

Whitley County Family YMCA School Age Childcare Parent Handbook



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Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Whitley County Family YMCA is extremely pleased to provide a School Age Childcare program for your child. By selecting the Y, you are giving your child(ren) the opportunity to benefit from a quality program that has a foundation of YMCA traditions and many years of experience in serving children and their families.

We are excited to be able to provide an enriching, safe, and fun environment for your child to experience. Our mature and experienced staff will focus on incorporating the Y's core values of: Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility into this program. We will also provide opportunities for your child to learn compassion, build self-esteem, and develop lasting friendships.

This parent handbook has been designed to answer your questions, promote communication between our staff and your family, and to assist you in understanding our policies and procedures. The policies outlined in this booklet are intended to protect your child(ren) and to ensure that his /her experience at the program is positive and rewarding.

Please read the handbook carefully with your child(ren) and refer to it as needed. We look forward to a great year!

Sincerely, Y Childcare Staff

About the Y

The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening the foundation of communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

Our Cause

Strengthening the foundations of community is our cause. Every day, we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income, or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

How We Do It

We are the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Through our three areas of focus, the Y nurtures the potential of every child and teen, improves the nation's health and well-being and provides opportunities to give back and support our neighbors.

Our Impact

The Y is, and always will be, dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected and secure children, adults, families and communities. Every day our impact is felt when an individual makes a healthy choice, when a mentor inspires a child and when a community comes together for the common good.

Our Promise

The YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne has made a promise to our community to turn no one away due to the inability to pay.

The YMCA Mission Statement:

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

Character Development

Y's throughout the USA strive to implement our character development program exemplifying our core values of: CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, and FAITH.

These core values provide a foundation that guide all Y programs, staff trainings, and operations. It is our job to give youth and adults experiences that help them develop a set of positive values, morals, and ethics to live by. The School-Age Childcare Staff strives to provide an environment focused on these Y core values. Students will be taught these core values on a consistent basis. Each child will be taught expectations of conduct while in the School-Age Childcare Program. Teaching the core values will allow students in our care to form a foundation that will provide a stable, secure base on which to build their lives.

Child Care Staff Qualifications

The quality and effectiveness of Y services for children are directly related to the skills and personal characteristics of the staff. Recruiting, selecting, training, and supporting the staff are essential, interrelated processes in ensuring the success and integrity of children's programs. The leaders are required to have experience in working with children, knowledge of recreation activities, and must model the Y's core values.

All Y staff is first aid and CPR certified. Background checks are conducted on all staff members. This includes a criminal background check, national sex offender public registry check, drug screen, and reference checks. We take pride in our staff training, which includes: emergency procedures, program planning, child abuse awareness, and other areas pertaining to child development.

Admissions Criteria

Participants must be between the ages of 5 and 12 years old and be in Kindergarten through 5th grade. Parents must complete, in its entirety, the Whitley County Family YMCA SACC Program Registration, Health forms, and Liability forms. These forms need completed and turned in 3 business days prior to the first day you would like your child to start care. Once you have completed the forms, there is a 3 business day waiting period before your child can start. Your child(ren) will not be able to attend until this paperwork is complete. It is also our policy that every child be fully toilet trained and capable of using the facilities without assistance. We understand that accidents can occur, in which case, we would require that parents pick up their children immediately or provide clean attire. Due to staffing policies and training, if accidents begin to occur on a regular basis, the child will not be able to attend our programs.

Equal Access

The YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, in keeping with its mission to help all people realize their fullest potential, encourages and supports the participation of all children in Y Child Care Programs. We serve all children regardless of gender, race, color, nationality, religion, ethnicity, or disability. Consideration is given to the individual needs of every child and the ability of the program to meet those needs.

Special Needs

At the Y we aim to promote an inclusive environment where all children, whatever their needs, can learn and develop in a happy, caring, and educational environment. If your child has special needs (including disabilities, medicinal requirements, behavioral conditions, or child custody concerns, etc.), please indicate these on the health form and notify the staff. A copy of the child's IEP is also required to better serve your child. The IEP will only be shared with the appropriate staff member.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for children who have special needs, provided a written request is made at least two weeks before the child's attendance. One-on-one aides are not provided by the Y, but will be accommodated if the family provides them, and they meet our hiring and volunteer criteria. Unless a family-provided personal aide accompanies them, children must possess the ability to self-monitor, be independently mobile, and the ability to reasonably foresee the consequences of their actions.

