



# **CAPITAL AREA YMCA 2021-2022 PARENT HANDBOOK**

## **Ages Pre-K 3 through Grade 7**



**431 Pennington Avenue, Trenton, NJ  
609-599-9622  
[www.capitalymca.org](http://www.capitalymca.org)**

## CAPITAL AREA YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

The Capital Area YMCA is a charitable, not-for-profit community organization dedicated to enriching the spirit, mind and body and improving the quality of life. We create and deliver values-based programs that draw their inspiration from our Judeo-Christian heritage. We serve people of all ages, races and creeds, with an emphasis on families and youth.

## WELCOME TO THE YMCA AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM!

The Capital Area YMCA is pleased to welcome you to our School-Age Child Care Program. We are so happy that you would entrust your most precious possessions, your children, with us. This booklet will hopefully answer many of your questions that you might have regarding the program. If you should have any questions that are not addressed in this manual, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our door is always open.

## YMCA SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE MISSION

To promote the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility in a safe, friendly & nurturing environment that allows children the opportunity to develop to their greatest potential academically, socially and spiritually.

The Capital Area YMCA is devoted to children. Our goal is to help children develop to their fullest potential in a safe and positive environment, as well as support and strengthen the family unit.

The YMCA is a value-based association. Therefore, everything we do encourages and develops your child's confidence, self-esteem, sense of community, and leadership skills. As part of our character development program, we strive to teach caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

## FOUR CORE VALUES

The Four Core Values were introduced by the YMCA of the USA in the mid 1990's. These assets were put in place in order to teach children the difference between right and wrong. We stress the high importance of these values every day in all of our camps.

**Honesty:** Being honest, dependable & loyal.

**Respect:** Living the Golden Rule, accepting others, showing courtesy and manners.

**Responsibility:** Being accountable, doing one's best.

**Caring:** Being kind, compassionate & understanding, showing love and charity to others.

## YMCA OFFICE STAFF & SITE LOCATIONS

### CAPITAL AREA YMCA

Attn: Victoria Gist  
431 Pennington Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08618

### Victoria Gist

School Age Child Care Director  
vgist@capitalymca.org  
609.599.9622 extension 218

## SITE CELL PHONE AND COMMUNICATION

Please use the Front Desk phone number (609.599.9622 extension 201) in case of emergencies, changes in your child's daily schedule (including the reporting of absences) or if you are running late for pick-up. All site cell phone numbers will be provided to you upon registration or can be found on the YMCA website: [www.capitalymca.org](http://www.capitalymca.org).



## **PROGRAM INFORMATION: A to Z**

### **ABSENCES FROM THE PROGRAM**

Please call the Site Director and YMCA Office before 2:30 pm if your child will not be attending the program for any reason when your child is present at school for that day. The site cell phone voicemail is checked daily so you may call anytime, 24 hours a day. Please do not send in notes to your child's teacher to notify us of their absence. If your child is sent home from school for illness or any other reason, you are still responsible to call as an absentee.

If your child is sent home from school due to illness or any other reason, they are not permitted at SACC for that day.

Attendance is taken every day by the Site Director. School attendance sheets are picked up from the school's office prior to the start of After School, so each site is aware what children were absent from school that day who would regularly attend the program.

### **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION**

The After School Program is offered at all listed sites beginning at school dismissal and ends at 6pm each day. Each parent/guardian or designated person must sign out their child when they arrive for pick up. Please see the "release of children" policy below for more information.

### **BABYSITTING**

YMCA staff shall not socialize with children enrolled in YMCA programs outside of approved YMCA activities, including babysitting or transporting children. Immediate disciplinary action will be taken by the YMCA toward YMCA staff if a violation is discovered. PLEASE DO NOT ASK STAFF TO BABYSIT!

All payments are due by the 15th day of the previous month. Late payments will result in a disruption of your child's attendance at SACC.

In the event of illness, vacation or other absences such as other after school activities, please contact the after school site by 2:30pm by leaving a voicemail or speak to the director. No credit or refund will be given for missed days.

The After School Program ends each day at 6pm - late pick up will result in a charge to your account. The fee for late pick up is \$15 per 15 minutes beginning at 6:01pm.

Monthly tuition is the same for every month that school is in session, regardless of the number of days on the school calendar. There will be no reduced fees for months with fewer school days (November, December, March/April & June).

