



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# PARENT HANDBOOK



**YMCA of Northwest North Carolina  
Before and After School Academy (K-5)  
and Teen After School Academy**

## **Welcome to the YMCA!**

We are so pleased that you have chosen a YMCA Before and After School Academy for your child. We welcome you and your family and we look forward to providing an experience for your child that is safe, fun and educational. Collectively, YMCAs are the country's largest provider of child care and are committed to developing and operating the highest quality Youth Development programs possible.

In partnership with local school systems, the YMCA school age youth development program supplements the school day with a broad curriculum designed to help kids grow physically, mentally and spiritually, while emphasizing and modeling character development values such as caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith.

We believe that parents are the most significant adults in the life of a child and we wish to act in partnership with you to provide the best possible care for your child. Your feedback is important to us and we invite and encourage you to talk with our program site staff, program directors, branch directors, or myself whenever you have a comment, question or idea.

Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the information in this handbook. It will provide you with helpful and necessary information regarding policies, practices and procedures related to our YMCA Before and After School academies. Familiarity with this handbook will assist you, your child and our YMCA staff in gaining the greatest benefit possible for the program.

Thank you again for joining our program, we look forward to serving your family!



**Donna Rodgers**  
**Interim President & CEO**  
**YMCA of Northwest North Carolina**

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT STAFF



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### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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#### **Chelsea Byers**

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At the YMCA, we believe that the quality of your Youth Development setting cannot be undervalued. We strive to provide the highest quality for your children and focus our efforts on the following vital ingredients: positive and healthy relationships, spacious and appropriate environments, engaging and diverse activities, focused safety and health practices and a highly effective staff.

Through our programs and curriculum, we will instill character development traits of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith. Activities in our YMCA Model Youth Development Curriculum include health and wellness, arts and humanities, science and technology and service learning projects. Each of the YMCA Youth Development programs are designed with age appropriate activities created to help your child grow and develop physically, mentally and spiritually.

## **Before & After School Academies**

In partnership with local school systems, the YMCA offers both before and after school care on site in several schools throughout our service area (Forsyth, Davie, Iredell, Stokes, and Wilkes) as well as care in several of our YMCA branch locations.

## **Hours, Holidays & Special Days**

### **Hours of Operation**

Care will be available at the following times for our various programs:

- Our Before School Program begins at 7:00 a.m. and concludes at the beginning of school.
- Our After School Program begins at the end of the school day and concludes at 6:00 p.m. (Contact your individual branch for precise hours of operation as times may vary slightly.)
- An after-hour late fee will be assessed for children who are picked up late. The late fee is \$5.00 for the first five minutes plus \$1.00 for each additional minute.

### **Holidays**

To allow staff time with their families, Youth Development Branch will not be available on the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day & the day after
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

### **Inclement Weather**

If possible, our programs continue to operate regardless of inclement weather. If school is closed or releases early due to snow or other inclement weather, you may bring your child to the YMCA or a designated location for care from 7:00 a.m. (6:30 a.m. at Davie Family YMCA) until 6:00 p.m. To ensure your child's safety, we will not transport children in inclement weather. If school is delayed, we will offer care at the regular site (if there is a Before School Program); however, program times may vary due to the severity of weather and road conditions. Please check with your local branch or our Youth Development social media accounts for specific information. If school closes early we will provide care at the YMCA branches. **Parents will be responsible for transporting children.**

## **Out of School Days**

The YMCA provides programming for children on teacher workdays, professional days, and some holidays. On these days, care will be provided at the YMCA or at a designated school. To enable us to properly staff for these special days, please have your child signed in by 9:00 a.m. Check with your Site Supervisor/Coordinator for more detailed information.

## **Arrival, Departures & Absences**

### **Arrival & Departure Procedures**

To ensure your child's safety, please escort them to a YMCA Youth Development Staff Member and sign them in and out daily. The YMCA cannot assume responsibility for children dropped off prior to program opening. Only authorized people will be allowed to pick your child up. If someone other than you will be picking up your child, they must be listed on your Authorization List (located on the Registration Form), have a code word, and photo identification.

### **Absence**

When you enroll your child in one of the YMCA Youth Development Programs, we will guarantee his/her space for as long as you need care. However, regardless of the absence of your child (e.g., vacation or illness), our fees are constant to ensure your child's space in the program. If your child is going to be absent from the program for any reason, please notify the Program Director or Site Supervisor/Coordinator or Branch in advance or before noon of the absent day.

## **Participation**

The YMCA youth development program is designed for group participation; therefore, we strongly encourage all children to attend field trips and special events and participate in group activities. If you request that your child not participate in certain activities, he/she will need to remain with their assigned group while observing the activity. If your child cannot attend a field trip, please find alternative care during that time.