No child will be denied acceptance unless his or her presence would pose a significant risk to himself or herself, or to the general population, as determined by the staff. However, if the Y cannot meet the child's need through reasonable accommodations, the placement cannot be accepted. Decisions are made on a per case basis.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Goals

- Provide an environment of safety, support, and care
- Focus on instilling the four core values in each student
- Develop the interpersonal skills of each student
- Provide an environment that increases the self-confidence and the feeling of self-worth for each student
- Focus on teaching each student how to be effective members of a group
- · Improve the ability of parents and children to communicate with and understand each other
- Support a child's education

Before School Program

Daily before school care is offered at Little Turtle Elementary ONLY and begins at 6:30am. We will be offering delay care at all sites.

2/3 Hour Delay Procedures

If a two or three hour delay is needed, the Whitley County Family YMCA SACC sites will open at 6:30 AM as scheduled. If you are a scheduled participant, there is not a charge. If you are not a scheduled participant, your account will be charged. If school closes during the delay and your child(ren) have already been dropped off, then the students will be transported the Y and staff will plan activities for the children. If we move to a closing from a delay, there will be an upcharge to your account if you are a scheduled participant. If your child(ren) packed a sack lunch for school that day, they may eat that for lunch during our unscheduled no school care. If they did not pack a lunch, lunch will be provided for them for that unscheduled no school care day.

After School Program

Begins at school dismissal and continues until 6:00 PM. Schedules will vary at each site. More details including the Y curriculum are in this handbook. Please check with your Site Director if you have any questions.

Full Day Schedules

On days when school is not in session, full day care is offered at the Whitley County Family YMCA from 6:30 am-6:00 pm. You must sign up for these dates by the Wednesday prior to the week you plan on attending. Once scheduled, you have until the Wednesday prior to cancel that scheduled day off; the same policy applies for Winter and Spring break weeks.

During Winter and Spring Break, full day camps are also available from 6:30 am-6:00 pm at the Y. **Winter and Spring Breaks are not included in the SACC program fees.** All other scheduled days off are included in the SACC program fees. Children are required to pack a sack lunch, snacks, swim suit and towel on a full scheduled day.

Holiday Schedule (subject to change)

The Childcare Program does not operate on the following days:

New Year's Eve Thanksgiving

New Year's Day Day after Thanksgiving

Good Friday Christmas Eve Memorial Day Christmas Day

4th of July Labor Day

Toys/Electronics from Home:

We do not allow participants to bring personal items from home (including electronic devices, cell phones, sharp objects, weapons, firearms, explosives etc.). We are not responsible for any of these items should a participant make the poor choice to bring them. Due to the nature of our program damages and theft of personal items is possible. If participants are caught with any of the above items the staff reserves the right to confiscate them.

Evaluations

Parent communication is one of the most important aspects in our programs. One tool we use to facilitate this is the parent evaluation. Evaluations will be conducted yearly. It is very important that you provide us with your current email address so we can send you the evaluation link. Your input is very valuable to us.

Marketing

On occasion, the Y takes photographs, film footage, or tape recordings of our programs. This media may include your child's image or voice and is used only for purposes of promoting or interpreting Y programs. On the registration form you will be asked for permission to include your child in these promotional materials.

Staff Relationships Outside of Y Program

For the safety and protection of your child and our staff, Y employees are not allowed to babysit for program participants, spend time outside of program with our families, transport children in their private vehicles, or contact families by personal phone, email, or internet. Please do NOT put our staff at risk of losing their position with us by asking them to do so.

Curriculum

The Y is committed to helping children develop into healthy, caring and responsible adults. As a result, we have adopted the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Asset Model along with our own core curriculum components. To learn more about the Developmental Assets visit the website at: www.search-institute.org.