The Capital Area YMCA offers a financial assistance program to families who meet our qualification guidelines. For a copy of the financial assistance application and guidelines, please call the Membership Desk at the YMCA.

Parents of a child who is enrolled in outside subsidy programs must complete all required paperwork on time prior to starting the before or after school program. If monthly payments are not made, children may not be accepted into the Program.

Payments may be made in cash, check, credit card, or electronic funds draft. (If we have your credit card or EFT authorization on file, you will be drafted on or around the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month). Payments can be made at the YMCA Membership Desk at any point. Payments will not be accepted on site by before or after school staff.

Payments may also be mailed to:  
Capital Area YMCA  
Attn: Victoria Gist, School Age Child Care Director  
431 Pennington Avenue  
Trenton, NJ 08618

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are special days for children and can be celebrated in a variety of ways. Parents can make arrangements with our staff to bring a special snack to celebrate with the group. Invitations to parties outside the YMCA and Before/After School program can be given out at the Site if the **entire group** is to be invited.

## BULLYING POLICY

As defined by the New Jersey Coalition for Bullying Awareness and Prevention, "Bullying is an act or threat that is unprovoked, repeated, aggressive, intended to cause fear, distress, harm, may be physical, verbal, or psychological in nature or combination, and may be bias/prejudice. Acts of bullying may include name calling, slurs, epithets, put-downs, taunts, teasing, bodily harm, hitting, kicking, tripping, shoving, taking or damaging personal property, saying/writing inappropriate things, starting rumors, public humiliation, deliberate exclusion and coerced actions." (New Jersey Coalition for Bullying Awareness & Prevention)

Any child observed bullying another child or children will have their parents notified along with the child(ren) being bullied by the YMCA staff. If the problem persists, the YMCA may remove the child who has committed the act or acts of bullying from the program.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the site or not, is required by the State law to report the concern immediately to the State Child Abuse Hotline, 1-877-NJ-ABUSE. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at 609-292-0422 or go to [www.nj.gov/dcf](http://www.nj.gov/dcf) and select Publications.

## CANCELLATION, REFUNDS, AND CREDITS

If you choose to stop enrollment, a written request must be sent at least seven (7) days in advance of the beginning of the following month. Written notice can be made through the Program Change Form available from the YMCA Membership Desk. No credits or refunds can be issued without 7 days written notice. Accounts will be charged accordingly if 7 days written notice is not given to the YMCA office. Staff at school sites will not accept any cancelation requests.

## CHANGES TO REGISTRATION

You may only change your schedule once a month. If you switch your days more than once a month, you will be charged a \$20 fee. A Program Change form is available on our YMCA website and at our Membership Desk. To change their enrollment, this form must be

filled out and returned. All changes must be received at least seven (7) days prior to the beginning of the effected month.

## DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR

It is the goal of our YMCA to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment for all participants. Children are expected to exhibit YMCA Core Values, follow basic behavior guidelines and to interact appropriately in a group setting. Please remember that you are your child's biggest role model. Discipline is viewed by our staff as a teaching opportunity. Our goal is to teach children the kind of self-control that results in appropriate, cooperative behavior.

The YMCA believes that we should always be positive with our children. Children respond and cooperate when they feel good about themselves. Learning to be responsible for oneself and one's own actions is a basic need of all children. Positive discipline involves correcting behavior rather than punishing the child. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual and the group. If inappropriate behavior develops, staff will encourage the child to verbalize his/her feelings and help develop an understanding of why certain behavior is not appropriate. If inappropriate behavior continues, we will try to redirect the child to a new activity to change the focus. If the behavior still continues, the child will be seated away from the group/activity.

Under no circumstances will we use any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, humiliating or frightening treatment in our programs. Our aim is to help each child develop self-control and self-esteem while learning independence and respect for themselves and others.

Any child who does not behave in an appropriate manner may experience the following consequences:

1. Warning ..... 1st Offense
2. Removal of privileges ..... 2nd Offense
3. Supervisor/Parent Conference ..... 3rd Offense
4. Possible Suspension or Expulsion ..... 4th Offense

When a child does not follow the behavior guidelines, the following steps will be taken. These steps are progressive and assume that behavior problems continue to occur:

- Staff will redirect the child to more appropriate behavior.
- The child will be reminded of the behavior guidelines



and rules, and a discussion will take place regarding the child's behavior.

