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FOR HEALTHY LIVING
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EXPLORE**

LET'S GO!

**Universal Preschool and Wrap Around Care
SOUTHWEST YMCA**

SOUTHWEST YMCA

Universal Preschool & Wrap Around Care Handbook

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WELCOME TO THE YMCA UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL PROGRAM & WRAP AROUND CARE

Thank you for choosing the YMCA Universal Preschool Program (UPK) and Wrap Around Care. The YMCA is committed to making a positive impact on the lives of the children and youth while helping to prepare them for kindergarten.

UPK BRANCH INFORMATION

Southwest YMCA

SRC Arena at Onondaga Community College
4585 West Seneca Turnpike, Syracuse

OUR MISSION

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

WHO WE ARE

The YMCA is a nonprofit organization governed by a Board of Directors that is made up of concerned and interested local community leaders. The Y is supported solely by those who choose to join and take part in the many programs offered as well as those who choose to make voluntary contributions.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

Joined together by a shared commitment to nurture the potential of kids, promote healthy living and foster a sense of social responsibility, members and staff believe that lasting personal and social change can come about only when we all work together to invest in our kids, our health and our neighbors.

OUR COMMITMENT

At the Y, 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. That's why we offer financial assistance to families who need help paying for membership or programs.

Our Annual Giving Campaign raises money for financial assistance to ensure that nobody is turned away due to an inability to pay. To apply for financial assistance or to make a donation, visit the Y today or go to www.ymcacny.org. We handle all applications confidentially.

NYS OCFS LICENSING

Our program is governed by the Office of Child and Family Services. We adhere to all the State of New York Licensing Regulations, Policies and Procedures. If you have any questions regarding OCFS regulations, please contact your UPK Director: 315-498-2474.

OUR STAFF

The quality and effectiveness of YMCA 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 process in ensuring the success and integrity of the children's programs. Staff are hired based on experience working with children, educational background and the ability to positively represent our four core Y values. Our staff receives medical clearances, background checks and reference checks through YMCA and OCFS agencies.

SPECIAL NEEDS AND INCLUSION

The YMCA shall accept into the program all children who are able to participate within the regular activities and guidelines as part of a group with a ratio of 8 children to 1 staff. The YMCA will not exclude any child with a disability from the full and equal enjoyment of its services, unless the child poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others in the program.

In accordance with the requirements of Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act and applicable state disability law, the YMCA will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of disability. The YMCA will consider reasonable accommodations and/or modifications to its policies and procedures as necessary to allow children with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in this program, unless the accommodations or modifications would pose an undue hardship or fundamentally alter the nature of the program.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Illness

If your child becomes ill while in the program, they will be isolated from the other children and you will be contacted to pick them up. The YMCA is not equipped to handle ill children beyond securing their immediate comfort. Pick up by an authorized person shall be within 30 minutes. Please review the Return to YMCA Program policy for when your child may return.

Lice

In the event that your child has live lice while at the site, we will call you to pick up your child within 30 minutes. Children may return if there are no live nits present after 24 hours.

Medication

If your child is required to take a medication during program, a written medication consent (OCFS document) must be completed by the child's physician and parent prior to starting program. We also are required to have the medication in the original box with the original prescription label. Medication forms and medications must match exactly and be provided prior to the start date of the program.

Medical Emergencies

If your child is injured during program hours, the staff member in charge will take all steps necessary to obtain emergency medical care as warranted.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, staff will provide first aid, contact parent/guardian immediately, contact emergency contacts if necessary and call 911.

Child Abuse Prevention

All YMCA staff are mandated reporters and required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services.

Dress for Weather and Play

Please dress your child in washable clothes that are appropriate for weather and daily activities. For the safety of all participants, sneakers are required to be worn for physical activities in the gym, field, or playground spaces.

Emergency Drills

Our program will conduct a monthly evacuation drill, along with semi-annual shelter-in-place drills. Drop-off and pick-up during these drills are restricted. In the event a situation arises that is not a drill, families will be notified immediately of any change in location or situation.

HEALTH & SAFETY (CONTINUED)

Nutrition

Our Y Universal Preschool program participates in the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) programs. We provide a healthy snack during our afternoon wrap care program and on special registration days such as vacation days. Water is served with each meal as well. If your child would like to bring their own snack from home, we would prefer it to be a peanut/tree nut free snack. Each day and during days off, we will ask you to send a nutritious lunch that does not need to be refrigerated or re-heated.

