



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

DO MORE, BECOME MORE

Before & After
School Program

Handbook
2014-2015

YMCA OF FLORIDA'S FIRST COAST



PARENT HANDBOOK

Before and After School Program

OUR PROGRAM

Before and After School care is part of the YMCA's history of dedication to youth and children's services. It was established to meet the needs of working parents in the community while providing their children a fun, safe, enriching environment that would promote the YMCA's four core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

OUR MISSION

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide a safe and fun learning experience for children that includes a healthy snack, homework time, character development and physical activity
- To develop positive behavior through character development activities that focus on the YMCA core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility
- To enhance physical fitness through active games, sports, exercise and education
- To support academic performance by providing daily homework assistance

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communication is vital to keeping the program innovative, safe and fun. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to speak with the Site Director. The best way to communicate with the Director is by email or calling to schedule a meeting outside of regular Before and After School program hours.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARENT

Parents and guardians are responsible for the following:

- Timely payment of all program fees
- Student drop-off is no earlier than 6:30am daily (where applicable).
- Pick-up no later than 6:00pm each day
- Treat YMCA staff of the Before and After School program with respect and dignity
- Complete/Update the YMCA registration form

A student may be dismissed from the program if a parent does not meet the above responsibilities on a consistent basis.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Each YMCA childcare site is staffed with qualified, professional individuals. They receive comprehensive training and are locally and federally screened, in accordance with state licensing requirements.

Staff to child ratio:

- The YMCA provides a ratio of 1 staff person per 12 children for VPK – Kindergarten
- A 1:15 ratio is used for First grade and above

All Before and After School employees receive training in the following areas:

- CPR PRO/First-Aid
- Child Sexual Abuse Prevention
- Risk Management
- YMCA Code of Conduct
- 40 hour state mandated childcare training
- 10 hours of in-service training annually

In addition, YMCA Before and After School Childcare Credentialed Directors also complete the following:

- Department of Children and Families Director’s Credentialing requirements
- Department of Children and Families Staff Credentialing requirements
- 10 hours of Special Needs Appropriate Practices Training
- Early Childcare Professional Certificate (ECPC)
- 120 hours of early childhood instruction and minimum of 480 contact hours with children

Before and After School is a licensed childcare program regulated by the State of Florida Department of Children and Families.

CURRICULUM

Each YMCA Before and After School site follows a curriculum framework based on sound planning principals and on eight core developmental content areas. These eight core content areas are Arts and Humanities, Character Development, Health, Wellness, and Fitness, Homework Support, Literacy, Science and Technology, Service Learning, and Social Competence and Conflict Resolution.

Component	Outcome	Examples
Arts and Humanities	Demonstrate an appreciation for arts and humanities	Program offers arts activities a minimum of three times per week.
Character Development/Assets	Demonstrate caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith	Staff and activities teach, celebrate, model, reinforce, and practice character development values on a daily basis. Staff confront behaviors that are inconsistent with the values.
Health and Wellness	Demonstrate physical fitness and knowledge about healthy lifestyles	Program offers 30 minutes daily of physical activity, cooperative games, dance, or sports.
Homework and Enrichment Centers	Complete homework and demonstrate a commitment to learning	Program offers a time for homework and enrichment centers offer additional support.
Service-Learning	Demonstrate caring, honesty, respect, responsibility faith and problem solving and leadership skills.	Program offers service-learning projects throughout the year.
Social Competence and Conflict Resolution	Demonstrate age appropriate social skills, compliance with requests and problem solving skills; maintain adequate self-esteem; and not engage in anti-social behavior	Program integrates social skills and social competence activities into the daily curriculum. Staff provide appropriate guidance and are positive role models for youth.

The specific activities associated with the various curriculum categories generally take place in one or several of the following contexts, each of which is balanced throughout the day or week.

Free Choice: The child has the option of choosing from among several activities.

Small Group: The activities available can be done either in small groups or alone.

Project Time: Time is set-aside for children to begin or return to a long-term project.

Large Group: Activities are designed for large group participation.

Indoor/Outdoor: All of the contexts and activities above are presented or done in both indoor and outdoor settings.

Please take a few minutes to look at the curriculum calendar that is posted monthly at your child’s site. It is our hope that your child enjoys his or her experience at YMCA Before and After School. If you have any questions regarding the curriculum, please do not hesitate to ask your Site Director.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

YMCA Before and After School programs provide a strong focus on literacy and mathematics. The new academic support will help children to retain information in a structured environment. Research shows that children who spend time in constructive learning activities after school perform better in the classroom.

Homework time is offered Monday through Thursday for at least 30 minutes per day. While we make every effort to give your child appropriate time and support to complete his/her homework, please realize it is not the responsibility of the staff to be sure it is correct and complete. We encourage parents to follow up on the child's homework.

