



WELCOME TO YMCA AFTERSCHOOL ACADEMY!

We're excited that you've chosen YMCA Afterschool Academy. Afterschool Academy is designed with your child in mind. Our staff believes that every child should have a chance to grow and shine in a caring and encouraging environment.

This Parent Manual provides information to help you and your child have a successful experience. Please read everything carefully, and let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We're looking forward to the best school year yet, in spite of the changes COVID-19 has surprised us with.

We take pride in our programs. If your experience is not a positive one, please contact your Afterschool Site Director.

For billing and account information, please email childcare@ymcabham.org.

COMMUNICATION

YMCA staff will provide you with periodic updates about your child's participation at the Y. We strive to communicate effectively about our programs through newsletters, email and staff communication during drop off and pick up. We encourage all families to sign up for Remind 101. If you have questions, please feel free to contact your Afterschool Site Director.

EMAIL ADDRESS ON FILE

Be sure to update your online account with an accurate email address. We will send important information regarding schedules, activities and updates via email. The email will let you know what is planned for each week.

CUSTODY

Please alert the YMCA of child custody arrangements. It is imperative that official, current court documents are maintained in your child's file if custody or visitation is a concern. Without court orders, we cannot withhold a child from his/her parent. Based on the information that you share with your director, he/she will tell you if additional documentation is required.

The parent(s) who registers the child for Afterschool Academy is responsible for payments. We cannot subdivide fees.

WRITTEN NOTES

Parents should write a note or send an email in instances of:

1. Early pickup
2. Medication needs (Please review the "Health & Safety" section.
3. Modified activities, extra help or additional support for your child.

WHAT TO WEAR

1. Dress appropriately for the outdoors, active play, and potential weather.
2. All shoes must be closed-toe. Sneakers are recommended.
3. All children must wear a face-covering to the program.
4. All belongings should be clearly marked with the child's name and phone number.

WHAT TO BRING

To help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and minimize the sharing of equipment, we are asking each child to bring the following items to Afterschool Academy. They will be cleaned daily by YMCA staff at the end of the day. Please label everything with your child's name.

1. Plastic pencil box
2. School supplies: Scissors, glue sticks, crayons (paper removed), markers or colored pencils.
3. Cloth face covering
4. Hand sanitizer- if you would like your child to have their own so as not to share with others
5. Refillable water bottle
6. Sunscreen (children must be able to self apply sunscreen)
7. Clipboard to use for activities when tables aren't available

Toys, personal listening devices, portable game devices, cell phones, trading cards, stuffed animals, pets and money should stay at home.

The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items.

SNACKS

The YMCA will provide a snack daily to each child. Parents are welcome to send additional snacks should their child require something more.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

At the YMCA, we believe in reinforcing good behavior and teaching our students the importance of our four core character traits: respect, responsibility, caring, and honesty. We recognize good character at Afterschool Academy by pointing out children who display these traits throughout the day.

MEDICINE PROCEDURES

Please do not pack medication with your child's belongings. Parents (not the child) must leave necessary medication with a staff member prior to the start of the program. Medication must be in its original container with written instructions for dispensing. A Medication Form must be provided for staff to dispense all medications including over the counter medications such as topical ointments.

Generally, children are prohibited from having medication with them, unless the medication is dispensed on their person (such as an insulin pump) or a doctor has specifically indicated in writing that the child may self-administer and safety precautions are met for the safe handling of the medication. If a doctor has given this written permission, a copy must be provided to the YMCA. A parent or guardian must give the medication to the program staff.

For safety reasons, all medications are stored and locked in the program office. For school-based programs: **We do not have access to rescue medications that are stored with the school nurse.**

Notice: For those children who may require injections, medications that require insertion into a body cavity, and/or have other special medical needs, the YMCA will consider all requests for reasonable modifications to its program, including meeting with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of such children to discuss such modifications, and strive to develop a mutually acceptable plan designed to address the medical circumstances of each child, provided that the requested accommodation does not amount to a fundamental alteration to its program.

SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen can be brought with the child to the program. Children must be able to apply sunscreen independently. Our staff are not permitted to apply sunscreen on the children.

