

A United Way Agency

Boys' Club Fits Needs Of Area Youth

Thanks to United Way, the Boys' Club of Santa Cruz works even harder for more boys in providing services to its over 1,250 members.

The club is a home-away-from-home for boys 8 to 18 years providing health and fitness programs with built-in personal adjustment benefits six days of week, 50 weeks of the year.

Club Executive Director Bill Fankhouser points out many examples of personal achievement by the young chargers that come into the program and the care of the Boy's Club:

Joe was an overweight, 8-year-old ball of protoplasm with very little coordination and many large adjustment problems.

He was fighting a losing battle in his struggle to achieve his place in the world around him, and if such a thing as walking across the school ground without falling was considered an accomplishment—it was one he hadn't mastered.

Joey was not tolerated as a participant in any normal schoolground activity.

Lacking the basic skills of running, throwing a ball, or swinging a bat was frustrating to Joey and reflected in his classroom performance and social adjustment.

A thoughtful teacher, observing the tormented, and tormenting, world in which Joey found himself, referred him to the Boys' Club, hopeful that somehow he could be helped.

A long slow process was initiated by the Boys' Club staff, Fankhouser recalls, to impress Joey with the idea that the "impossible

was not only possible, but it could be fun."

After weeks on the tumbling mat, working with the medicine ball and chinning bar—a subtle program of physical fitness that was sweetened with recognition and encouragement—Joey came out of a lifetime slump.

A lot of practice on the pocket-billiard table for eye-motor skill improvement and then Joey achieved his crowing victory—learning to swim.

"Don't get me wrong," Fankhouser comments, "Joey is no all-American athlete, nor will he ever be. "But now he is a happy, almost averaged skilled, 10-year-old boy that reacts to the cry of 'play ball' with the answer, 'where's the bat?'"

And as Fankhouser points out, "We were able to help Joey because you were willing to help us through the United Way campaign."

This year, from the UW 1976 drive, the campaign gave the Boys' Club \$18,000, about one-quarter of its financing with the rest coming from other club sponsors.

That contribution from the campaign helps do the job at 16 cents per boy-hour and only \$13.24 a year per boy. Membership is \$2.50 per boys, plus 50 cents for insurance.

Letters of support tell the club's staff: "we hear about your great work all the time" . . . "keep up the good work" . . . "our boys will never forget the Boys' Club."

One boy the club will never forget is Philip Kashap, the executive director notes, a boy,

and now a young man, who was a high achiever all the way.

Kashap now is an Epstein Scholar—a scholarship to assist gifted Boys' Club members—and is studying classical violin at Yale.

Philip joined the local Boys' Club in 1969 at 10 and was a nine-year members.

In 1973, he was named "Gamesroom Boy of the Year" for his outstanding social-recreational skills and willingness to help younger members.

Philip represented the Boys' Club of Santa Cruz in table tennis, chess and pocket billiards in Bay Area competition and in 1975 won the Epstein Scholarship—an assistance to boys gifted in graphics and fine arts.

The club also lists as one of its prime goals "value development and enrichment of family and community life."

Johnny is one example the club can achieve its goal:

A rowdy, destructive 12-year-old, Johnny seemingly joined the Boys' Club for the sole purpose of seeing how much trouble he could cause, Fankhouser remembers.

"He immediately proceeded to abuse equipment and antagonize other members regardless of their age. He appeared to thrive on confusion and the discomfort of others—something had to be done."

After a study of Johnny's background, which revealed he came from a broken home subsequently headed by a disinterested stepfather, the staff of the Boys' Club decided to

launch a concentrated effort to help the boy.

With a combination of skill improvement and encouragement, Johnny soon discovered he could fulfill many of his drives and needs in a constructive manner that won the respect, friendship and admiration of those around him.

He moved into a constructive leadership role at the club and his mother reported a vast improvement in school attitude and performance.

"Johnny is now a well-adjusted youngster who faces a bright and promising future which is a far cry from two years ago when his future offered nothing but frustration and unlimited turmoil with family, school and the authorities," Fankhouser pointed out.

He summarized, "This story is not unusual—the Boys' Club of Santa Cruz is regularly confronted with similar situations, but that is what we are all about.

"And, we are grateful for the opportunity to give hall the Johnnies, Joeys and Philips a boost along the way.

"Generous support of the United Way campaign now under way helps to make it all possible," Fankhouser said.

The Boys' Club of Santa Cruz is chartered by Boys' Clubs of America, Inc., incorporated in 1965 with the building completed with the help of the Mallory Fund and public assistance in 1969. It has 28 members on its board of directors and the president this year is Al McCommon Jr.



Boys' Club activities include water sports in the club's service to more than 1,250 local youths. United Way plays its part in keeping the recreational-social program going in Santa Cruz and this year gifted \$18,000 to the club, about one-fourth of its funding. Here, swim instructor Ken Sommers gives some hints to a group of youngsters. Serving boys and young men from 8 to 18 years of age, the Boys' Club of Santa Cruz has an exceptional record of giving a leg up to both troubled and highly-achieving boys.