



YMCA Before & After School Parent Handbook

Introduction

The YMCA of the Shoals Before & After School Program is designed to provide your child with fun, constructive ways to fill their afternoons while also meeting their homework needs. We provide children ages 5-12 an opportunity to grow physically, mentally, and spiritually. We also offer full-day childcare during most school holidays, to enable parents to continue in their normal routine. Families and the community depend on us to provide wholesome opportunities for children to discover who they are and what they can achieve through engaging experiences.

Mission Statement

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

Our Purpose

- Provide quality childcare in a safe, creative, and fun environment providing opportunities and experiences, which stimulate the child's physical, social, intellectual, and emotional growth.
- Provide children with a quiet time and place in which to do their homework.
- Provide children with social interaction opportunities with peers and caring adults to cultivate old friendships and build new relationships.
- Provide children with opportunities to develop and discover new skills and abilities.
- Raise awareness of the environment and appreciation of the natural world.

Our experiences are based on the Y's Core Values of **Caring, Honesty, Responsibility and Respect**. All questions, comments or concerns regarding this program should be directed to the Youth Development Director.

Staff

The YMCA Before & After School Program is staffed with a Director, a Program Coordinator, and various Group Leaders. Each staff member is chosen for their experience, education, and love for children. All potential

employees must be able to pass a satisfactory comprehensive background check required by the State of Alabama, submit to a drug screening, and attain First Aid/CPR certification.

All YMCA Before & After School employees working directly with before and after school students must be enthusiastic, and eager to make a difference in the growing needs of children under their care. By providing quality childcare for every child, YMCA Before & After School staff promotes positive practices, gives hope, inspires dreams, and builds lasting relationships in the minds of children, families, and their communities.

Child Abuse Reporting Requirements

Child abuse is defined as “the physical injury or death inflicted upon a child by a parent or caretaker by other than accidental means.” Neglect and exploitation of a child are considered child abuse as well. The YMCA Before & After School program and its staff are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. Each staff member receives training to recognize the signs of abuse or neglect and are given explicit instructions to follow if they suspect the maltreatment of a child. Should anyone in our facility suspect or witness child abuse, the employee will notify the Department Director. The Department Director will then immediately notify the YMCA Executive Director followed by the Department of Human Resources.

Nondiscrimination Statement

It is the policy of the YMCA of Shoals to comply with all existing statutes regarding Equal Opportunity, as they relate to all program participants. Ensuring that program participation decisions are made without regard to race, color religion, gender, age, national origin, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or any other basis prohibited by statute. For more information, visit our website to learn more about Diversity and Inclusion.

Program Information

General

The YMCA Before & After School program currently serves Florence City and Lauderdale County School Systems. Florence City students have the opportunity for a morning and afternoon session. The YMCA is a designated stop on the Florence City School’s bus routes. For Lauderdale County schools an afternoon session is available. Children enrolled in these programs will receive care from qualified staff that are trained in several areas, including Child Abuse Prevention and First Aid and CPR. Participants are grouped according to grade or age and maintained at a safe and adequate ratio for supervision.

Parent Communication

The YMCA Before & After School program DOES NOT PROVIDE ONE-ON-ONE CARE. We encourage active communication and participation in all the YMCA Before & After School program events both on site and on the occasional field trip. Parent emails or handouts will be sent out throughout the school year. If you have not already done so, ask for your child’s link to join our Classroom DOJO group. It will allow you to receive announcements directly on your phone.

Parent Communication is welcome each day at pick up and drop off and conferences with the Youth Development Director are available on request.

Records

Enrollment forms and medical records for each child will be kept on site to ensure access for daily operations and emergency situations. These records are confidential and will be treated as such. All records are accessible daily by the Director and kept in a locked area when stored.

Admission

Children may only enroll for YMCA Before & After School program if/when spaces become available. All participants for the YMCA Before & After School must have a completed application for the current program on file. We will have separate registrations for Before & After School and Summer Camp. A non-refundable \$50.00 registration fee is required at time of enrollment.