## **Snacks, Lunches & Things to Bring**

During the school year, healthy snacks are provided each day at Davie, Forsyth, Iredell, Wilkes (evening snack only) and Stokes sites only. During special day programming, such as Out of School Days, please provide your child's lunch (no peanut products), beverage and two healthy snacks as well as a swimsuit and towel. Please make certain all your children's belongings are labeled as we cannot assume responsibility for lost items. If your child has any food allergies, please make sure you note that on his/her registration form and inform the Program Director or Site Supervisor/Coordinator and staff.

In an effort to be fair to all the children in the programs, please do not bring additional toys, sports equipment, radios, computer games or other items from home unless specifically requested.

## **Parent Visits & Evaluations**

Parents are invited and encouraged to visit our program sites at any time. We welcome your comments or suggestions and encourage you to talk with our staff. Parent Surveys are emailed periodically and we encourage you to fill these out so we may gain insight into recommended program improvements that will allow us to better serve your family.

Each of our Youth Development sites are visited and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure consistent, quality delivery in the following areas: Safety (first aid, staff ratios, emergency procedures, sign-in and sign-out procedures and approved drivers), Public Relations (cleanliness/appearance of staff and communication with parents), and Program Content (goals, schedules, enrichment and character development activities). A key factor in our observations is to ensure that all children are engaged and enjoying the program.

## **Registration, Payment & Financial Assistance**

### **Registration**

The YMCA requires the following information and/or documentation for registration in one of our Youth Development Programs:

- YMCA Registration Form
- Legal documentation regarding custody or restraining issues (if applicable)
- Parent Statement of Understanding (included in this manual)
- Order of Medication (if applicable)
- Payment Form
- Subsidy Voucher (if applicable)
- Financial Assistance Form (if applicable)

### **Payment**

Bank Draft or Credit Card draft payments are highly recommended for Before/After School payment both online and in branch, but Cash, Check, or Credit Card (MASTERCARD, VISA, AMERICAN EXPRESS) are acceptable methods of payment, at the branch, for all programs as well. Inquire with your local branch for specific rates and payment due dates. **Note: Additional fees may be charged for field trips or special events. Late fees of \$10 will be charged for late payments not made by the due date.**

### **Financial Assistance**

The YMCA strives to ensure that families of all income levels are able to participate in our programs. Our "Open Doors" financial assistance program allows parents the opportunity to receive quality care for their children without causing undue financial difficulties. Please check with your branch for additional information regarding assistance. No one is turned away due to an inability to pay if financial assistance funds and space are available. **Note: financial assistance applications may take 7 to 10 days to process.**

### **Refund Policy**

Refunds and credits will be issued for medical reasons. The Refund/Credit will be for the unused portion of the month from the date written notice of cancellation is given. Registration fees are nonrefundable.

### **Federal Income Tax Information**

The YMCA's Federal Tax Identification Number is 56-0530015. Please use this when filing tax returns. Keep cancelled checks and/or receipts as documentation of child care payments.

## **Medical Information**

### **Medications**

The YMCA does not typically administer any medications (including sunscreen, bug spray, prescription medicine and over the counter medication) and will do so only when directed in writing by the child's parent or guardian, and as approved by the Program Director. In the event it is necessary for your child to take medication during program hours, please complete an "Order for Medication" form and return it to the branch Program Director or Site Supervisor/Coordinator. Please be certain that all prescription medications are in their original containers. For prescription medications, the bottle or prescription directions from the pharmacy must be turned in with the Orders for Medication form. However, in the event of an emergency in which the parent cannot be contacted, Emergency Medical Staff and the YMCA may take appropriate action in the best interest of the child.

Please also notify your branch Program Director and Site Supervisor/ Coordinator if your child has any special medical, physical or mental challenges.

### **Accident & Health Insurance**

The YMCA does not provide accident insurance or health insurance for your child. Participants are responsible for their own accident and health insurance when using the YMCA and when participating in YMCA programs off-site.

## **Emergency Procedures**

Should your child have an accident or illness that is determined to be life-threatening, we will immediately call 9-1-1 to transport the child to the hospital and will notify you immediately. If any accident is deemed to be of a minor nature, you will be told of the accident when you arrive to pick up your child.

## **Staffing & Curriculum Requirements**

### **Staffing**

Staff are carefully selected for all of our Youth Development Programs.

1. A minimum of two reference checks are conducted, documented and filed on all potential staff prior to employment. References must include personal references, immediate prior employment, and any employment involving supervision of children.
2. Criminal record checks are conducted on all staff.
3. Drug Screenings are completed before hiring and are conducted randomly thereafter.
4. All employees will wear YMCA Staff Name badges and designated staff shirts during program operation and/or work hours. Children are instructed to avoid any person not wearing a YMCA Staff Name badge and staff shirt.
5. All Youth Development staff receive the following orientation training before or within the first 60 days of employment:
  - Training in CPR, First Aid, AED, and Bloodborne Pathogens
  - Training related to swimming pool safety, transportation
  - YMCA emergency procedures
  - National YMCA Youth Development program standards
  - YMCA of the USA Child Abuse Prevention Training
  - Training in recognizing signs of suspected child abuse

### **Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse**

The YMCA and staff guidelines require all employees, especially Youth Development employees, to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect to a Child Protective Agency by telephone immediately or as soon as practically possible and to complete the YMCA Child Abuse Reporting Form. A child protective agency may be a police or sheriff's department, a county probation department, a county welfare department or the Department of Social Services. Reasonable suspicion means that it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain such a suspicion, drawing when appropriate on his or her training and experience, to suspect child abuse. Failure to report is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination. Every staff member has an absolute duty to report and document any suspicion of child abuse, molestation or sexual misconduct to the proper authorities. The Department of Social Services will determine the accuracy of the report.