- Time outs will be used, when needed. Staff will discuss appropriate behavior and will then allow the child to return to the activity.
- The parent/guardian will be notified of the problem through a written form. Written documentation will identify the behavior problem, what provoked the problem, and all corrective actions attempted.
- Supplemental Behavior Contracts will be written to address specific problems and solutions to the problems.
- A conference with the parent/guardian, staff & Site Director will occur to determine appropriate action.
- If the problem persists, a conference will occur with the parent/guardian, child, staff and Program Director. The YMCA Senior Program Director will have all documentation and conference notes for review. Future participation may require counseling.
- If a child's behavior at any time threatens the immediate safety of self, other children or staff, the parent/guardian will be notified and expected to pick up the child immediately – suspension from the program may be warranted.
- If a problem persists and a child continues to disrupt the program, the YMCA reserves the right to suspend the child from the program.
- Expulsion from the program will be considered in extreme situations

The following behaviors are unacceptable and may result in the immediate suspension of a child for the remainder of the current day and/or further time period:

- Endangering or threatening to endanger the health and safety of others, self, children, staff or volunteers.
- Stealing or damaging YMCA, host site, or personal property.
- Leaving the program or boundaries as set by staff without permission.
- Continuous disruption of the program
- Refusal to follow the behavior guidelines of the program.
- Using profanity, vulgarity or obscenities
- Acting in a lewd manner

While the fore mentioned is the general outline of our behavior procedures, the YMCA reserves the right to ask parents to find alternative arrangements for their child without prior notification, as deemed necessary

for the safety of staff and/or program participants, not limited to the fore mentioned behaviors.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

The after school program will operate on all scheduled early dismissals from school as established by the district calendar. The program will end at the regularly scheduled time of 6:00 pm.

Families who require care on early dismissal days not on their child(ren)'s schedule days of care may purchase drop in passes to cover the date of care. Two drop in passes are required for one day of early dismissal care.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

See "Weather Related Closing Policy."

### **EMERGENCY/NATURAL DISASTER PLAN**

In the event a natural disaster occurs, our goal is to keep children safe and calm. The YMCA Director along with each Site Director will determine the safest plan of action. The staff will always keep the student's emergency information with them at all times. Our designated area of safety for all sites in the event we need to evacuate a facility is the grass fields/playground areas. Our designated area of safety for all sites in the event we need to take cover indoors is the appropriate gymnasiums.

You may want to consider making arrangements with a friend or relative who works or lives close to the area to pick up your child in case of a disaster. Their names must be included on the emergency contact list on your Emergency/Health Information Form. Remember, they must have a Photo ID and they must be at least 18 years old. Remember, making plans prior to emergencies can expedite the safe release of your child. Closure due to a natural disaster is at the discretion of the Senior Director, or the Executive Director. If questionable situations arrive, please call the Capital Area YMCA at 609-599-9622. If an immediate closure is deemed appropriate, the Capital Area YMCA will contact parents immediately via phone and email, as well as post further information on our website at [Capitalymca.org](http://Capitalymca.org).

Please remember, no credits will be given for absences due to family trips, holidays, vacations, disasters, emergencies, or days we are scheduled to be closed.

## ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

Registration is on a first come, first serve basis per licensing capacity. Returning children must re-register each year. There will be no exceptions to this policy. When a program fills to capacity, a waiting list will be established.

Proper forms must be completed in full and handed in to the Membership Desk three business days before your child's start date or care will not be provided. These include: Child's health history, child's personal history, authorized pick-up form and the parent/guardian sign off sheet.

After School programs start the first day of school and end on the last day of school. Please let your child's classroom teacher know that your child is in our program by sending them a note stating the days that your child attends the YMCA Program.

## ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY

All activities are deemed age appropriate and safe for each group. We ask that each child be able to be self-sufficient. Self-sufficient is defined as: children are able to eat on their own, use the restroom, and change independently. Assistance may be provided if needed under certain circumstances.

The Capital Area YMCA will accept children with special needs into our programs and make a reasonable effort to accommodate the child without fundamentally altering the child care program. The Capital Area YMCA provides group child care. If a child requires a one-on-one aide during the school day, one will need to be provided for the after school program. The YMCA is not able to provide personal assistants. Please speak with the YMCA Director prior to registration to discuss the needs of your child and the level of care we could provide within our scope.

