



# AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT 2023-2024 PARENT HANDBOOK

FIND YOUR Y AT  
YMCA OF THE UPPER PEE DEE  
Darlington, Chesterfield, Hartsville

**For a better us.®**

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# MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

## YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

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

## PHILOSOPHY

YMCA programs foster each child's cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development through opportunities and experiences which focus on achievement, relationships, and belonging. It is our belief that each child is a unique individual with his or her own rate of development. Our goal is to introduce youth to as many positive experiences as possible that will assist in the development of individuality in each child and encourage an awareness of themselves and others. Youth participate in fun and educational activities that help them with:

**ACHIEVEMENT** – Learn and master new skills that help them realize their passion, talents, and potential

**RELATIONSHIP** – Build friendships with new friends and staff adding to their well-being and confidence

**BELONGING** – Help them feel like they are a part of the group, so they feel safe, welcome, and free to express their individuality

# ENROLLMENT PROCESS AND EXPECTATIONS

## ADMISSION CRITERIA

Children must be 5-12 years of age and enrolled in school to be accepted. Parents must complete in its entirety and sign the YMCA of the Upper Pee Dee After School Enrichment registration materials. This includes the registration form, the disciplinary policy, the child abuse reporting procedures, additional policies sheet, the photo/video release, the parent handbook acknowledgement, and the consent to draft form. **A payment equal to a week of participation and the registration fee is due prior to the start date.**

**All previous program balances, regardless of branch or time frame, are to be paid in full before a child is allowed to register for After School Enrichment.**

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND VOUCHER

The YMCA of the Upper Pee Dee is committed to access for all, regardless of a family's financial situation. Financial assistance is available for those families that may qualify. Scholarship forms are available at each branch's front desk and must be completed in their entirety, accompanied by the requested financial information. After School Enrichment registration and one week's fee must be paid in full to hold your child's spot while a scholarship is being reviewed.

The Hartsville and Darlington YMCAs host South Carolina ABC Quality programs. Applications for this type of assistance is completed through DSS. The YMCA of the Upper Pee Dee will not honor ABC voucher until approval through DSS and connection to either location has been established. Until ABC has issued an official letter of assistance to the YMCA, full price must be paid to hold your child's spot in the program.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

The YMCA aims to promote an inclusive environment. During the program, children participate in highly active games, walking field trips, swim, and other physical activities. Generally, the YMCA is unable to meet the needs of a child who requires a greater ratio than one staff to fifteen campers. These needs include social, emotional, cognitive, language, and/or motor development growth or assistance. If you believe your child may need assistance during the program, please contact the branch's Childcare Supervisor. Decisions about a child's ability to attend will be made on a case-by-case basis.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION, HOLIDAYS, & UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES**

Hours: 2:00pm-6:00pm Monday through Friday

Holiday Schedule: The YMCA After School Enrichment Program will not operate on September 4 (Labor Day), November 23-24 (Thanksgiving Holidays), March 29 (Good Friday).

Out-of-School Days: The YMCA will host After School Enrichment any full days, up to two days in one week, when school is not in session for no additional charge. When school is not in session three days or more within one week, the YMCA will consider this full-time care and treat this time as a separate out-of-school session. Full time care rates must be registered for and paid separately from After School Enrichment. These weeks may be subject to cancellation dependent on participation.

Full time care weeks this school year: October 2-6, December 18-22, December 26-29 (Closed Dec. 25), February 19-23, April 1-5

Inclement Weather: With safety in mind, the YMCA of the Upper Pee Dee reserves the right to close the After School Enrichment due to potentially harmful weather. Should a closure or delay occur, parents will first be notified via Remind. Postings will be made on our Facebook page and website. If a weather warning is issued during program time, children will be escorted to their emergency stations. Should a warning be issued to last longer than our normal program hours, parents will be notified by phone to pick up their child as soon as possible under safe conditions.

\*The YMCA of the Upper Pee Dee will follow school district guidance for all closures.

## **REGULAR DAILY SCHEDULE**

2:00-3:00 Arrival, Physical Activity

3-3:30 Snack

3:30-4:15 Homework Time

4:15-5:00 Activity Time

5:00-6:00 Group Games/Dismissal

This schedule is only a guideline. Many days will look different to include visitors, field trips, and special activities.