Parents and guardians are required to update all information on the child's enrollment form when changes occur. To help the program maintain and provide the best care possible for each child, it is vitally important to notify the Director of medical changes, allergies, pick-up authorizations, addresses and contact numbers.

Days and Hours of Operation

The YMCA Before & After School program begins at 6:00 a.m. until the school buses arrive to take **Florence City students** to school. The afternoon program begins when the children arrive from school (**City and County**) and ends at 6:00 p.m. Children **must be picked up by 6:00 p.m.** A \$15.00 late pick up fee will be added to the account if not picked up in a timely manner.

Enrollment

The YMCA Before & After School program is offered before and after each school day. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis and shall be accompanied by a non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00. If you wish to remove your child(ren) from the YMCA Before & After School program a written 2 week notice of your intent to withdraw or remove your child(ren) must be submitted to the YMCA Before & After School office. Without the written withdrawal, fees may continue for at least the two weeks drop period.

Children with special needs

We do not discriminate in our admission policies based on race, sex, religion, place of national origin, or physical or mental disabilities. To best meet the needs of your child, we ask that you contact the YMCA Before & After School office to inform us of **ANY and ALL** special accommodations that your child may require (i.e., dietary, medical, physical, mental, etc.). If the needs of your child extend beyond the scope of before and after school staff training, The YMCA Before & After School program reserves the right to require an "official" health care plan from the child's licensed medical doctor or an IEP from school records to determine the ability of the program to render care.

Sign In and Out Procedures

Each child will be checked to the YMCA Before & After School program using our operations rosters. Children will be checked out of the program in the same manner. No child will be released to anyone under eighteen or not listed on their Authorized Pickup List.

Attendance

Once registered, weekly tuition is required whether your child(ren) attends or not. Once the YMCA Before & After School is in the possession of your child, NO ONE will be allowed to sign out the student without written authorization on the emergency contact or authorization pick up form you completed.

NOTE: In emergencies, more names can be added by contacting the Child Care office.

Parents are reminded that a telephone call can serve as authorization to pick up a child. If the party is not listed on the child's pick-up list, they will be required to provide a current photo id. To avoid any inconvenience please ensure that the release forms in our files are kept current, and that names should be added or deleted as needed.

The staff will take attendance on the buses and again at the start of the program day. If possible, please let us know if your child will not be in attendance.

It is understood that if a participant attends karate or gymnastics, a staff member will walk them to and pick them up from that program area. Spots are limited for gymnastics, and you will need to re-register monthly. Karate/Gymnastics are available as a benefit of a Membership to the Y.

Meals

Snacks are provided in the afternoon for program participants. On vacation days, participants should bring a sack lunch. We are not equipped to provide refrigeration or microwave access. Ice packs should be placed in lunches that need to remain cold.

Program Policies

Behavior/Conduct/Discipline (Children and Parents)

Just as YMCA Before & After School staff members are to treat children with courtesy, dignity and respect, children are also expected to follow the rules and regulations of the program. We try to live by 3 simple principles:

- 1. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.**
- 2. If we don't have anything nice to say, we don't say anything at all.**
- 3. Stay with your group.**

We also try to incorporate our 4 core values into everything we do:

Caring

We should always strive to use kind words and offer encouragement to others.

Honesty

We all make mistakes, admitting when we have made a mistake, taking accountability, apologizing, and learning from the situation is a continuous part of life.

Responsibility

We have a responsibility to care for each other and our surroundings. We play, eat, and clean up after ourselves and strive to leave the space cleaner than we found it.

Respect

Respect is a two-way street. We strive to create an environment where we can learn and grow by getting to know others from diverse backgrounds.

Participation in YMCA Before & After School is a privilege, not a right, and any student who is disruptive despite staff members' best efforts to work with them may be suspended or removed from the program.

Step 1: YMCA Before & After School staff will identify the negative behavior of the child and give directions for how they should behave.

Step 2: YMCA Before & After School staff will identify the negative behavior again and redirect the child to another activity or change their surroundings.

Step 3: YMCA Before & After School staff will give a final verbal warning to the child and let them know the consequence for breaking the rule again.