PHYSICAL FITNESS AND NUTRITION

As a leader in the fitness industry, the Y is addressing the rising childhood obesity rates. It is imperative that children remain physically active in and outside of our YMCA Before and After School program. Therefore, we include in our curriculum at least three days of physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day. We encourage children and families to be physically active outside of our program as well.

Nutrition is discussed weekly, emphasizing healthier choices. We encourage parents to ask their child about nutrition tips he or she has learned and how they can be applied at home and in the family's daily routine.

SNACKS

Healthy snacks and 100 percent juice or water are provided daily. A monthly snack menu will be posted at your child's site. **If a child has special dietary needs, it is the parent's responsibility to provide an alternate healthy snack. This MUST be noted on the registration form.**

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Arts and humanities projects are included in the curriculum to encourage your child's creative side, as well as indoor and outdoor games, relays, stories and rainy-day activities. We also incorporate volunteering and community involvement through service learning projects.

HOURS OF OPERATION

YMCA Before and After School is open Monday through Friday. Select sites provide morning care, starting at either 6:30am or 7:00am and lasting until start of the school day. Afternoon care begins at each school's dismissal time and most sites end at 6:00pm. Times may vary by site. Contact your Before and After School site for specific hours.

*NOTE: All children must be picked up by closing time. If you will be late, please make arrangements with another person listed on your registration form to pick up your child and contact the program supervisor. A late fee will be assessed for **any** late pickups. The late pick up fee is \$1 per minute, per child after 6:00pm.*

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

A parent or authorized person must sign each child in and out daily at the time the child is picked up or dropped off. Only authorized individuals listed on child's registration form will be allowed to sign out child. Proper identification must accompany the individual at Pick-up. It is imperative that your registration form includes all other appropriate individuals who may pick up your child in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

- Please adhere to the school's posted speed limit when picking up and dropping off
- Smoking is prohibited at all Before and After School locations

CUSTODY

Should you have court ordered paperwork for any parties who are not able to have contact with your child enrolled in the YMCA Before and After School program, it is required that the legal custodial parent or guardian provide documentation of any custody and/or guardianship agreement at the time of registration and keep it updated regularly. The parent or guardian that has signed the registration for is responsible for paying Before and After School fees. Occasionally we are asked to provide attendance records. Please know that in order to obtain any records from the YMCA, we must be subpoenaed for them.

DRESS CODE

Before and After School follows the YMCA Appearance Policy and School Board dress code guidelines. Appropriate clothing and closed-toe shoes are required for outdoor play.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please do not allow your child to bring toys, electronic devices or any other valuable items to Before and After School. If a child brings personal items, the YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please label all personal belongings with a permanent marker for identification purposes. If an item is missing, you can check the lost and found at the site.

Cell phones are permitted, but must be stored in the child's backpack and must not be a disruption to the program. The YMCA will not be held responsible for lost or damaged phones.

DISCIPLINE

It is important that staff maintain good order and discipline in all programs. Top objectives in all YMCA programs are safety and a positive atmosphere for learning and developing social skills. The YMCA makes every effort to help children understand clear definitions of acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

The YMCA does not condone and will not permit:

1. Corporal punishment
2. Ridiculing, threatening, using an inappropriate loud voice
3. Leaving children unsupervised
4. Use of profanity

A child's behavior is expected to be consistent with the following:

1. Use appropriate language at all times.
2. Cooperate with staff and follow directions.
3. Respect other children and staff, equipment and facilities, and yourself.
4. Maintain a positive attitude.
5. Aggressive behavior and hitting is not allowed.
6. Stay in program areas – running away is not acceptable.

Discipline Policy

1. If a participant is unable to comply with the behavior expectations, the child will be given an initial warning and his or her parents/guardians will be notified.
2. If a participant's behavior continues to be disruptive, he or she will receive a written reprimand and parents will be notified and consulted concerning the participant's behavior.
3. The YMCA reserves the right to suspend or expel a child from the program if his or her behavior places other participants or staff in immediate harm and/or if his or her behavior places him or herself in immediate harm.

The YMCA reserves the right to suspend or expel any child from the program who poses serious or continual behavior problems with no fee reimbursement. Infractions deemed "serious" may result in immediate suspension and/or expulsion regardless of previous disciplinary action.

Behaviors which may result in immediate dismissal include but are not limited to:

1. Any action that could threaten or pose a direct threat to the physical/emotional safety of the child, other children or staff
2. Fighting or hitting
3. Possession of a weapon of any kind
4. Vandalism or destruction of YMCA property or property of others
5. Sexual misconduct
6. Possession of or use of alcohol or controlled substances unless under the prescription of a doctor
7. Running away
8. Biting

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Parents or guardians are required to inform the YMCA in writing, prior to a child's acceptance in a YMCA program, of any special circumstances which may affect the child's ability to participate fully and within the guidelines of acceptable behavior, including but not limited to any serious behavioral problems or special circumstances regarding psychological, medical or physical conditions.