## **Physical Activity**

- A. Please dress your child in clothing and shoes that allow for maximum participation in physical activity.
- B. Children are encouraged to be physically active indoors and outdoors at appropriate times
- C. The program's schedule for outdoor play for school age children totaling at least 45 minutes on half days and 1 hour and 30 minutes on full days(weather permitting).
- D. If outdoor time is decreased due to weather, the time of indoor activity is increased to ensure the total amount of physical activity remains the same.

## **Swim**

Swim is a weekly activity for students. All swimming activities will be accompanied by a certified lifeguard. Staff to student ratio shall not exceed 1:12. Swimsuits for girls should cover their midsection and have secure closures at the shoulders or neck. Boys should wear swim shorts that are not too loose for active aquatic play.

Supervising counselors are required to stand poolside while students are in the water. Students at no time are allowed in the spa or sauna. The Hartsville YMCA pool always remains under DHEC regulation.

## **Transportation**

YMCA activity buses will be used to transport ASE students from school to the YMCA on school days and on special occasions for planned activities off site. Written parental permission will be obtained once per school year to include all transportation. The following policies apply to all YMCA sanctioned activities that are to involve transportation of ASE students:

- Activity bus capacity shall not exceed 13 students per bus regulation. Staff to student ratio shall not exceed 1:13
- Manufacturers' restraints shall be used appropriately during transport.
- Activity buses will have current vehicle registration and insurance.
- Students will never be left unattended on an activity bus.
- Activity bus drivers are required to hold a regular driver's license, clean driving record, and a valid CPR and First Aid.
- Students will be tracked as they enter and exit the vehicle.
- Student emergency information and first aid kit will be kept on the vehicle whenever in use.
- The bus driver will have a cell phone while driving the bus in the event of any emergencies.

## **REQUIRED SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES**

An authorized signature is required to sign out your child every day. For the protection of your child(ren), only persons 18 and older and authorized in writing by the parent/guardian may pick up your child. Persons who are on the authorized pick-up list, will be asked to present a valid ID. Anyone without proper authorization or does not appear to be capable of providing safe care, will be stopped from taking a child and parents/ guardians will be contacted. If someone other than those persons authorized on the registration form is to pick up your child, you must notify the program director in writing or in person and a valid ID must be presented at the time of pick-up.

## PARENTAL ACCESS

The custodial parents have unlimited access to their children during our program operation hours and should make his or her presence known to childcare staff prior to removing the child from the center.

## LATE PICK-UP

The YMCA After School Enrichment program ends at 6:00pm and our staff is scheduled to leave at that time. If, due to an unavoidable emergency, you must be late, please notify the YMCA so that staff may ensure the comfort of your child.

Beginning at 6:00pm, there will be an additional charge of \$10 for every 10 minutes after 6:00pm. (Example: 6:01–6:10 will be \$10, 6:11–6:20 will be an additional \$10, etc.) This late fee will be due no later than the following day of service.

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

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| 6:00pm | Program Closes   |
| 6:15pm | Staff member in charge begins calling parent contact numbers to check for problems or miscommunications. If contact cannot be made with a parent, alternative contacts listed on the registration form will be called to pick up the child. Attempt to contact authorized pick-ups will be made periodically until someone is reached. |
| 7:15pm | The Childcare Director or other YMCA management will contact local authorities to determine if any problems related to the parent has been reported. If there is no contact from the parent and no other safe option has been identified, the child will be turned over to the custody of the local Police Department.                 |

We do understand that parents may work late and that emergencies arise, but please make other arrangements when these circumstances occur to avoid late fees.

Program dismissal will be considered if:

- You fail to pay the weekly fee
- You fail to pay the late pick-up fee
- You fail to pay any returned draft fees related to tuition
- You are late picking up your child three or more times during a 30-day period

**Parents MUST keep the YMCA office and program site notified of any changes in phone numbers for work, home, mobile, and emergency contacts at all times.**



# BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

## PHILOSOPHY

The YMCA 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. Expected behavior is self-rewarding and allows for program activities to occur. When children choose to behave outside of the guidelines, some consequence is required to avoid future problems. The overall safety of the children in the program is our highest priority.

## GUIDELINES & PROCESS

The YMCA teaches the core values of caring, honesty respect, and responsibility. Children who attend the program are expected to follow the behavior guidelines and to interact appropriately in a group setting.

- Students are RESPONSIBLE for their actions.
- Students must RESPECT each other and the environment.
- HONESTY will be the basis for all relationships and interactions.
- Students will CARE for themselves and those around them.