Step 4: YMCA Before & After School staff will alert the Director and will allow the child a time to reflect. When the time is up, the staff member will go over the negative behavior with the child and give them ideas as to how to improve their behavior.

Outcomes

First Offense	Verbal warning to child with parent's awareness (documented)
Second Offense	First write up given to parent
Third Offense	Suspension/Expulsion
Fourth Offense	Expulsion

Any act deemed dangerous to the participant or staff is grounds for immediate suspension or expulsion. The steps for the "Offenses" may be skipped depending upon the severity of the rule violations.

Just as we expect the YMCA Before & After School Staff to treat parents with dignity and respect, we expect the parents to treat the YMCA Before & After School staff accordingly. Any parent or guardian who exhibits hostile behaviors directed towards any staff member will be asked to remove their child(ren) from our program.

Transportation

For those students riding the NACOLG buses:

- Eating and/or drinking is **NOT** allowed on the buses.
- Children should speak in a whisper. Screaming/yelling can distract the driver and put everyone in danger.
- Children should stay seated with their seat belts worn correctly. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- All papers, books, notebooks, etc. should be kept in backpacks.
- **Children who repeatedly disregard the rules will not be allowed to ride the buses.**

For those riding the Florence City School buses:

- See Florence City School bus guidance. <https://www.florencek12.org/Page/1454>

Learn and Play

Our program offers a variety of outdoor and indoor physical activities, games, and sports challenges throughout the school year. All activities are designed to build teamwork, highlight individual skills, and promote team unity. The YMCA Before & After School program offers a system of educational opportunities in a center-based program that meet the needs of every child:

- Physical Education & Recreation
- Homework (Academic Reflection)
- Language & Literature
- Creativity
- Science & Nature

During academic reflection, all children will be allotted 30 minutes of time to work on homework and/or time for quiet academic reflection in a supervised setting. Staff will encourage children to tackle their most challenging assignments but cannot be expected to offer one-on-one tutorial assistance. Your child(ren) is responsible for knowing their homework assignments and bringing all necessary books, papers, etc. to the program each day. The YMCA is not responsible for the school supplies needed for your child(ren's) homework.

The YMCA Before & After School program prohibits the use of electronic devices during program hours unless utilized for homework assistance. Any electronic devices used inappropriately will be collected by the staff and returned to the parent/guardian at pick up time that day. Continued or inappropriate abuse of this policy may result in suspension and/or expulsion from the YMCA Before & After School program.

YMCA Before & After School is not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic devices or accessories.

Payment: Policies and Procedures

- YMCA Before & After School payments are required WEEKLY if student is registered. Payments are due each Friday prior to service.
- Fees for EACH participant are considered full price until supporting documentation specifies a reduction.
- There are no refunds or pro-rating for fees, absences, partial weeks, or emergency closings.
- **Tuition accounts more than two weeks behind may incur a \$15.00 late fee. Accounts over four weeks behind may be removed from the program until balance is paid or a payment plan has been worked out with the Youth Development Director.**

Amendments to fees are authorized by the YMCA Before & After School administration ONLY.

FEES

Childcare payments are due WEEKLY every Friday prior to the week of service. A \$15.00 late fee may be assessed for payments not received by the due date.

YMCA Before & After School fees are due weekly even if your child is not in attendance.

Your child's enrollment in any other YMCA program (i.e., Vacation Days, Holiday Camp, Summer Camp, etc.) will not be permitted until the account is current. If your child is removed from the program, a new \$50.00 registration fee must be paid before being re-enrolled. Three (3) removals for nonpayment will result in permanent removal from YMCA Before & After School program for the remainder of the school term. Reenrollment may be limited, and your child may result in being placed on the waiting list.

YMCA Before & After School operates on a first-come, first serve basis and spaces are limited.

Weekly Fees	<u>Full</u>
Member Rate	\$60
Non-member Rate	\$75

Fees for **EACH** participant are considered full tuition until supporting documentation specifies a reduction.

