

Boys & Girls Clubs: Distributes 450,000 cost free N95 masks statewide

Posted on Wednesday, Jan 26, 2022

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Clubs Offer Infrastructure to Collaborate with Emergency Management

This week, Boys & Girls Clubs around the state are coordinating with the Wisconsin Office of Emergency Management to distribute almost a half-million masks statewide, including to youth, the families they serve, partner organizations, and the general public.

“We have over 150 club sites in the state, across 60 cities, connecting with over 140,000 youth and their families”, said Christina Singh, Vice President of the Wisconsin Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs. “We are eager to utilize our infrastructure to help solve the state’s problems whenever we can. Clubs are safe spaces during out of school time, and so much more.” Singh is CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Sheboygan County, and her organization is coordinating distribution of over 27,000 masks within that region.

Going into the pandemic, Wisconsin clubs employed over 2200 staff and coordinated 9000 volunteers to provide afterschool support, food banks, PPE distribution and childcare for essential workers. Clubs also provided over 2 million meals and snacks at no cost to youth and their families during 2020. In some locations, club sites opened up testing centers, vaccination sites, and school overflow classrooms during COVID-19.

“We want to thank Governor Evers and the Office of Emergency Management for providing N95 and KN95 masks to the youth, individuals, community non-profits, and grassroots organizations in our area,” said Michael Johnson, CEO of the Dane County Boys & Girls Clubs. In just one week, his organization distributed over 200,000 masks by partnering with F.O.S.T.E.R.S, Black Men Coalition of Dane County, Briar Patch, SELU, and other organizations. “We are all in this together, and the help from our community partners has been invaluable in getting N95 masks into people’s hands,” said Johnson.

The state has already distributed 5.4 million pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE) during 2022, working with community partners like the Boys & Girls Clubs. This includes the N95/KN95 respirator masks, named for their ability to filter 95 percent or more of tiny 0.3-micrometre (μm) particles. A mainstay for protection against airborne bacteria and viruses in hospital settings, if purchased online today the cost is over a dollar a mask. The Biden administration recently rolled out a plan to distribute an additional 400 million N95 masks for free, with adults allowed three masks each. They are expected to be available in February.

Boys & Girls Club State Alliance Director Andy Gussert added, “We simply want to provide an upgraded N95 masks to employees, member families and community partners if they want them. We partner with the state on a myriad of issues, and are always here to share our infrastructure to help solve problems.”