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

- Staff will redirect the child to more appropriate behavior.
- Reasoning: Every effort will be made to help the child understand the inappropriateness of his/her actions and agree to an alternative 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 reasoning has been pursued and the behavior has not changed, removing the child from the activity involved for an appropriate amount of time is necessary. The denied activity should be related to the misbehavior and the removal should not exceed 15 minutes. Other duty-oriented consequences suitable to the inappropriate behavior may also be utilized at this stage.
- If a child breaks a rule that is harmful to him/herself or others, or repeatedly violates a rule, then he/she will receive a written behavior report.
- Behavior Reports: Each child will be allowed two written behavior reports after which a conference will be requested with a parent or guardian, staff on site, and the Childcare Director. The program dismissal form will be filled out and signed by the parents with the understanding that the third behavior report may result in permanent dismissal from the program.
- Child/Director Conference: When a camp counselor is not successful in correcting the behavior, the Childcare Director is consulted and may decide on longer or stricter consequences if necessary.
- Conferences: If the parent needs to be formally involved in the process, specific changes in behavior will be requested, with specific consequences for non-compliance outlines. This is usually accomplished through the use of a "Behavior Contract." Whenever possible, the child is present and heard at these conferences.

## ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY

The YMCA of the Upper Pee Dee has a zero-tolerance policy for serious behavior issues. The behaviors listed below are grounds for immediate removal from camp for the remainder of the day, and additional days as deemed necessary by YMCA Leadership. Each incident is evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the best course of action.

- Any kind of physical assault, such as hitting, kicking, biting, or pushing
- Endangering the health and safety of children and/or staff, members, and volunteers
- Inappropriate touching of other campers or sexual misconduct
- Theft, damage to, or destruction of YMCA property
- Leaving the YMCA Afterschool Enrichment program without permission
- Using profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity frequently
- Acts or threats of physical harm, mental harm or bullying
- Possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, knives, firecrackers, firearms, or explosives

## BEHAVIOR-RELATED ISSUES

In addition to behavior management procedures outlined above, parents must be aware that:

- No staff member will ever strike, swear at, abuse, or threaten with physical intimidation either a child or a parent.
- No staff member will allow a child to be struck, sworn at, abused, or physically intimidated by anyone in the program.
- No child will be allowed to continue in the program if he/she becomes a safety hazard to him/herself or others.
- No staff member will ever solicit or accept gratuities in consideration for any treatment of a child

## BEHAVIOR REPORTS

When a behavior falls outside the YMCA values and behavior guidelines, the YMCA will implement a "behavior report". This is written documentation of the behavior that occurred, what corrective action took place, and, if necessary, if a suspension from the program is needed.

Upon three behavior reports, the child will be suspended from the program for 1-5 days, depending on the severity of the infractions. Upon returning to the program, any subsequent infraction will result in an immediate five-day suspension. After a second return to the program, if an infraction occurs, the child will be dismissed from the remainder of the program. **Suspensions and expulsions are handled on a case-by-case basis based on the severity of the infraction(s) and are at the sole discretion of the Childcare Director and Childcare Development.**

# ILLNESS AND MEDICATION DURING PROGRAM

## PERMISSION TO MEDICATE

**All medication must be turned in to the Childcare Director by the parent.**



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

- Written, signed, and dated parent/ guardian consent prior to giving medicines
- All medications should be kept in the original container and labeled with the child's name.
- Medications should be stored in a locked container, inaccessible to children.
- Medication should only be used for the child for whom the medication is labeled.
- Medication should only be given in dosage specified on the label.
- A medication log will be used to show the child's name, name of medication, dosage, date, time, and name of the person administering the medication.
- Medication errors will be recorded, and parent/guardian informed immediately.
- Any unused/expired medications will be returned to the parent/guardian.
- We will only administer medications that the child has used before, to ensure no allergic reactions.

## ILLNESSES

Children are observed for health-related issues daily. If your child becomes ill, he/she will be isolated from other children, and you will be contacted to pick up the child. The YMCA is not equipped to handle ill children beyond securing their immediate comfort. A staff person will be made available to observe the child periodically. Please be sure to keep the YMCA office informed of any changes in your work, cell, or emergency phone numbers. If you cannot be reached, we will contact someone you have authorized.