The qualifications for reduced rates for YMCA Before & After School fees are based on the direct determination of income and number of people in your household. A separate Financial Assistance Application and income documentation are required to determine eligibility for reduced fees.

Children should be picked up from the YMCA BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL program by 6:00 p.m. For every child not picked up by 6:00 p.m., a late pick up fee of \$15.00 will be added to each child's account beyond the close of business.

At 6:00 p.m., the Childcare staff will begin making calls to parents or guardians. If a child has not been picked up by 6:05 p.m., the Staff will make attempts to contact the person(s) listed as emergency contacts from the child's registration form.

If we have been unsuccessful in contacting anyone, we will be left with no choice but to contact Law Enforcement or DHR to help us locate an authorized person to pick up the child(ren).

Any household with a repeated pattern of late pick-ups may be removed from the program.

Please keep your child's registration information and emergency contacts updated.

Health and Safety

Injury Procedures

YMCA Before & After School staff members shall receive training in first aid and CPR. In case of a minor accident, the staff member in charge will supervise the care of the child or children involved. In the event of a serious medical emergency, the YMCA Before & After School Director shall telephone EMS for assistance and shall notify parents immediately thereafter. Parents are asked to ensure that all the information on their children's YMCA Before & After School medical forms is correct and complete; and to notify the YMCA Before & After School Director of any changes or special conditions that may affect their children's participation in YMCA Before and After School.

If a child has a minor injury that does not need medical attention, an Accident Report will be issued to the parent. The report lists what happened and what injury the child sustained. Parents will be contacted before pick-up time if the injury is noticeable upon sight.

Care of Sick Child

If a child becomes ill during YMCA Before & After School program hours, they will wait with the Director until arrangements can be made for them to leave the site. If a child exhibits a fever of 101 degrees or higher and one other symptom (vomiting, diarrhea, headache, earache, etc.) the parent will be notified and asked to pick their child up immediately. The child cannot return to the YMCA Before and After School program for 24 hours after the symptoms are gone.

Medication

Under special circumstances, the YMCA Before & After School Director may administer prescription drugs only. Those drugs must be in the original container with a pharmacist's label bearing (a) the name of the child, (b) the name of the prescribing physician, and (c) clear directions for administering the medication. The child's

parent or guardian must provide medication to the YMCA Before & After School Director in person and must fill out a special form. Parents and guardians are reminded never to send any medication with their children.

Medication forms are available for children who need to take prescription medication during YMCA Before & After School hours. The form is to be completed and signed by the parents. It indicates the type of medication the child is to be given and the dosage. (Dosage must be the same as package directions). A letter must accompany any long-term medications for the participant's medical physician. When the medication is given, the staff person will document it on the form and list any adverse reactions seen over the next hour. Sick children will be separated from the group until the parents arrive.

Transportation

The YMCA Before & After School program shall provide transportation from designated schools to the YMCA in partnership with NACOLG and the Florence City Schools Transportation Department.

Parking

Drop-off/Pick-up for the YMCA Before & After School Program will be accessible under the Pavilion at the Youth Center. Parents are asked to avoid obstructing the drop-off/pick-up lanes. Parking spaces are available for any parent who wishes to come in and pay or meet with staff. Please remember the exit from the Youth Center is **RIGHT TURN ONLY**.

Fire/Tornado Drills

Emergency drills shall be conducted periodically to familiarize students with procedures and exits to be used in an emergency. Directions shall be posted in all classrooms and YMCA Before & After School spaces.

Emergency Closing

The YMCA Before & After School program will close during severe weather emergencies which coincide with the forced closing of Florence City and/or Lauderdale County schools. Listen to local broadcast media for announcements of emergency closings. **If the school closes, the YMCA Before & After School program will be closed as well.**

Emergency Relocation

Should an emergency arise such as power or water outage that renders the facility disabled for more than 1 hour, parents will be contacted to pick up their children early. Should an immediate threat be detected, the children will be moved to an alternative location on the property and the parents contacted to arrange for pick up from the new location.

If you have any issues, comments, or concerns please contact the Youth Development Director at 256-246-9622.