Core Curriculum Components

The Y of the USA School-Age Curriculum Framework was developed in partnership with the Y and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time. Following are the curriculum areas that we use in our activity planning: Arts & Humanities, Character Development, Health & Wellness, Homework Support, Literacy, Science & Technology, Service Learning, and Social Competence & Conflict Resolution.

Homework/Academic Enrichment

Homework support is a core component of the Y School Age Curriculum. Each after school care site will provide your child the opportunity to do homework for a minimum of twenty minutes Monday through Thursday of each week. Your child will be encouraged to work on homework during the scheduled time. Staff will be available at this time to assist your child when needed. Please encourage your child to take advantage of the scheduled homework support time. If your child does not have homework, or chooses not to work on homework during the scheduled time, the staff will provide your child with alternative educational and enriching activities. Please note that we do not provide one-on-one tutoring during this time.

HEPA (Healthy Eating & Physical Activity) Standards

The Whitley County Family YMCA implements a series of healthy eating and physical activity standards in our afterschool program as part of the Y's national commitment to combat childhood obesity and ensure that all those who participate in Y programs live healthier, balanced lives. Specific ways we implement these standards:

- Parent Education- programs and information for parents about physical activity and nutrition as it relates to the health of their children.
- Physical Activity- minimum 30min. of physical activity each day, including a mix of moderate and vigorous activities. Play will take place outdoors whenever possible.
- Screen Time- no access to television or movies. Limit digital device time to less than one hour per day. Digital device use is limited to homework or programs that actively engage children in activity.

Inclement Weather

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily schedule. Parents are asked to dress their children appropriately for the weather conditions.

Thunderstorms

Should there be a tornado warning, all children and staff will go to the predetermined safe room. They will sit on the floor against the wall until the threat passes. Monthly drills are done for safety purposes.

Snow Closings

If WCCS closes due to inclement weather, you will bring your child to the YMCA. To make use of the snow day, parents must provide a sack lunch, 2 snacks, water bottle, swim suit and towel, and send appropriate winter clothing for outside play. There is an additional fee for full day care. If it is an early dismissal, it will be treated as an After School program and no additional fee applies.

Heat/O-zone Advisories

At the Y we are committed to the safety of all children. All precautions will be taken to prevent heat related injuries. Staff is trained to do the following for your children:

- Make sure there are frequent water breaks
- Lower physical activities
- o Act as role models, applying sunscreen & wearing hats outside
- Make sure participants are in the shade or indoors whenever possible
- Make sure there are opportunities for children to reapply sunscreen
- Watch for the signs of heat exhaustion

Health & Safety

Medication During Program

Any medication that needs to be administered during program hours must:

- Be accompanied by "Permission to Medicate" form. (Available at each site)
- Be brought directly to the After School Site director in its original container with the child's name, physician's name, and drug name on the container.
- Have specific doctor instruction for dosage, times, etc. The Y can only administer medication according to original instructions on label. If direction from parent is different, the parent must provide a physician's written change.
- · No over-the-counter medication, including aspirin, cough medicine etc. will be given without a doctor's written consent
- · Staff cannot administer amounts other than specified on bottle or split pills.
- · Medication will not be administered past expiration date.

Child Illness

For the sake of your child and others, if a child has a temperature of over 100 degrees, is vomiting, or shows other signs of illness, parents are asked to keep the participant at home. Parents must notify their Y Site of the absence and the nature of the illness. If this happens during program hours we will call you and ask that you pick your child up within one hour

Illness/Injury Occurring During Program Hours

The Y does not aim to exclude children from the program unnecessarily. The Y's illness/injury policies are based on the following criteria:

- · Preventable public health practices
- · The comfort and safety of the sick child
- · The staff's ability to accommodate or care for a sick child
- · The protection of the other students, staff and parents from communicable disease conditions

If your child becomes ill/injured, they will be isolated from the other children and you will be contacted to pick him or her up within one hour of notification (depending on the severity of the injury or illness). The YMCA is not equipped to handle ill/injured children beyond securing their immediate comfort. If you cannot be reached, we will contact someone you've authorized from your emergency contact on the Health and Registration form for immediate pick up. Please be sure to keep the YMCA and your Site Director informed of any changes in your work or emergency phone numbers. In an emergency, medical aid will be sought immediately.