- Parents will be notified if their child has been exposed to a communicable disease.
- Staff shall administer or obtain immediate treatment for a child who sustains a minor injury or insect bite. The parent will be notified.
- If a major accident or injury occurs, the staff will immediately seek professional medical attention for the child and the parents will be notified immediately. If they are not available, the emergency contact person will be notified.

For the sake of your child and others, if a child has any of the following symptoms, he/she should not be brought to the YMCA program until the symptom is absent for a period of 24 hours.

- Fever – 100 degrees orally, 101 rectally, or higher
- Severe cough
- Sore throat/strep throat
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pinkeye – tears, redness on eyelid, followed by swelling and discharge or pus
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of skin – possibly accompanied by fever
- Unusually dark, tea-colored urine – especially with fever
- Gray or white stool
- Headache or stiff neck
- Vomiting
- Severe itching of body or scalp
- Hair lice

# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

## ATTENDANCE AND PAYMENT POLICY

### **Draft Payments:**

All YMCA of the Upper Pee Dee childcare programs operate on a weekly draft payment schedule. Drafts are scheduled on the day of sign-up via credit card or EFT. This payment system is not optional unless you are paying for the entirety of the program before attending.

### **Returned Payments:**

In the event your draft payment is returned, a \$25 return fee will be added to your account for each return instance. You will be notified of any returns that occur on your account. Returned drafts and fees must be settled at the YMCA front desk within one week of notification or your child will be dismissed from the program. After three returned drafts, you will be asked to provide a new form of draft payment.

### **Discontinuing the Program:**

In the event you wish to terminate your child's attendance in a program, you must fill out the termination form at the front desk or submit in writing (in person or by email) your intention to discontinue. After submission of termination, future drafts will be stopped. It is your responsibility to ensure that your termination has been received and drafts discontinued. The YMCA will not reimburse any weekly drafts that occur after your child stops attending and before your written termination is submitted.

### **Attendance Policy:**

The YMCA does not deduct missed days from your weekly fee. Your fee pays for direct operational costs such as staffing, snacks, crafts, and other program supplies. When you enroll, you are reserving the time, space, staff, and provisions for your child whether he/she attends or not.

Your registration is for the entirety of the program with the following exceptions:

- If your child must quarantine due to COVID-19, proof of the child's or household member's positive test must be provided and a maximum of three weeks of childcare may be excused.
- If your child is absent for three days or more due to an illness, a credit for half a week's fee will be applied to the next draft payment.

### **Financial Assistance:**

Those families unable to pay the full cost of participation are encouraged to apply for YMCA Program Scholarship and/or ABC Assistance. These discounts are not applicable to field trip costs.

### **ABC Program Participants:**

- The YMCA must receive an ABC certified letter of connection before participation at grant discounted rates can begin. If you wish to participate in the program before the letter arrives, you must pay regular rates.
- The parent/guardian registering the child must accept responsibility for any fees that result from the difference between the YMCA program rate and the amount provided by ABC.
- You will be required to provide payment via weekly draft.

- Attendance is a must for children receiving ABC Program assistance. You are only allowed a few unexcused days for the year.
- If a child is absent or sick, the parent must notify the Childcare Development Director at the Hartsville YMCA and provide a doctor's excuse if applicable.
- If the ABC program drops your grant assistance at any time due to absences or ineligibility, you are responsible for any charges that incur during the time your child is in attendance.

## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

### **Parent/Child Confrontation:**

It is the policy of the YMCA of the Upper Pee Dee that no parent may confront a child in the program. If you or your child has a problem with another child in the program, please inform the staff and they will handle the situation.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect:**

By South Carolina law, the YMCA is required to report all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Darlington County Department of Social Services.

### **YMCA Child Abuse Prevention:**

The YMCA maintains a policy of child abuse prevention practices, which include procedures related to:

- Employee reference checking, hiring criteria, etc.
- Training and supervision requirements for staff
- Staff relationships with children
- Unscheduled visitation by YMCA leadership and ABC Quality
- Sex offender registry scans of all members and guests

These policies are enacted to protect children, parents and YMCA staff members from actual occurrences or child abuse as well as allegations of abuse.

### **Parent Volunteers:**

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the program, to assist the regular staff, and to complement or work on special projects as their time permits. Activities involving parents should be designed by site staff based on the individual needs of the program. As an example, parents may be included as guest speakers when the children are learning about careers or may assist in supervising program trips. Parents should always work with staff in the program. Parents should never be left alone with a child (ren) or act as a substitute for a staff person.