Our center is required to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169(NJSA 10:5-1 et seq), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 USC 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at 609-292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for 609-292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an

ADA claim at 1-800-514-0301 (voice) or 14-800-514-0383 (TTY).

## EXPULSION POLICY

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from a center:

### Immediate causes for expulsion:

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

### Parental Actions for child's expulsion:

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including all health records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Verbal abuse to staff.

### Child's Actions for child's expulsion:

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting
- If a child is in possession of and/or using tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, firearms, knives, explosives or any other weapon.

### A Child will not be expelled:

- If a child's parent has made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding the center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements.
- If a child's parent reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center.
- If a child's parent has questioned the center regarding policies and procedures.
- Without giving the parent sufficient time to make other child care arrangement.

### Proactive actions that can be taken in order to prevent expulsion:

- Staff will try to redirect children from negative behavior

- Staff will reassess classroom environment, appropriate activities, and supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Child will be given verbal warnings.
- Child will be given time to regain control.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be document and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/Guardian will be notified verbally.
- Parent/Guardian will be given written copies of disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.
- The staff and parent/guardian will have a conference to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
- The parent may be given literature or resources regarding methods of improving behavior.

At no time will swearing, abusive language or physical violence be allowed by children, staff, volunteers or parents. In addition, the YMCA strictly enforces all rules and regulations set by the local school or host sites.

Parents are responsible for any damage imposed by their child to the program area, YMCA property, activity grounds, appropriate schools, buses or other YMCA activity areas.

Our sites must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

In most cases, the After School Program will not offer any type of field trip activities throughout the school year. If this policy changes for any of the sites, we will inform all parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

### **FUNDRAISING**

During our program year, we will run fundraising events to benefit the Capital Area YMCA's Annual Giving Campaign – our financial assistance program.

Participation is on a voluntary basis, but proceeds directly benefit all program participants.

The needs are great, but there's a way you can help. By making a donation to the YMCA, you help the us provide membership and programs to kids and families who might not otherwise be able to afford them, helping to improve their lives and the quality of life in our community.

Contributions to the YMCA's ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN ensure that no child or family is turned away because of the inability to pay. Each year, the Capital Area YMCA provides financial assistance to hundreds of local youth and families in need. These requests are now rising to unprecedented levels. The Capital Area YMCA, through its annual fund-raising, wants to be there to meet them.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

A registration packet must be completed in full for each child to be enrolled in our program. We are currently licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing. Dates for immunizations are required. (If for religious reasons, you cannot provide this information, contact the YMCA for a waiver. This must be signed before attending). All pages of the registration packet will need to be completed in full in order for your child to attend the any program. A new registration packet and health information must be submitted annually.

Safety is our primary concern. We strongly enforce safety rules for all children. We believe in the positive reinforcement approach and work very hard with all participants to teach safety at all times. At least two staff members are required to be onsite at all times who is CPR, AED, and First-Aid Certified and asked to only give care within the scope of their training. If your child is injured or becomes ill during After School, we will take whatever steps are necessary to provide appropriate care. These steps may include but are not limited to:

- Attempting to contact parents.
- Attempting to contact persons named as emergency contacts.
- Summoning 911/emergency care
- Assigning a counselor or a designated person to go with the child to the hospital or medical facilities, if a child is sent.

Please remember that children will never be transported by any Capital Area YMCA employee. Special needs, allergies, or behavioral concerns should be reported to the director prior to the start so that adequate and appropriate preparation and care can be provided for each child.

## **HOMEWORK TIME**

We offer children time to do homework so that they can receive help from our staff and homework is complete upon going home. If you would not like your child to do their homework at After School, please talk to the Site Director so that other arrangements can be made. We spend roughly 45 minutes of homework and/or quiet time daily, except Friday.

## **ILLNESS**

If your child is ill, please keep them home. Any child who is unable to attend school due to a communicable health reason may NOT attend any Before or After School program. If your child becomes ill while in our care, a parent will be contacted and asked to pick up their child immediately. The child will be isolated, within sight and hearing of staff, until the parent arrives. If the parent cannot be reached, the staff will phone the emergency contact person(s) listed on the child's enrollment form. The YMCA is not licensed to provide health care for sick children.