Communicable Disease

Communicable diseases are diseases that are transmitted from one individual to another and easily spread among children. Common communicable diseases among children are head lice, pink eye, ringworm and chickenpox. The following policies have been created to reduce the spread of communicable diseases.

Head Lice

The Y reserves the right to inspect your child's head in the event lice is suspected in order to protect all of the other students, staff, and parents

- · In the event nits/head lice are found among your child, a parent/guardian must pick up the child within one hour of the notification.
- · The Y will notify all parents of all head lice/nits cases when found or reported.
- If nits/head lice are found outside of the Y care, parents/guardians must contact the Site Director immediately so proper notification can be made to the other parents.
- · Students with nits/head lice must not return to Y care until 24 hours after first treatment is complete.

Same policies apply to all other communicable diseases. If school policies differ from Y policies, the school policies will be followed.

Confidentiality

Student's records are kept within groups, as staff needs to access them regularly. Any information in a child's record that is sensitive will be kept in a secure place.

Behavior Management Procedures

Philosophy

The Y strives to maintain a positive approach to managing children's behavior at all times. "Discipline" is the process of teaching self-control and the ability to live within limitations and agreed upon guidelines. The staff and children at each site establish expected behavior guidelines. Positive behavior is self-rewarding and allows for program activities to occur. When children choose to behave outside the guidelines, some consequence is required to avoid future problems. The overall safety of all children in the program is our highest priority.

Children's Rules

It is our intent that each child enjoys the planned activities by understanding that they are responsible for their actions. With prior knowledge of our basic rules of safety and good conduct, each child is made aware of how to exercise self-discipline and to understand that we are here to assist her or him and that we expect them to succeed. Rules for behavior are posted at every Y site. Character Development is an important part of our program.

Process

When positive behavior is displayed, the consequence is participation and enjoyment of planned activities. In cases of negative or inappropriate behavior, the follow process will be employed.

- **Redirection:** Every effort will be made to help the child understand the inappropriateness of his or her actions and agree to an alternate form of behavior. When the conflict is child-to-child, every effort will be made to have them reason together face-to-face with staff facilitating.
- **Removal from the Specific Activity:** When redirection has been pursued and behavior has not changed, removing the child from the activity involved for an appropriate amount of time is necessary. The removal time will be age appropriate. Other duty-oriented consequences suitable to the inappropriate behavior may also be utilized at this stage.
- **Write-ups:** When the child is not successful in correcting the behavior, or the behavior is of a serious nature, a behavior write-up will occur. This write-up will be discussed with the child and parent, and requires a parent signature. If a child receives three write-ups a parent conference is required.
- **Removal from the Program:** If the above process has not resulted in corrected behavior, the child may be removed from the program.

Serious Behavior Issues

When a child has a serious discipline problem, on any one occasion, the parent may be called by staff and asked to pick up the child within one hour of the call. Should it be decided by Y staff that a child poses a serious problem, the child may be suspended from the program for a period of one to five days or may be re-moved from the program entirely. No child will be allowed to continue in the program who becomes a safety hazard to him/herself or others. In addition to behavior management procedures outlined above, parents must be aware that a child may be released from the program, without refund, for the following misconduct:

- Leaving Y care premises without permission, or going into unauthorized areas
- Using foul language, being rude or discourteous to staff and other children
- Defacing property
- Physical Violence (fighting, biting, putting hands on another child, threatening)
- Bringing or using any illegal substances and weapons
- · Any demonstration of sexual contact/words
- Any behavior that jeopardizes the safety of staff or participants
- Stealing

Other Behavior Related Issues

No staff member will ever, strike, swear at, abuse, or threaten with physical intimidation either a child or parent. No staff member will allow a child to be stricken, sworn at, abused or physically intimidated by anyone else in the program. No staff member will ever solicit or accept gratuities in consideration for any treatment of a child.