WHEN TO STAY HOME

Please do not send your child to YMCA programs with any of the following symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Excessive coughing
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Fever
- Head lice
- Undiagnosed rash, sore, or other skin condition
- Any other contagious disease or symptom

A child must be diarrhea, vomiting and fever-free for a full 24 hours before returning to the program. A physician's note may be required before readmitting a child to the program.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of severe rain, lightning, or other unsafe conditions, activities will be modified as necessary to ensure the safety of all participants.

Severe weather may affect the pickup process. In cases of driving rain and/or lightning, staff will keep children sheltered until conditions improve. This may slow down the pickup process, requiring drivers to wait. The safety of YMCA children and staff is our first priority.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event of an unplanned emergency school closure (inclement weather, power outage), the YMCA afterschool program will not operate. Parents will need to plan for alternative arrangements for their children and notify the school. For our school-based programs, if the school district cancels all afterschool activities, our programs will close as well.

PICKUP PROCEDURES

Specific pickup procedures will vary from location. Please check with your Afterschool Site Director for details. Parents will receive detailed information in the welcome email. Parents will be asked to present a photo ID at the time of pickup.

At pickup time, children will only be released to parents, legal guardians and those designated as emergency contacts with pickup on your child's account.

If you need to add a permanent authorized pick up, you can update your authorized pick up list [HERE](#). Please notify your director that you made an update to the list.

If you plan to have anyone else pick up your child for a specific date and do not want them added to the list permanently, you must notify the staff in writing via a handwritten note or email the Afterschool Site Director.

Parents who pick up children outside of scheduled times must pull into the designated parking spots and call the YMCA. A member of our team will check your child in and out from the car.

The YMCA/our staff or volunteers do not buckle children of any age into their car seats or fasten seatbelts, even when requested by the parents. We make every effort to be efficient in the pickup line.

PICKUP LATE FEE

A late fee is charged for children picked up after the last pickup time. The late fee is \$5 for the first 10 minutes past pickup time and \$1 for each additional minute thereafter. Two staff members will remain with the child until a parent arrives. Our staff will call late parents and emergency contacts if parents cannot be reached. After 1 hour, YMCA staff will call the local authorities and DHR.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

At the YMCA of Greater Birmingham, our behavior expectations and discipline procedures are based on our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We believe in creating a safe, secure, and fun environment where all youth have the opportunity to learn the importance of demonstrating good character. We believe that in order to do this, all youth need to know and understand the rules and expectations for appropriate behavior. We also believe that when youth do not follow the rules or when they demonstrate inappropriate behavior, we have an opportunity to help youth learn from their mistakes.

The YMCA promotes behavior guidance and discipline through creating a positive environment, developing structure and clear limits, promoting social and emotional learning, reinforcing our core values and addressing challenging behaviors.

The YMCA of Greater Birmingham youth programs use six simple rules to communicate behavior expectations to the youth in our care. The purpose of these rules is to ensure the safety of our campers and staff and to create a positive environment for all. These rules are:

1. Listen and follow directions.
2. Do what's right.
3. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
4. Try everything and do your best.
5. Be an Upstander. If you see something, say something.
6. Be safe and have fun!

All youth are expected to follow the rules established by the YMCA for the safety of all youth in the program. Your cooperation and support ensure that all youth have a safe and fun experience.

The YMCA does not allow the following behaviors including but not limited to:

Any action that could threaten the physical or emotional safety of the youth, other youth or staff. Prohibited conduct may include, but is not limited to:

1. Abusive jokes, insults, slurs, threats, name-calling or intimidation
2. Destructive behavior
3. Behavior that is a violation of personal boundaries or is of a habitual nature and negatively impacts the program, and/or safety and enjoyment of others
4. Behavior that is of a sexual nature
5. Not following procedures related to help reduce the spread of COVID0-19. This may include disregarding social distancing and purposefully coughing/sneezing on each other.

The YMCA uses positive discipline which means staff members promote desired behaviors through teaching and reinforcement. Staff will redirect or problem-solve with youth when they are not displaying desired behaviors, rather than restrict behaviors by taking away opportunities or controlling youth with fear of punishment. We believe this approach focuses on the needs of the youth and contributes positively to the youth's overall development.