If your child has any food allergies or special dietary needs, please let us know on the back of your child's registration form.

COVID-19

YMCA programs will follow all guidelines from the county, our Association Administration, New York State OCFS, and local Department of Health guidelines. Additional information and updates will be provided when necessary.

Return to School/YMCA Program

In accordance with CDC guidance and the Y's Return to Program plans, the YMCA UPK program will follow CDC guidance for allowing a student or staff member to return to school after exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. This plan is subject to change based on CDC, Health Department, or Y Administration guidelines. Please contact the UPK office if you have questions.

A child may return to their YMCA program when:

1. If they have been diagnosed with another condition and have a healthcare provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) written note stating they are clear to return to school - AND - the child is fever-free, without the use of fever-reducing medication, for at least 24 hours. Documentation from the healthcare provider must be e-mailed to and reviewed by the YMCA UPK Administration before the child may rejoin the YMCA program.
2. If a person is diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider based on a test or their symptoms or does not get a COVID-19 test but has symptoms, they should stay at home until:
 - It has been at least ten days since the individual first had symptoms;
 - It has been at least three days since the individual has had a fever (without using fever-reducing medicine) - AND-
 - It has been at least three days since the individual's symptoms improved, including cough and shortness of breath.

Note: if a person was placed in isolation by the Health Department, in addition to the above criteria, a release must be submitted and reviewed prior to return to school.

** All criteria is subject to change based on newly released guidelines from local and federal officials.

WHAT TO BRING EVERY DAY

- Backpack
- Blanket or sheet for cot for nap time (optional: stuffed animal)
- Water Bottle
- Lunch (nothing that needs refrigeration or reheating)
- Sunscreen & Bug Spray

Please be sure to label all items with your child's first and last name

TOYS AND ITEMS FROM HOME

To prevent distraction, lost or broken items, toys or other items from home are not permitted, unless it is part of your child's specific learning or behavior plan. We are not responsible for lost or stole items brought to the UPK program. Please connect with the UPK Director if your child requires a comfort item or fidget to be successful in program.

PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

Parents or caregivers must sign their child out each day. The sign out sheet is a record of your child's attendance. For your child's safety, only parents or people you designate as Authorized Pick-Up/Emergency Contacts may pick up your child from the program. You may add additional people by submitting their name, phone number, and full address to the UPK office. All pick-up people must be at least 16 years old.

Contact Information Changes

If you experience a change of address, phone number or email, please submit your changes in writing to the UPK office as soon as possible. In the event of an emergency, it is critical that we are able to reach you.

Divorce/Separation

If a non-custodial, biological parent arrives to pick up their child and they are not listed on the form (whether or not a court order is on file), we will:

1. Call the parent/guardian listed on the registration form
2. Explain to the non-custodial, biological parent that we cannot release the child to them and explain the release procedures to the non-custodial parent.
3. Call the police to release the child to the police. The police will then confirm the identity of the non-custodial, biological parent.

This scenario can place all parties in a very difficult situation. Often times, the person who will have the most difficult time is the child. Please discuss these implications with non-custodial parent, so that they will not show up at the program without prior arrangements. All court orders must be provided to the UPK office when updated to ensure appropriate information is at each site.

Concerns for Safety

Safety is our number one priority. If we have reason for concern regarding the safety of a child's release to a parent or other adult, we may call the police. Cause for this course of action includes:

1. Parent/adult suspected to be "under the influence".
2. Parent/adult is abusive or threatening to the child, our staff, or any persons present.

If there is a concern for the safety of our program participants, please contact the UPK Director immediately.

TRANSPORTATION

YMCA staff are not permitted to transport children in their personal vehicles.

FAMILY/CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT

Parent support is critical to the success of the program. We have an open door policy and our families are encouraged to visit our program at any time. Please be respectful of the children's routines and program activities, as well as our staff's need to be with the children. We encourage you to schedule a time with the UPK Director to discuss your child's progress.

Newsletter

You will receive a monthly newsletter outlining important information about the YMCA UPK Program, including upcoming special activities and days off.

Family Events

Family events are held throughout the school year and provide an opportunity for families to spend time together, meet new friends and have fun.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Our first step in discipline is prevention. Our staff are trained to be proactive to prevent behaviors prior to the trigger.