Upon being informed of such circumstances, the Site Director may require a conference with the parent(s)/guardian to discuss issues created by these circumstances.

I understand and acknowledge that: (i) it is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian to make full disclosure to the YMCA of any special circumstances which may affect the ability of my child/ward to participate, as described above; (ii) it is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian to inform the YMCA of any requested accommodation believed by the parent(s)/guardian to be necessary and readily achievable for such participation; and (iii) full disclosure of any special circumstances is material to the YMCA's evaluation of the child's/ward's ability to participate and the YMCA's consideration of any requested accommodation.

INVESTIGATING AN ISSUE OR CONCERN

You may occasionally have an issue or concern you wish to bring to our attention. We welcome your thoughts and comments. In the event you have reported an issue at the site, please be assured that we will complete a thorough investigation which includes speaking to any pertinent staff and sometimes the children. So that you can be aware of our process, listed below are the procedures we follow when dealing with parental concerns:

- Speak to the parent/guardian to get all the information regarding the concern. We are unable to speak with anyone other than the parent/guardian (this includes grandparents, aunts and uncles, etc.).
- If necessary, we will bring our Human Resources Representative in to work with us.
- Once we have gathered all the pertinent information, we will follow the YMCA of Florida's First Coast Policies and Procedures. Depending on the circumstances, disciplinary action may be required. Due to confidentiality, we are unable to discuss any details – regardless if it involves another Before and After School participant or a staff member.
- There is no time limit with an investigation. We will take as much time as necessary to thoroughly investigate all issues.

PAYMENT POLICIES

All payments are due in advance of care. Payment shall be made out to the YMCA and is due on the Friday before the week of attendance. If payment is not made on time a late fee of \$10 will be assessed. Families may be removed from the Before and After School program for non-payment at any time.

The YMCA offers many different options for parents to make payments. If you have any questions about payment methods please speak with your Site Director.

Check or Money Order: Checks and money orders should be paid at your Before and After School site. The site Director will have a specific place to turn in checks. Please make the check payable to the "YMCA". Providing your child's name in the notes section of the check is very helpful and should be done whenever

writing a check. Checks may take up to nine days to fully process through your account. Please see your Site Director for specific account questions.

Automatic Debit or Credit Card: Parents may choose to have a card on file with the YMCA. Before and After School payments will be set to automatically withdraw on the specified due date. Payments may be set up to come out weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly.

Automatic Checking or Saving Account: Parents may choose to have a checking or savings account linked to their Before and After School account. Like the Debit or Credit Card payment option, Before and After School payments will be set to automatically withdraw on the specified due date. Payments may be set up to come out weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide the YMCA with current up-to-date bank or credit card information throughout the term of the program. Should any program draft not be honored by the parent's bank, for any reason, the parent is still responsible for the payment, plus any applicable service charge assessed by the YMCA. Parents must provide, in writing, any changes to their account information or draft frequency 30 days in advance.

Families may not register for any other programs or membership until any Before and After School outstanding balances due are paid.

REFUNDS

Non-attendance does not entitle a participant to a refund. No refunds or adjustments will be granted for partial weeks missed due to illness, vacation or when YMCA programs are cancelled due to inclement weather. All refunds or program credits given for other reasons are issued on a case-by-case basis. The YMCA reserves the right to apply any credit due to other outstanding balances. Refunds are issued within 30 days of cancellation. The registration fee is non-refundable.

COLLECTIONS

The YMCA is using a third party to assist in the collection of returned checks and bank drafts. If a check or bank draft is returned for any reason, the account will be debited electronically for the amount of the check and/or draft plus a processing fee.

NON-ATTENDANCE and CHANGES IN ATTENDANCE

We recognize the need for parents to occasionally have their children absent from Before and After School for an entire week. Before and After School allows you two, one-week sessions of non-attendance at no charge with written notice. No partial weeks can be applied to this time off policy.

WITHDRAWALS

If at any time you wish to withdraw your child from the program, a two-week written notice must be given to the program supervisor so that we may adjust your account. **Parent is responsible for payment through the end of the two-week notice.**

CLOSURES AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Before and After School sites may be closed when schools are closed. Programs will be provided at consolidated sites during teacher planning days and school holidays. Check with your Site Director or the YMCA about the availability of camps during school closures and holiday closures for your specific site. The YMCA Before and After School program will not provide care on the following holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY

To ensure the health and well being of all children in our program, if a child has a contagious illness, infection or fever of 100 degrees, vomiting or diarrhea, parents must make arrangements for their child to be picked up from the program immediately. It is necessary for the child to be symptom free for 24 hours, without the use of fever reducers, before being allowed to return to the program. If a child has been sent

home from school with a communicable disease, the child will not be re-admitted to the site until he or she has been re-admitted to the school or provides a written doctor's release.

