



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

# BETTER TOGETHER

**School Age Programs  
Parent Handbook**



## **WELCOME TO Y SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS!**

We believe that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. That's why, through the Y, thousands of local youth today are cultivating the values, skills, and relationships that lead to positive behaviors, better health and educational achievement.

Y Before and After-School programs are an exciting, safe community for young people to explore hands on enrichment activities, build self-esteem, develop interpersonal skills and make lasting friendships and memories.

### **WHAT WE DO:**

We provide children and youth with the building blocks they need to grow up healthy, caring and responsible. Our dedicated staff guide students towards these goals every day to create an experience that your child will always remember:

- Forming new friendships
- Trying new things
- Becoming self-reliant
- Being physically active
- Reaching personal goals
- Feeling connected to the program, the Y, our community and our world

Y programs are committed to building strong and healthy bodies through nutrition activities and daily physical activities. Children have the opportunity to get moving with games, sports skills, dancing, yoga, team challenges and much more!

### **WE'VE GOT IT ALL RIGHT HERE!**

We structure our program to provide lots of hands on activities that focus on the following curriculum areas: Health and Wellness, Literacy, Arts and Humanities, Science, Math, Dramatic Play, Homework Support, Outdoor Play, Technology and much more. We bring in guest speakers and partners from the community, such as Junior Achievement and Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. In fact, we have so many enrichment activities for our students that we don't need you to send them with anything except a smile. Go ahead and leave the MP3 players, cell phones, handheld games and so forth at home...we promise they won't even miss them!

### **COME OUT AND PLAY!**

Y programs offer many ways for parents to become involved in programs. Some volunteer opportunities are sharing a talent or skill, storytelling, leading a craft project, playing games with the children, or being a guest speaker. Can't give the gift of time? We are always looking for donations of scrap paper, dramatic play props, craft supplies, and more. Ask your Site Director if he/she can turn your "trash" into "treasure" at the program. Family activities are offered periodically at the programs and may include book swapping, pot luck suppers, story hours, family game nights and more. A parent newsletter is available each month to inform you of upcoming events.

### **STRENGTHEN YOUR COMMUNITY**

At the Y, strengthening community is our cause. The Y has been listening and responding to our community's most critical needs for more than 160 years. Your tax deductible contribution keeps the Y available for the kids and families who need us most. We count on the generosity of our members and community to help us make an impact right here in our community. Be a part of something great— visit [www.ymcaofcentralky.org](http://www.ymcaofcentralky.org) and consider giving to the Y today.

### **WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED**

You've got enough on your mind—let us help you plan those days when the kids are out of school for in-service, snow days or school breaks. Our all day camp programs are convenient, affordable, and most importantly...FUN! Check our Parent Table for information about upcoming programs and how you can sign up.

## REGISTRATION

A completed registration form, \$30.00 registration fee (if not previously enrolled in Y Child Development programs for current school year), valid KY immunization certificate, and bank draft information for childcare payments are required to register for the program. Our programs do have a maximum capacity, so register early to reserve a place. We must have all registration information listed above for your child to attend, and we must have it in time to process it and pass along to the Site Director at your child's school, so please ensure that you allow time for this before the actual day care is needed.

## TUITION POLICIES

You may choose to enroll your child as a Full Week (3/4/5 days), Part Week (1/2 days), or Emergency Care (up to 3 times per month) participant. Credit is not given for missed days, and you may only change your enrollment status once every 30 days. If dropping from Full Week to Part Week, Emergency Care or un-enrolling, we require a 2 week notice during which full tuition is required. Credit is not given for weeks that school is out due to snow days. Payment is due weekly, and must be made via automatic draft payments that will occur on Tuesday of each week, or you may choose to have payments drafted monthly. If you are unable to pay via bank draft/credit card, we require the full monthly payment on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Failure to pay according to our policies will require that care is discontinued immediately. **Children with outstanding balances for any Y program cannot attend until balance is paid in full.**

- In the event of a returned check or draft, parents must pay the amount of check plus a \$15.00 returned check fee. Failure to do so in the allotted time will result in suspension of childcare. After three returned checks or drafts, only money orders will be accepted.
- **Our programs accept Child Care Assistance Program funding (CCAP)—we must have a valid contract stating the YMCA as the provider and parent is responsible for any costs not covered by CCAP. Full fees must be paid by parent until the contract is received.**

## OPEN DOORS

Through the generous contributions of our donors, the YMCA of Central Kentucky provides financial assistance that enables all members of our community to enjoy Y programs, regardless of income. Sharing the financial responsibility for a Y membership or program will give you peace of mind as well as a sense of ownership and pride. Those who qualify will be asked to pay only a portion of the established rate. Applications may be picked up at any Y Member Services or online at [www.ymcaofcentralky.org](http://www.ymcaofcentralky.org). Applications take 5-10 business days to approve and are usually valid for one year before a renewal is required.

## DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

All Before-School participants must be walked inside the Y site by a parent each day and signed in. Y staff will sign them out and dismiss to their classrooms/lockers at the appropriate time.

All After-School participants are required to report directly to the program area (usually cafeteria) promptly at school dismissal. Children must be signed out each afternoon by an authorized adult over 16 years of age with a picture ID. Please fill in the time and full signature when signing a child in and out. **Please bring your ID every day, as there might be days when different staff will be at the Parent Table. If you are not asked for ID and you feel that the staff person in charge of signing children out did not know whose parent you were, please call 226-0393.** Check the Parent Table daily for information concerning special events or other important items.

## WE LOVE YOUR KIDS, BUT...

...we do want them to go home with you each day! Y After-School programs end at 6:00pm. Beginning at 6:01, a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged. Emergency contacts will be notified starting at 6:15pm. Should a child remain at the program one hour past closing, our only remaining alternative will be to contact legal authorities. Parents consistently late picking up their children may be asked to find alternate care. Please make sure that your child's registration form is kept up to date with the appropriate emergency numbers.

## **ALLERGIES**

Please make our staff aware of all allergies your child may have by writing them on the registration form. If your child has severe allergies, please make sure the staff has written instructions on what to do if your child has an allergic reaction.

## **SNACKS**

Our After-School programs serve a nutritious snack consisting of 2 food groups each day. We are committed to providing a healthy snack that focuses on fruit and vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, lean protein and water as the drink of choice. Through portion size and variety of items offered each day, we strive to provide each child with enough calories to avoid both hunger and over eating.

Due to the prevalence of children in our program with severe peanut allergies, we do not serve peanut based snacks, but please check our menu to ensure that your child is safe to eat the snacks we are serving. Students may bring an appropriate snack from home if allergic to one we are serving, and we will always have an alternate snack available. If your child brings a snack from home, we ask that it be reflective of the snacks we serve—we will not allow chips, cookies, soda, candy, etc. Please check the daily snack menu and address any special circumstances with the Site Director.

## **MEDICATIONS**

State regulations require that medication be administered only with written orders from a physician, and daily written instructions from a parent. The medication must be in its original container and the label must contain the child's name, expiration date, and dosage instructions. Over-the-counter medications must also be in the original container with the appropriate dosage instructions. A medication authorization form must be completed and written permission to administer must be given daily. Please sign the medication permission slip for your child for the NEXT day when signing him/her out—you cannot sign ahead of time for upcoming days. Please make sure to include any additional instructions concerning possible side effects or interactions. The Y keeps all medication in a lock box for the safety of your children. Please help to keep our programs safe by giving all medications directly to the Site Director and not allowing your child to carry it with his/her belongings. Medication guidelines apply to prescription and non-prescription medicines, including sunscreen, Epi-Pens, and inhalers. Medication authorization forms are available from your child's Site Director. Medication that is left over and not picked up after the program year has ended will be disposed of properly.

## **ILLNESS**

We want to make our programs safe for all participants. Children who are ill can jeopardize the health of other children and Y staff. Your child's overall health and well-being and sense of comfort is extremely important to us, so if your child exhibits any of the following signs or symptoms of illness, you will be called to pick up your child immediately:

- Vomiting
- Temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- Conjunctivitis ("pink-eye")
- Evidence of live lice, scabies, ringworm or other parasitic infestation
- Diarrhea

Children with lice must use a doctor approved treatment and be cleared through the school nurse. Schools may allow children with nits (unhatched eggs) to attend school, therefore we will allow them to stay for the afterschool program. However, we will not allow children with nits to attend Y full day camp programs, so please be aware of this policy for inservice/school's out days.

When a child has had a communicable disease the Y must be notified immediately. Children may return to the program after providing written permission from their doctor. We appreciate your efforts to arrive at the program promptly to pick up your child in the event of illness.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

A staff person is always on duty that is trained in CPR and First Aid. A first aid kit is kept at each program. In the event of an emergency, parents will be contacted immediately. If we feel it is necessary, we will contact the Emergency Medical Service to assist us in first aid procedures, or to transport the child to the hospital. Should a child be transported to the hospital, a Y staff person will accompany him/her. It is very important to keep your child's registration form updated, as this is where we will obtain our information in an emergency. We carry liability insurance only, and will not be responsible for injuries and accidents while participating in Y programs; families must carry their own accident insurance.