- Staff will be proactive in preventing negative behaviors.
- Staff will address the behavior in a calm manner and redirect the child to a more positive behavior. Staff will discuss the occurrence and strategies implemented with parents at pick up.
- If behaviors continue, staff will complete a behavior reflection with the child to encourage alternative strategies for a better outcome. Staff will share this with the parents.
- After 3 behavior occurrences, staff will request a meeting with the parent to discuss the next step. The staff, parents, and child will determine an action plan to outline the steps everyone will take to create a positive experience.
- All staff will do their utmost to support students so that they may remain in school. Behavior that occurs during wrap around hours that exceeds 2 behavior modification reports may result in suspension.

*The above steps can be bypassed based on severity of the actions and behavior.

**PLEASE REVIEW ALL POLICIES WITH YOUR FAMILY AND ADDRESS ANY QUESTIONS WITH THE UPK OFFICE.
ALL POLICIES IN THIS HANDBOOK ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE YMCA UPK
ADMINISTRATION.**

UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL (UPK)

OUR CURRICULUM

The YMCA UPK program reinforces our core values in a caring atmosphere. The classroom curriculum we use is The Creative Curriculum which incorporates learning in fun and creative ways. Our day will consist of circle time, themed activities, creative and interesting enrichment centers, music and movement, story time, and outdoor time.

Y Values

Caring • Honesty • Respect • Responsibility

ENROLLMENT & REGISTRATION

Applications for enrollment must be turned into the Westhill School District. Students are selected through an anonymous draft process without regard to race, religion, sex, ability, gender/gender identification, sexual orientation or national origin.

Registration of approved applications is required for attendance. Registration is online at YMCACNY.ORG. Only families that have been selected by the Westhill school district will be permitted to attend. Registration without approval through the district will not guarantee a spot in the UPK program.

ATTENDANCE

The UPK Program follows the Westhill School Districts policy on attendance. Full day attendance is expected of all students enrolled in the UPK program. To ensure your child's safety, if your child will not be attending our program that day, or will be arriving late, please call and notify the UPK staff before the scheduled arrival time.

SCHOOL CLOSURES & IMPORTANT DATES

The UPK program will follow the Westhill school calendar for week breaks and holidays only. Vacation weeks are a separate registration. A \$5 non-refundable, non-transferable deposit per day is due at the time of registration. The remainder of the fees are due on the 1st of the month of care. Written withdrawals must be submitted in writing via email to the UPK office by the 15th of the month in order to be removed from the next month's billing. Families will be responsible for the next month's full fees if cancellations are received after the 15th of the month prior to the vacation.

Vacation Weeks & Holiday Breaks

Our UPK Program will follow the Westhill District Calendar for closures including vacations and holidays. Full day care is available for students on these days. This care requires a separate registration and has a fee associated with it.

Half-Days

Our UPK Program follows the Westhill District Calendar for half-days.

Snow Days and School Delays

We follow Westhill Districts decision to close schools. In the instance of closure due to weather, Snow Day Programming will be available to students. This requires a registration and has a fee associated with it.

MONITORING & SUPERVISING QUIET TIME

Children must be directly & actively supervised at all times. During downtime or quiet time, participants must remain in the line of site of staff at all times. Staff will position themselves in a way that they can supervise/monitor all children within the program space. Staff should refrain from having their back to children at all times. Staff/Child ratios will be maintained at all times.

EARLY DROP OFF/LATE PICK UP

Students that are not enrolled in Wrap Around Care should not be dropped off before 8:55 am and should be picked up no later than 3:05 pm. If students arrive early, caregivers will need to remain in the hallway with that student until 8:55 am. If students are not picked up by 3:05 pm, a \$15 fee will be added for every 15 minutes after dismissal a child is in their teachers' care. If a child is picked up late 3 times, the family may be asked to register for PM care for their child.

WRAP AROUND CARE

The Southwest YMCA provides wrap around care for UPK students. This care has a fee associated with it and families must register for this service separate from their UPK Registration. Wrap Around UPK Care begins at 7:00 am and goes until 5:00 pm.

REGISTRATION

Open registration begins each year on the 3rd Wednesday of February. To register online, please visit www.ymcacny.org. A \$50 non-refundable, non-transferable deposit per program is required at the time of registration. Any registration fees received after August 1st will have an additional \$20 non-refundable application fee. Fees vary and will depend on the school site. The UPK/Child Care office requires 3-5 business days to process your registration before your child may attend. A 15% discount is offered for any sibling registered in the same program.

