

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

**Regarding the Boxing Program
at the Burbank YMCA**

October 24, 2018

Due to an exclusion in our general liability coverage, the boxing class in its current format will no longer be offered as a part of our group exercise program.

We appreciate how important the boxing program has become to some of our members and we recognize the many benefits attributed to a safe boxing workout. It is for this reason that we will be reformatting the class and intend to put it back on the group exercise schedule in January of 2019.

We cannot allow the physical contact that goes along with the boxing club operations, including someone holding a punching bag while another strikes the bag or someone holding mitts while someone strikes those. Sparring or physical contact of any kind is not allowed.

We've enclosed a list of FAQ's that should address any further questions you have on this programming change.

In addition,

The YMCA of the USA Medical Advisory Committee strongly recommends a complete ban on boxing for children and adolescents. The Committee agrees with both the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, who advocate the discontinuation of boxing due to its excessive risk of brain injury. (The complete statement from Y-USA on this matter is enclosed.)

We hope you will join us for a high intensity boxing workout in January of 2019 on the group exercise schedule. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Burbank Community YMCA

Boxing Program FAQs

October 24, 2018

Why are you canceling the boxing program?

We are canceling the boxing program in its current format due to an exclusion in our general liability coverage which does not cover boxing events, exhibitions or any form of physical contact.

Why now?

Approximately six weeks ago, we discovered that members of our boxing program were sparring. This activity has been forbidden in our program rules since 2010 and is not covered under our general liability insurance. Upon further investigation, we came to understand that there is little agreement on what is considered sparring, so we requested specific language from our carrier. We learned that much of the activity in our current program is not covered and therefore puts the organization at risk.

Why can't we do boxing drills if we don't do sparring?

Our insurance provider has stated that the intent is to exclude the boxing program operations and all of the physical contact that goes along with that, including someone holding a punching bag while another strikes the bag OR someone holding mitts while someone strikes those. Physical contact of any kind is excluded.

Why aren't you looking for another general liability insurance provider?

We have checked with our broker and have not found suitable coverage for an organization of our size that will insure a boxing program with physical contact.

What if the boxing program participants find and/or fund their own liability provider?

The Board of Directors has approved our strategic priorities for fund development which can be found on our website. They include reducing summer learning loss for low income youth, building mentors in the elementary schools, improving water safety (drowning prevention) and membership for all (financial assistance for low income children, youth and adults). Raising additional funds to purchase additional liability coverage would divert critical resources away from those set priorities.

Who made this decision and how?

This decision was made by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) after review of the YMCA of the USA Medical Advisory Committee Recommendations, the American Academy of Pediatrics' Policy Statement, "Boxing Participation by Children and Adolescents" (2011), and our general liability policy. Additionally, consultations occurred with Y staff, the Y's Board of Directors, our Y-USA Resource Director, and members of the California State Alliance of YMCAs. The Board*

of Directors voted on Tuesday, October 23, 2018, to discontinue our boxing program by unanimous vote.

**See full policy statement on our website at burbankymca.org.*

How come you're not listening to the boxers?

We have heard from many boxing program participants in person, on the phone and in emails. We have been listening to your heartfelt testimonies of what this program has meant to you. Your stories are touching and have not fallen on deaf ears. We care very deeply about our members and your experience with our Y. There is no easy way to bring this era to a close without deep sadness and disappointment.

Is the Y against boxing?

*The YMCA of the USA Medical Advisory Committee strongly recommends a complete ban on boxing for children and adolescents. The Committee agrees with both the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, who advocate for the discontinuation of boxing due to its excessive risk of brain injury. **

In addition to advocating a total ban on boxing for children and adolescents, the Medical Advisory Committee also strongly recommends the elimination of all boxing programs. The U.S. public, especially its children and adolescents, must be educated as to the dangerous effects of boxing on the health and well-being of its participants. The benefits attributed to boxing, such as fitness and hand/eye coordination, can be just as effective from many other less dangerous sports. Children and adolescents should be encouraged to engage in sports in which intentional head injury is not the primary objective of the sport.

** From the American Academy of Pediatrics*

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2011/08/24/peds.2011-1165>

The Burbank Community YMCA is responding in accordance with the recommendation of the YMCA of the USA's Medical Advisory Committee.

Can we have a boxing class without sparring, mitt drills or hitting the mannequins?

Yes. It is our intent to re-design the boxing class in a format for group exercise and put it back on the schedule in January of 2019.

What about all of the boxing equipment?

We will be keeping the three heavy hanging bags and the speed bag for our group exercise boxing class to resume in January. We will be donating the remaining boxing equipment to the Sheriff's Youth Foundation, a non-profit organization that has an active boxing program for youth. Here is their link:

<http://www.sheriffsyouthfoundation.org/>

Who will be teaching the boxing class in January?

The Healthy Lifestyles Director will be working with our Safety and Risk Manager to design a class that is high energy, aerobic, fun and safe. Once staff has decided exactly how the class will be designed and formatted, we will post and hire the best suited instructor to teach the class.

Will it still be a two-hour class four times a week?

No. It will be a 55-minute group exercise class, provided free with membership.

In Closing

We do our very best to provide a wide variety of programs, services and initiatives that focus on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. We aim to enable youth and adults to realize their potential and empower people to be healthier in spirit, mind and body. We value all of our members. We also believe that to bring about meaningful change in individuals and communities, we must be focused and accountable. We hope you will join us in January to give our new boxing format a try.



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

BOXING INVOLVING CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Statement of the YMCA of the USA Medical Advisory Committee

The YMCA of the USA Medical Advisory Committee strongly recommends a complete ban on boxing for children and adolescents. The Committee agrees with both the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, who advocate the discontinuation of boxing due to its excessive risks of brain injury.

The overwhelming weight of evidence indicates that the inevitable result of the cumulative effects of concussive blows to the head (with or without a protective helmet) is irreversible brain damage. Head blows can result in tiny tears and bleeding. Studies have demonstrated that when adult boxers have fought a number of times, brain atrophy results—the brain becomes smaller than normal. In addition, since boxing is a “sport” in which it is within the rules for each contestant to deliberately try to inflict severe physical injury to his or her opponent, it is also morally indefensible. In our opinion, young people must not be taught to injure, maim, and knock senseless their opponents. The benefits attributed to boxing, such as fitness and hand/eye coordination, can be derived just as effectively from many other less dangerous individual sports. Children and adolescents should be encouraged to engage in sports in which intentional head injury is not the primary objective of the sport.

In addition to advocating a total ban on boxing for children and adolescents, the Medical Advisory Committee also strongly recommends the elimination of all boxing programs. The U.S. public, especially its children and adolescents, must be educated as to the dangerous effects of boxing on the health and well-being of its participants.

For the American Academy of Pediatrics’ Policy Statement, “Boxing Participation by Children and Adolescents” (2011),” visit <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/128/3/617.full>.

For related information, see the following Medical Advisory Committee Statement, “Martial Arts Programs Offered by YMCAs.”

November 1988

Reaffirmed April 1996

Revised October 2000

Reaffirmed November 2004

Updated June 2009

Reaffirmed December 2012