### **Model School Age Youth Development Curriculum**

The following are excerpts from the YMCA of Northwest North Carolina's Model School Age Youth Development Program. A complete copy of the program is included in the Youth Development registration packet.

### **Staff/Volunteers**

- Site Supervisors/Coordinators will be 21 years of age or older.
- All youth department staff will obtain CPR/First Aid/AED/Blood Borne Pathogens Certifications within 60 days of employment.
- All staff and volunteers involved with the Youth Development programs will be subject to a criminal background check and drug screenings.

## **Participants**

- A 1:15 or better ratio will be maintained at all sites.

## **Transportation**

- There will be at least 2 staff/volunteers on all YMCA vehicles transporting children who are 14 years or younger.
- Cell phones will be on all vehicles transporting children in the event of an emergency.

## **Environment & Safety**

- Participants are carefully supervised to maintain safety.
- The program serves food and drink that meet the needs of the participants.
- Fire drills and playground inspections are performed monthly.

## **Before and After School Curriculum**

- Arts and Humanities
- Character Development
- Health, Wellness and Fitness
- Homework Support
- Reading Component
- Service Learning
- Social Competence and Conflict Resolution
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

## **Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy**

### **Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct detailed below is directly tied to the YMCA character development values, and all youth participating in YMCA programs are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct:

The following behaviors are prohibited and can be grounds for immediate dismissal from the YMCA program:

1. Fighting, inciting to fight, harming another student or harming a YMCA staff member
2. Open defiance of counselors, supervisors or directors
3. Threats, profanity, name calling, or other verbally threatening action toward other children or adults
4. Bringing knives, sharp instruments, guns or weapons (real or toy), dangerous objects or toys to the site
5. Possession of tobacco or intoxicant, or any illegal substance
6. Theft
7. Harassment (verbal or physical)
8. Destruction of school or YMCA property
9. Touching others in the program without their permission, including horse playing, wrestling or play-fighting

### **Restroom Behavior**

1. Child must be accompanied by a counselor(s) to the restroom
2. Child will not write on walls or any other property
3. Paper towels and other trash must be placed in trash cans
4. Bathroom facilities must be used properly and immediately exited after use
5. No playing in the restroom areas

## **Discipline Policy**

Violation of the Code of Conduct above may result in YMCA staff directed consequences or other appropriate measures to be carried out as directed by the administration. Methods of discipline staff may use are timeout and consultations with parent(s).

We reserve the right to immediately suspend or dismiss a child based on the severity of the offense. If a child is suspended for a short period of time (1 week or less) NO refund will be given.

3 written discipline notices = 3 days suspension

6 written discipline notices = 5 days suspension

9 written discipline notices = expulsion

## **Parent's Pledge of Understanding**

The safety and protection of the children involved in our programs is our primary concern. Please read the following information to help us ensure we are providing the best possible environment for your child:

- I understand that I am not to leave my child at the YMCA or program site unless a YMCA Staff member is there to receive and supervise my child.
- I understand that my child will not be allowed to leave the program with an unauthorized person or staff. Any person authorized to pick up my child must be in the possession of a YMCA child care code word and photo identification. Arrangements must be made by calling the YMCA to give my authorization to make a change.
- Should I, or another authorized person appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when arriving to pick up my child, staff may take appropriate action to protect my child's safety. (Please do not put staff in a position where they have to make this judgment call).
- I understand that it is my responsibility to help the YMCA maintain a safe environment for my child and others by talking to my child about following applicable rules and regulations and make sure they do not bring prohibited items such as weapons of any type to the YMCA sponsored programs or activities.
- I understand that the YMCA is mandated by state law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities for investigation.
- I understand that I will be charged "late fees" if I pick up my child after the designated site closing time.
- I understand that I will be charged "late fees" if my payment is not made by the due date
- I understand that the YMCA does not sanction, encourage or endorse the use of YMCA employees or volunteers for non-YMCA activities. Such activities are considered outside of the scope of an employee or volunteer's duties with the YMCA. Therefore, the YMCA does not assume any responsibility for off-duty interaction or employment.
- I understand that non-attendance does not entitle me to a refund. I understand that no refunds or adjustments are granted for illness, vacation, or when YMCA programs are cancelled due to inclement weather.