PAYMENTS

Payments are due on the 1st of the month. Payments can be made through automatic payment, online using a credit card or bank account, or at the membership desk using check, cash or credit card. Access your online account to schedule or modify payments. You are responsible for updating your payment method prior to the due date if you receive a new card number or expiration date. No payments are accepted at our school sites. Half, Vacation, and Snow Days are separate registrations.

DSS Payments

DSS payments are due on the 1st month for all weeks in the month. Before DSS parent-pay portions can be approved, the YMCA must receive a contract from DSS outlining the parent payment. If authorization is discontinued the parent is responsible for the full month's payment.

Late Pick-Up

Our program promptly ends at 5:00 pm. Please arrange for an alternative pick-up person to pick up your child and notify staff immediately if you are unable to pick up by 5:00 pm. If you arrive after 5:00 pm, your card or bank account on file will be charged a \$15 late pick up fee per 15 minute interval. Late payment fees will be charged to your billing method on file and you will receive an e-mailed receipt. Excessive late pick-ups (more than 3) may result in suspension or termination of services. If your child remains at the site until 6:00 pm with no contact from the parents/guardians the child will be turned over to the local authorities.

Late Payment

A late fee of \$20 per account will be assessed to you after the due date (1st of the month.) Late payment fees will be charged to your billing method on file and you will receive an e-mailed receipt. If full payment has not been made by the 15th of the month, your Wrap Around Care services will be suspended. Excessive late payments (3 or more) may result in termination of your services.

Tax Statements and FLEX Reimbursement

You may access your full account, including record of registrations, payments, and tax statements on your online account at ymcacny.org/myaccount. Paper tax statements will not be mailed. You are responsible for maintaining your receipts for FLEX reimbursement. Please contact your UPK/Child Care office if you need a reimbursement signed.

WITHDRAWING FROM PROGRAM

Withdrawals from Before and After School programs, Half Days and Vacation Days must be submitted in writing via e-mail to the UPK/Child Care office by the 15th of the month in order to be removed from the next month's billing. Any cancellations received after the 15th will be processed the following month and families will be responsible for the next month's full fees. Monthly fees will not be prorated.

Credits/Refunds

The YMCA Wrap Around Care program does not issue refunds or credits, unless overpayment of fees occurs or the program is canceled. Refunds or prorates will not be given if your child is out of program for illness, suspended or terminated from the program or during a suspension period from school.

VACATION DAYS

Your Y branch may hold a Vacation Day during full days off during the school year. UPK participants receive priority registration for Vacation Days. Non-participants (children not currently enrolled in before or after school care) may be available two weeks prior to the date of care. Non-participants must select the Non-participant rate during registration and complete the Non-participant registration form for the appropriate branch. If the non-participant rate option is not available online, please inquire with the UPK/Child Care office.

HALF DAYS

The Half Day program will operate from the time school dismisses until 5:00 pm at the child's typical after school location. Wrap Around Care participants receive priority registration for Half Days. Non-participants (children not currently enrolled in before or after school care) may be available two weeks prior to the date of care. Non-participants must select the Non-participant rate during registration and complete the Non-participant registration form for the appropriate branch. If the non-participant rate option is not available online, please inquire with the UPK/Child Care office.

WHAT TO BRING ON HALF OR VACATION DAYS

Your child will need a healthy bagged lunch, sneakers, a water bottle, and weather appropriate clothing. Some sites offer swim time during their day off programs. If this is the case for your local program, please pack a bathing suit and towel in a separate bag, if your child chooses to swim. Please label everything!

SNOW DAYS AND SCHOOL DELAYS

Some Wrap Around Care programs are able to provide care on days where school is canceled due to inclement weather. Please refer to your branch's inclement weather plan for more information on how to register. Additional fees for snow days may apply. If Onondaga Community College closes campus, our Snow Day and School Delay programs will not run.

EMERGENCY CLOSING PROCEDURES

Due to the Southwest YMCA's location on the OCC Campus, the branch follows the guidance set forth by OCC regarding emergency closures. On days when OCC issues a closure of campus, all YMCA programming ends by 12:30 pm and the branch will close.

ENDING CARE

We reserve the right to end your child's enrollment for the following reasons:

1. If you pick up your child after the program closes more than three times.
2. If you fail to pay your fees on a timely basis for two consecutive months.
3. If there are consistent disciplinary occurrences with your child that puts other children and/or program staff at risk physically and/or emotionally.
4. If Parent/Guardian is abusive or threatening to staff or program participants.