Parent Conferences

Informal or formal conferences may be requested by staff or parents regarding their child's behavior. Typically, conferences are requested after multiple behavior reports or extreme changes in a child's demeanor. We cannot emphasize enough how important it is that you share changes occurring at home or at school. Staff can better provide for a child's needs when we are aware of changes.

Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures

The safety of every child is a priority of the Y. Following Sign-In and Sign-Out procedures helps ensure the safety of your child and allows staff to determine which children are present at any given time.

Sign-In

This takes place during a no school care day. During the After School Program your child's site director or assistant will sign in your child.

In the event of a no school care day, an adult (at least 18 years old) must walk all children to the designated Childcare area. The adult must sign the child into the program by initialing next to the child's name on the attendance roster.

Sign-Out

All children must be signed out of the program by a parent/guardian or an authorized adult (at least 18 years old). When a child is picked up from the program the parent/guardian or authorized adult must come to the designated Childcare area and sign the child out of the program by initialing next to the child's name on the attendance roster. No child will be released from the program without an adult initial. All adults picking up children must be prepared to show I.D. so staff can verify their identity. For your child's protection, anyone without proper I.D. will be stopped from taking a child from the program and the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

If someone other than the parent/guardian or those on the authorization list needs to pick up your child, you must notify the Y Childcare staff in writing at least one day in advance.

Any restricted individual must have the appropriate paperwork (restraining order, court documents etc.) on file with the director.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent, it is very important that you call your School Age Childcare Site and request the school put a note in the Y mailbox. You may also contact the site director directly. Tracking a missing child takes staff time and resources from the program and other children at the site, therefore, repeated failure to notify the program staff of your child's absence may result in your child being dismissed from the program and/or an additional fee.

Late Pick-Up

Y childcare ends at 6:00 p.m. and our staff is scheduled to leave. If you are running late, please notify your Site Director. A late pick up fee will be assessed after the program closes. There will be an additional charge of \$1.00 per child, per minute starting at 6:05 p.m. payable to the YMCA. You will receive a receipt for your payment.

Parents who have not notified the site director they will be late can expect the following sequence of events to occur. These steps are necessary to ensure the safety of the child as well as Y staff members.

- <u>6:00 p.m.</u> Program closes. Staff member in charge begins calling parent work number to check for problems or miscommunications. If contact is not made, alternative contacts listed on the registration form will be called.
- <u>6:30 p.m.</u> Staff member in charge contacts team leader, program director, and local authorities to apprise them of the situation.
- <u>6:45 p.m.</u> If there is no contact from the parent and no other safe option, the child will be turned over to the city or county police department.

You risk dismissal from the program if:

- You fail to pay the late fee.
- · You are late picking up your child three times within a 30-day period.

Parents must keep the Y office and ASP staff notified of phone number changes for work, home, and emergency contacts at all times.

PAYMENT INFORMATION.

THERE WILL NO PAYMENTS ALLOWED TO BE MADE AT THE SITES.

Financial Assistance

We believe that no one should be turned away due to inability to pay. The YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne is a non-profit organization committed to strengthening the foundations of our community, one child at a time. Our annual Strong Kids Campaign is a Y initiative that provides scholarships for programs and memberships to children and families in need. Those families unable to pay the full cost of participation are encouraged to apply, please call the Whitley County Family YMCA at 244-9622 or download an application from the website. Once approved, you will receive an award letter. It is your responsibility to keep your original copy as proof of your scholarship amount. You will be charged for any additional copies.

Late Payment

A late fee of \$5.00 will be assessed when payment is not received on time. After the third late payment, the fee will increase to \$15.00 per occurrence.

Delinquent Accounts

When payment on an account falls two days behind, the parent/guardian will be notified that their child cannot return to the program. Your child may return when the account is brought current or payment arrangements are made. If parent/guardian has been notified of delinquent account and sends their child to the program anyway, staff will call to have the child immediately picked up.

Insufficient Funds

If payment to the childcare program is returned due to insufficient funds, the parent/guardian is responsible for immediately issuing another payment plus all NSF fees that are assessed. After two returned checks, payment must be in the form of a money order payable at the site, or cash/credit card.

