to support learning
- ✓ **Youth Engagement**  
A wide variety of youth led, interest based activities/projects
- ✓ **Mentoring**  
Matched weekly mentoring

The *Raise the Grade* website gives you access to many resources and tools that help you:

- ✓ explore your interests
- ✓ assist you in learning about the kinds of careers that may suit what you already love to do or what you may discover you love to do through the program

Mentors and volunteers will help you find and use:

- ✓ relevant web resources, including homework help
- ✓ relevant careers and post-secondary options
- ✓ financial assistance for post-secondary education
- ✓ interesting and exciting field trips as well as technology-related projects are also part of your experience when you join the program



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What happens when I join *Raise the Grade*?

When you join the *Raise the Grade* program, the first step will be to attend an **Orientation Session** with your parent(s)/guardian(s). During this orientation session, we'll describe the program to you in more detail, and we'll answer any questions you and your family may still have. Most importantly, you'll get to meet other young people like you who are participating in the program! After the orientation session, you'll be matched with a mentor. With the help of your mentor and other volunteers, you'll spend the remainder of the school year exploring your interests and passions.

When you join *Raise the Grade*, you're committing to meet with your mentor **at least 4 times every month**. These are your **Check-in Meetings**, and they are very important. You and your mentor will spend time getting to know each other, discussing your interests, your passions, your goals, and where you'd like to see yourself in 1 year, 5 years, maybe even in 10 years! Your mentor will work with you to create your Personal Development Plan (PDP) and help you stay on track to reach your goals. And of course, you'll be spending time going through the many exciting learning and self-discovery resources on the *Raise the Grade* website.

Throughout your time as a *Raise the Grade* participant, you'll spend lots of time in the **Tech Centre**. Perhaps you'll be there working on homework assignments or getting extra help for a school course, or maybe you'll be participating in group projects that focus on exciting new technology, or maybe you'll just come into the Tech Centre to explore the Internet on your own.

You have to be a **member of the Boys and Girls Club** to participate in the program. If you're not yet a member, you can sign up and join the RTG program at the same time. Simply ask the Education Manager for a membership form.

### How long is the *Raising the Grade* program?

When you join the program, you should plan to participate for **at least 2 academic years** (September to June), or until you graduate high school.

### What will I be asked to do as a participant in *Raising the Grade*?

In addition to the weekly **Check-in Meetings** with your mentor and working on your PDP, you'll also be asked to provide your mentor with your **report cards** from school and to let us use your information for research. Research is a very important part of *Raise the Grade*. We are constantly evaluating the program to make it better, and we will be tracking the success of our participants for several years. We want to see whether the program helps participants with their schoolwork, their post-secondary education and their career goals. You will be asked to fill out **occasional surveys** at the beginning and end of each school year, and very short surveys every couple of months to let us know if you're satisfied with the program. Most importantly, we want to get your feedback and ideas to help make the program even better. You can read more information on how *Raise the Grade* will collect and use your information on the next page. Of course, you can always find out more by talking to the Education Manager at your club.



## What if I no longer want to participate in Raise the Grade?

You can withdraw from the program at any time. If you want to leave the program, we encourage you to talk to the Education Manager at your Club so we can learn what didn't work for you. Just ask the *Raise the Grade* Education Manager at your local Club for the program withdrawal form. He or she will help you fill it out. If you choose to stop participating in *Raise the Grade*, you can still be part of the evaluation research, which is conducted by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), a non-profit research organization.

SRDC or BGCC may contact you from time to time to complete a short survey. This will help us learn more about what outcomes the program may have for those who've participated. However, you can choose not to continue to participate in these surveys, by contacting SRDC at 1-866-896-7732. You can also choose to have all your survey and web site information deleted from the research study.

## What information about me will you collect?

The program staff will collect information about you in order to learn about your experiences, keep track of your progress, and evaluate the program. This information includes:

- ✓ your completed registration package
- ✓ weekly check-in logs on your Personal Development Plan
- ✓ notes about your progress written regularly
- ✓ your responses to surveys
- ✓ the content of your eportfolio, your usage of the *Raise the Grade* website and your web activity when you use the *Raise the Grade* internet connection at your Club or when you log-on to the program website remotely, or when you use a computer that is provided through *Raise the Grade*

You understand that *Raise the Grade* will not release information to any other person or agency without your consent, except when required by law.

## What will happen to my information?

All of the information about you (including your name) collected in the surveys you complete for *Raise the Grade*, as well as the content you develop in your private website, and your web activity, will be collected by or on behalf of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada. Data collected via the RTG website will be stored on servers located at the BGCC National office in Toronto. Since some of the tools and resources on the RTG website are owned by other companies and not BGCC (for example, MyBluePrint), information collected from participants on these tools and resources will be transferred to BGCC and/or to SRDC for program evaluation purposes.

By signing the consent form, you agree to allow Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada and/or SRDC to access and use the information that you and your parent(s) or guardian provide in surveys or by using the *Raise the Grade* website or Technology Centres, and to link this to all the other information obtained through your participation in this program or any other BGCC program.



Any data containing your name or other identifying information will be stored in secure locations, whether at your local Boys and Girls Club, the BGCC national office, or at SRDC offices. When transferring paper or electronic data with personal information (such as your name or address), strict measures will be in place to ensure that the files are sent securely. This could include encrypting and protecting electronic files with passwords, sending paper files by courier, or downloading data directly onto secure computer servers.

You have a right to ask to see the information collected about you for the evaluation. Where possible, your name will be replaced with an ID number and kept separate from other information (such as survey results). We will use this information only for the program evaluation. Your name will never be revealed in any reports or publications prepared as a result of the program evaluation.

All of the information about you (including your name) collected in the survey completed as part of the program evaluation, as well as future interviews you complete with Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) or another survey agency, will be turned over to Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada.

*Your permission is required for Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada to link the information about you as described above with information provided by your child from the sources listed in the Student Consent Form.*

Any information that is collected during the course of this program will be kept strictly confidential. Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada and the researchers hired by Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada to work on this program will not release in any research reports any of this information in any form that contains your name, address, or any other identifying information.

### **How will my information be used?**

The findings of this program will be published in research reports. The information will help Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada improve their program, and may influence education policy in Canada. The results from this program will be used to design future programs to help students go to university, college, or trade school. At no point in any of these reports will you be identified as someone who participated in the program.

### **Is my privacy protected?**

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, your local club, and SRDC will not release any information that contains your name, address, or any other identifier to anyone without your permission. Your name will not appear in any published reports and will not be used in any other way that would identify you.

### **What happens to my information after the program is finished?**

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada will destroy all your data collected under this informed consent form within five years of publishing the final report on the program evaluation.

### **Who should I contact for more information about the program or the research?**

Please call Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada at 905-477-7272 with any questions about the program.