## **MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL CAMPERS**

We know that every child has different needs, whether physical, emotional, mental or behavioral. The more we know about a child's abilities, the better prepared we are to serve him/her. If your child has a diagnosed special need, we will ask you to fill out an additional form so that we can learn more about him/her. The Y is open to children of all abilities, but we acknowledge that our school age programs may not be appropriate for every child. Our programs are group based and involve lots of transitions and outdoor activities. We are not structured to provide one-on-one supervision or care beyond what is typical and age-appropriate, and children must be able to function safely within our 1:15 maximum child to staff ratio at all times.

## **CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**

The mission of the Y is to put Christian Principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. We demonstrate those Christian Principles through Character Development. Character Development is our effort to demonstrate and promote the four core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. These values are discussed daily in our programs, and are incorporated into the program's rules, games, songs and activities.

## **PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE**

The Y advocates a positive guidance policy with an emphasis on reinforcement, redirection, prevention and the development of self-discipline. We take an active effort to prevent child abuse and are committed to making our programs a safe, nurturing environment for every child.

### **We do not condone and will not permit:**

- Corporal punishment
- Ridiculing, threatening, using an inappropriate loud voice
- Leaving children unsupervised
- Use of profanity

### **We take the following steps to ensure the safety of children and staff involved in our programs:**

- All staff and volunteers must submit to a thorough background check including references, criminal history checks, and child abuse and neglect checks.
- Allegations or suspicions of child abuse are taken seriously and will be reported to the State for investigation.
- Programs are structured so that no staff member is left alone with one child.
- Staff and volunteers are prohibited from fraternizing with children outside the programs, including babysitting, transporting children in their personal vehicle, giving gifts and inviting children home.
- Mandatory pre-employment and random drug testing for all staff.

Our staff is not permitted to baby-sit or transport in their personal vehicles children who are enrolled in Y programs. Immediate disciplinary action will be taken by the Y toward staff if a violation is discovered. Please do not put staff in difficult situations by asking for these services.

## **SAFETY AND FUN FOR ALL**

The Y is, and always will be, dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected and secure children, adults, families and communities. We nurture the potential of every youth and teen by helping them to learn the skills needed to live comfortably with themselves and others. We believe that all individuals need to be responsible for his/her actions, and we encourage kids to make choices that are respectful to others as well as to themselves. We help children in recognizing alternatives and consequences, which will help guide them to a more mature and appropriate behavior.

### **Our first efforts will be toward setting kids up for success:**

- Planning the program to meet the needs of the children.
- Keeping staff to child ratios at, or below, state recommended guidelines.
- Being consistent.
- Offering problem-solving assistance.
- Stating directions and rules in a positive way.
- Encouraging feelings of self-confidence.
- Redirecting children.

### **Immediate action will be taken when a child's choices become inappropriate:**

- Discussing the behavior with the child.
- Removing the child from the group.
- Keeping parents updated.
- Writing a behavior report.
- Working with parents to solve conflicts.

We expect that all children in our programs will have respect for others and their property. Y programs should be a safe and fun experience for all kids, so behaviors that become a constant disruption or a danger to children or staff will not be allowed. **Behavior reports are issued for unacceptable behaviors, and suspension may occur for repeated behaviors. Immediate suspension or expulsion may occur in the case of severe behavior problems.** Children who have been suspended may not attend any Y childcare programs for the specified number of days. Children who have been expelled may not return to any Y childcare program on a permanent basis.

### **Acceptable behaviors**

- Asking the Y staff if you can have a minute to "cool off"
- Asking the Y staff to help you resolve a conflict with another child
- Asking the Y staff to sit down with you and talk about your problems
- Choosing another activity that is offered
- Using appropriate words, not physical force, to solve problems with other children

### **Unacceptable behaviors**

- Bullying in any form (physical, verbal, sexual, emotional, mental)
- Use of profanity, biting, spitting, hitting or sexual misconduct
- Failure to cooperate with staff's directions or leaving the group without permission for any reason
- Physical violence, or the threat of, towards others. Possession of a weapon of any kind.
- Unsafe behavior while at the program site, on the playground, outside, in the gym, or in the restroom
- Destruction of property belonging to school, the Y, staff or other children

## **IT TAKES A VILLAGE**

We believe we have a clear responsibility to protect children and promote positive conflict resolution skills. As a parent, we know you also want to teach your child to resolve conflicts in non-violent and non-aggressive ways. Everyone involved in our programs, whether Y staff or parents of participants, has a responsibility to be a positive adult role model for the children in our community. We expect that staff, parents and visitors will treat each other kindly and with respect, and cannot accept the following behaviors within our program at any time:

- Profanity
- Mental or bodily harm
- Destruction of property
- Intoxication
- Dishonesty or misrepresentation
- Threats, intimidation, or harassment
- Disruption or obstruction
- Violation of Criminal Law