A child with chicken pox can return to the program when there are no open sores. Remaining sores should be well scabbed over. Children are usually out for one week. All parents at the site will be notified in writing.

If a child is found to have head lice at the site, the child will be isolated with staff supervision and the parent contacted to pick up the child immediately. The school will be notified that the child has been sent home with head lice, and all parents at the site will be notified in writing. The YMCA will not re-admit children to the program as long as nits are present. A child identified as having head lice shall not be permitted to return until the following day and only provided that treatment has occurred and has been verified by YMCA staff. Verification of treatment may include a product box, box top, or empty bottle.

If your child becomes seriously ill or sustains any injury in our care, all efforts will be made to contact a parent, guardian or emergency contact immediately. As in any severe emergency, 911 will be called.

Please keep your contact information up to date in case of emergency.

MEDICATIONS

Medications that need to be administered to a child during Before and After School must be brought in the original prescription bottle or original over the counter packaging with the child's name and instructions for administration clearly printed or labeled. Parents must fill out and sign an "Authorization for Medication Card" required by the Florida Department of Children and Families. Please provide the appropriate measuring tools for proper dosage of the medication.

ALLERGIES AND SPECIAL DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

Allergies to foods, chemicals or other environmental issues (such as nuts, pollen, bee stings) must be listed in the "Allergies" section of the child's registration form. Please include any reactions and treatments.

LOST and FOUND

Due to health issues and limited space, lost and found will be cleared out monthly and donated to those in need. Please check the lost and found every day for any belongings your child/children may have misplaced. The YMCA assumes no responsibility for the loss of personal property.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All emergency procedures including building and facility emergencies, bomb threats, fire emergency, missing persons, life-threatening injury, aquatic emergencies, blood borne pathogen control and hazardous materials control are available at the front desk in the Emergency Procedures Flip Book.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

All staff will be required to wear staff shirts and YMCA nametags. Site staff will provide direct supervision of children. Only staff and children are permitted in program areas. A federally issued picture ID, such as a driver's license or military ID, must be provided to sign a child out of the YMCA's care.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

In order to ensure the wellbeing of all children in our care, our staff has a continuing duty under state law to report incidents of possible neglect or abuse, including physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, to the Department of Children and Families and to cooperate in any investigation of such possible neglect or abuse. All staff members are mandatory reporters and must follow Florida statute for mandatory reporting. We may be subjected to criminal penalties if we fail to report such possible harm. Staff is not allowed to comment to parents, other staff or any other persons on the subject of reported child abuse. Parents may not accuse or question staff concerning child abuse allegations. Child abuse investigations are a matter for DCF or local police departments.

BABYSITTING POLICY

The YMCA strives to employ the very best staff possible in all of our programs. After they are no longer employed with us, these persons are private citizens and no longer subject to our employment rules and procedures. The YMCA cannot and does not endorse or recommend its former staff members as babysitters to any parent or guardian of any child in any of our programs. Any babysitting arrangements with former staff of the YMCA are separate and independent from any YMCA program and must be based on the independent investigation, responsibility and judgment of the parent or guardian. Current YMCA staff are prohibited from babysitting while under employ of the Y.

The YMCA shall not be responsible and will be held harmless from any claims or liability in connection with such babysitting activities.

GIVE TO THE Y CAMPAIGN

Your support of the Give to the Y Campaign provides the funds that allow us to offer scholarships to those less fortunate. All contributions remain in our local community, giving children and families a chance to grow stronger in spirit, mind and body at the YMCA. While the need is great, the generosity of people like you can make the difference.

Please consider a tax-deductible donation to the Give to the Y Campaign and make a difference by giving your gift today.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Scholarships, in the form of financial assistance, are awarded to families interested in participating in YMCA programs, like our Before and After School Program. To determine eligibility, a family must complete a financial assistance application and supply all necessary supporting documentation. A member of the YMCA professional staff team will review applications confidentially and make award determinations based on a sliding scale. We are sensitive to extenuating circumstances, and will readily discuss needs a family may have beyond what their household income would indicate.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to review the information presented in this handbook regarding our YMCA Before and After School program. We sincerely hope that you and your child have an incredible Before and After School experience this school year. If at any time you feel as if the program is not meeting your expectations, please do not hesitate to contact the YMCA so we can work together to address your concerns.

STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATIONS OF COMMUNITY

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