

## Stanton leaders say city will match what Boys & Girls Club fundraises for improvements



Rendering of the proposed playground replacement at the Boys & Girls Club in Stanton, CA, on Monday, August 9, 2021. Stanton city officials, to help their Boys & Girls Club fundraiser, are pledging to give \$250,000. So they can finally replace their 25-year old playground and repair and upgrade their dilapidated restrooms. (Photo Courtesy of the Boys & Girls Club)

By [LOU PONSI](#) |

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During the height of the coronavirus pandemic, the Boys & Girls Club of Stanton provided a lifeline for many families whose children were attending school virtually.

Children whose parents were essential workers and couldn't stay home or didn't have internet access at home could go to the club and log onto a computer for their virtual classes, with staff on hand to provide supervision and support ... all at no charge.

The club, which opened in 1982, served about 85 children daily during the virtual learning period, staying open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day.

So when Stanton received \$9 million in funding as part of the American Rescue Plan Act, some of which could be used to help nonprofits, city officials said they almost immediately put the Boys & Girls Club on top of the list.

For every dollar [raised by the club through its own fundraising efforts](#), the city will multiply the amount by 20, up to \$250,000.

A \$20 donation, for example, becomes a \$400 donation.

"It was a life saver for those kids," Councilwoman Carol Warren said of the club. "They've been a school. They've taken care of kids. They've done everything above and beyond through COVID that you can imagine."

A chunk of the money raised would go toward replacing the club's playground equipment with a "creative learning space," club director Elvin Campbell said.



A handball court, a four-square court, hopscotch squares, marked pathways and other elements would be featured in the brightly colored play area envisioned.

"A lot of the things we are upgrading or replacing aren't necessarily dilapidated," said Campbell, who grew up in Stanton and was a member of the club in 1984. "The playground is still in great condition, but it's 25 years old. So don't these kids deserve something new that they can treasure as their own?"

"We can get our staff out here and get our kids to use their critical thinking skills," he said.

The remainder of the money would go toward needed upgrades to the building, including new plumbing, bathroom fixtures and Wi-Fi equipment, Campbell said.

"Our restrooms, the fixtures are 40 years old," he said. "They are still working, but it's something that given the gift, that we would love to replace."

The \$250,000 donation would be the largest single donation the club has ever received, he said.

The city plans to make donations to other local nonprofits that extended services during the pandemic, Mayor David Shawver said.

"They all interact with each other," Shawver said. "They work in symbiosis with each other and they help each other. So I think by us spearheading this, especially with the matching funds, it's going to give charities a boost in the arm throughout our community, not just the Boys & Girls Club."

When the club was being used for virtual learning, rooms where kids usually played games or did arts and crafts were converted into temporary classrooms, officials said, emphasizing the roll the youth organization played during the height of the pandemic.

Some children were even coming from surrounding cities.

Campbell estimated about half of the 80-plus kids who used the club didn't have computer access at home.

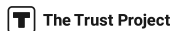
"We were just here trying," he said, "to do the best we could for our community."

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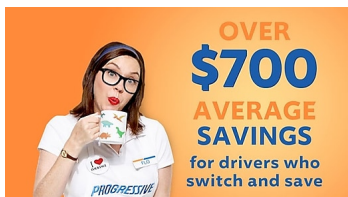


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