Whitley County Family YMCA School Age Program Rates for 2023-2024 School Year

- Daily Before School Care (Little Turtle ONLY)
 - o (Includes all scheduled and unscheduled delays and scheduled days off)
 - o **Part Time:** \$71/month-member, \$85/month-program participant
 - o Full Time: \$98/month-member, \$118/month program participant
 - August Pro-Rate-Draft on August 17
 - o **Part Time:** \$47/month-member, \$57/month-program participant
 - o **Full Time:** \$54/month-member, \$65/month program participant
 - December & April Pro-Rate
 - Part Time: \$54/month-member, \$64/month-program participant
 - o **Full Time:** \$74/month-member, \$89/month program participant
- Before and After School Care (Little Turtle ONLY)
 - (Includes all scheduled and unscheduled delays and scheduled days off)
 - Part Time Month: \$305/month-member, \$365/month-program participant
 - o **Full Time Month:** \$418/month-member, \$505/month-program participant
 - August Pro-Rate-Draft on August 17
 - Part Time: \$203/month-member, \$243/month-program participant
 - o **Full Time:** \$230/month-member, \$278/month program participant
 - December & April Pro-Rate
 - o **Part Time:** \$229/month-member, \$273/month-program participant
 - Full Time: \$314/month-member, \$379/month program participant
- Delay Care and After School Care (Coesse, Mary Raber, Little Turtle, Northern Heights)
 - (Includes all scheduled and unscheduled delays and scheduled days off)
 - o Part Time Month: \$234/month-member, \$279/month-program participant
 - Full Time Month: \$320/month-member, \$387/month-program participant
 - August Pro-Rate-Draft on August 17
 - o **Part Time:** \$156/month-member, \$186/month-program participant
 - o **Full Time:** \$198/month-member, \$213/month program participant
 - December & April Pro-Rate
 - Part Time: \$176/month-member, \$209/month-program participant
 - o Full Time: \$240/month-member, \$290/month program participant
- Unscheduled Full Days Up Charge for Contract Families (Coesse, Mary Raber, Little Turtle, Northern Heights) Only for staff to up charge and register
 - \$27/day-member, \$33/day-program participant
- Break Camps (Coesse, Mary Raber, Little Turtle, Northern Heights)
 - o December 20,21,22,26,27,28,29 January 2
 - April 1,2,3,4,5
 - Draft scheduled each day registered
 - \$37/day-member, \$43/day-program participant

Notes:

- No longer offering drop-in fees nor weekly payments.
- Monthly Draft Dates: August 17, then 1st of September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May
- No max/min numbers

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **How do I change my contract?** Contact the SACC Director in writing. Changes must be made two weeks prior to the new contract starting.
- How many times can I change my contract? Contract changes can be made as needed.
- What happens if my child is sick, do I still get charged? Yes! You will be charged for any days you have selected in your contract REGARDLESS of the reason the child does not attend. These charges will continue unless a new contract is signed or your old contract is terminated in writing.
- What about Spring Break and Winter Break? You will need a separate contract to be filled out for Spring Break and Winter Break. These contracts will be available to you on-line or in-house. They will need to be registered for no later than the Wednesday prior to the week of attendance. These extended periods of scheduled days out of school have a separate payment that is not included in your regular after school care registration, and charged only to those who have signed up for those specific days.
- Scheduled School Days Off (excluding Spring Break and Winter Break)? Scheduled days out of school, such as teacher in-service days or parent teacher conferences, will be included in your regular monthly contract fee. However, preregistration for these days will still be necessary; sign-ups for these days will be posted for these at least a week in advance. E-mail requests will also be accepted.
- What about delays and cancellations? If you are registered with the School Aged Childcare at the YMCA, your child(ren) may come. These are days that cannot be predicted, therefore, you DO NOT NEED to sign up your child(ren). If school gets cancelled prior to attendance, please provide a sack lunch. If school has been cancelled after your child has arrived, lunch will be provided. There is an additional fee that will be applied to your account for unscheduled days that school is cancelled.
- What about snacks? The Y will provide snacks in the afternoon only. Time and tables will be set aside for your child(ren) to eat a healthy snack/breakfast brought from home prior to heading off to school in the morning.