Staff shall use positive discipline, which shall include the following:

1. Communicate to youth using positive statements
2. Encourage youth, with adult support, to use their own words and solutions in order to resolve interpersonal conflicts
3. Communicate with youth by getting on their level and talking to them in a calm, quiet manner about the behavior that is expected.

YMCA DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

If a youth is unable to meet established behavior expectations, YMCA staff will follow these disciplinary procedures below. The YMCA staff desire to partner with families of the youth in our care. If at any time you have concerns about your child's behavior or success in our program, please do not hesitate to reach out to your Youth Director to set up a conference.

1. Conversation between staff and youth to discuss behavior and reset expectations.
2. Staff will first use positive reinforcement and redirection to redirect a youth's behavior. If this is ineffective, staff may use a timeout as an opportunity for the youth to take a break from the behavior before rejoining the group.
3. Staff will communicate with parents/guardians if/when youth is not following established YMCA rules. This communication may be at check out, over the phone or via a parent conference.
4. If positive discipline and redirection are ineffective in changing the youth's behavior, the Youth Director may suspend the youth. The length of suspension will be determined based on each individual situation. Factors such as type/severity of behavior, behavior history, age of youth, etc. will be considered when determining the length of the suspension.
5. If the youth continues to have challenges after a suspension, the Youth Director may set up a conference with the parent/guardian to develop a behavior plan for the youth.
6. If neither suspensions nor a behavior plan are effective in changing the child's behavior, the child may be dismissed from the program. Dismissal from the program for disciplinary reasons could result in permanent removal from all YMCA programs.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The goal of the YMCA of Greater Birmingham is to meaningfully include all youth and provide accommodations in our programs when needed. To help us achieve this goal, we respectfully ask parents or guardians to inform the YMCA, prior to the start of the program, of any special circumstances which may affect your child's ability to participate. By providing information regarding the strengths and needs of your child, the staff can prepare helpful accommodations that will better serve all children in our programs.

Upon being informed of such circumstances, the Youth Director or other staff member may request a meeting to gather more information and discuss the accommodations that can be created to successfully include your child.

BULLYING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Bullying is any unwanted behavior that involves a power imbalance. Here at the Y, our goal is to stop bullying, and we encourage our participants, parents, and staff to be Upstanders. An Upstander is one who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. If there is disclosure, discovery, or suspicion of bullying, we will handle each instance case by case and with care. At the Y we are building a caring, respectful, honest, and responsible community for all; the safety of our program participants is our main concern.

Conversely, we define conflict as a disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views and there is an equal power balance. We believe conflict with resolution is a natural and important part of Youth Development. Conflict can be constructive if managed in the right way. We will identify and resolve conflicts in a healthy and proactive fashion. The conflict resolution skills we learn and practice will make a positive impact on our Y programs and in every child's future.

CARING STAFF

The YMCA prides itself on hiring quality staff that embody our Mission and have a passion for being a positive role model for children. Many of our counselors are college students. Staff members are selected through a comprehensive application and interview process, and often have previous experience in other YMCA programs.

Each staff member completes training that emphasizes the importance of safety, child development and fun. All staff are trained in CPR, 1st Aid, AED and must pass a background check and be CA/N cleared. The YMCA strives to maintain a 1:12 ratio for youth programs.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The YMCA believes in serving the needs of everyone in our community regardless of their ability to pay full fees. Financial assistance, based on need, is available. Awards are given on a first-come basis. Applications should be emailed to your branch's Afterschool Site Director. To request an application, email childcare@ymcabham.org

MONTHLY/WEEKLY FEES

All fees must be made via automatic payment from either your checking account or debit/credit card. Fees will be scheduled for payment on the due date. We will not prorate for missed days.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If a parent wishes to cancel any month or week of After School/School Support Academy, a Two (2) Week advance written notice is required. No refunds or credits will be issued for requests not meeting the 2 Week notice and the monthly/weekly balance will be considered due. Registration fees are non-refundable.

Due to limited capacity, the Y requires continuous registration for the entire school year to maintain a spot in the program. The Y is not able to accommodate requests for temporary breaks in service in the school year. Requests to cancel a period of Afterschool/Support Academy will result in cancelation of all future weeks/months remaining in the school year beyond the 2-week required notification. If you choose to cancel under these terms, you may re-register for the program as space allows.