Staff has the authority to ask a parent to remove their child from the program, if that child appears ill or their health is judged to be detrimental to the other children and staff. Parents or emergency contacts are required to pick up the ill child within one hour of being contacted. Children exhibiting the following symptoms may not attend the program:

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea
- Episodes of acute vomiting
- Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees F
- Lethargy
- Severe coughing
- Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected/untreated skin patches or rash lasting more than one day
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Unknown Rash
- Any contagious illness

Once the child is symptom-free, or has a health care provider's note stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, the child may return to the center unless contraindicated by the local health department or Department of Health.

A child or staff member who contracts an excludable communicable disease MAY NOT return to the program without a health care provider's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others. These diseases included respiratory, gastrointestinal, and contact illnesses such as Impetigo, Lice, Scabies, and Shingles.

If a child has chicken pox, a health care provider's note is not required for re-admitting the child to the center. A note from the parent is required stating either that at least six days has elapsed since the onset of the rash, or that all sores have dried and crusted.

If a child is exposed to any excludable disease during the program, parents will be notified in writing.

## **INJURIES**

Injuries will be treated as needed: washing, applying Band-Aids or ice packs. Parents will be notified upon pick up, and given an incident report explaining the details. Parents will be contacted immediately in the case of more serious injuries, in which medical attention is needed.

Staff will only provide basic first aid and are not held to applying First Aid beyond their level of authorization.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The Capital Area YMCA assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items. Please label all belongings with permanent marker. If something is misplaced, check with your staff. Please leave all toys and games at home.

## **MEDICATION**

A Medication Authorization Form must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian in order for any medication to be administered. Medication must be brought to staff in its original prescription labeled container. The label must clearly identify the child's name, doctor, date, prescription name and dosage.



Children are NOT allowed to dose medication themselves—all medicine (including inhalers) must be given to the Site Director immediately. Children requiring EPIPENS must turn in all medication to the Site Director and inform them of any special instructions. Please note: The Capital Area YMCA does not provide medical or hospital insurance for medical costs incurred by the individual or immediate family as a member of the YMCA or a participant of any of its activities. Therefore, any costs incurred for such treatment will be the responsibility of the individual family.

### **MEMBERSHIP AT THE Y**

All children actively enrolled in the Capital Area YMCA School Age Child Care Program receive a Program membership included in their enrollment without an additional cost! The membership will be active through the end of June. If the child is registered for our Summer Camp programs that summer, the membership will be extended through the months of July and August.

### **PARENT VISITATION / PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Our YMCA programs have an open door policy for families. We welcome your visit at any time. You have unlimited access to the “Y” for the purpose of contacting your child and/or assessing the care provided. Please notify the Director, Supervisor or Coordinator of your presence upon arrival. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our sites must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in or observe the activities of the each site. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the Site Director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

### **PROGRAM CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS**

The YMCA encourages constant communication between parents, staff and children to assure everyone’s needs are being met. If you should ever have a problem, concern or question, we encourage you to speak to the YMCA staff. Should they not be able to meet your needs, please contact the YMCA School Age Child Care Director and/or Senior Director. It is through your input that we are better able to meet the needs of the community and enhance the quality of our programs.

### **PROGRAMMING & ACTIVITIES**

The After School program follows seasonal themes. Most of our group activities, projects and games are planned around the time of year theme. Themes include: the seasons, holidays and other fun and interesting topics. We include special days, parties, and family events throughout the school year. For parties and special days we usually ask parents to volunteer to bring in items for the children. There will be sign ups in advance for these days.

All activities have been deemed appropriate and have the best interest of all children in mind. We will provide opportunities for child involvement in activity planning, self-selected activities and recreational play. Daily schedules will include individual quiet time, structured and unstructured activities and small-group and large-group activities. It is our responsibility to provide structured and unstructured indoor and outdoor energetic physical activity for at least 30 minutes each day.

The use of Televisions/Computers/Videos will only be used for educational/instructional use only and deemed age/developmentally appropriate. These media outlets will never be used to substitute planned activities or for passive viewing. However, due to the nature of our program, and availability of such technology, the YMCA After School program will typically never engage in this type of media programming (watching movies, playing on the internet, playing video games etc.). Students will never be allowed to play with personal electronic devices.

With the ever growing popularity of technology in the school, school issued laptops or tablets may be used for completion of homework or educational tasks only by that student. These school laptops or tablets may be used by any student (including special needs students) under the direct supervision of the YMCA staff only. All work done on these types of electronics shall be very limited. Accommodations will be made for any student with special needs who uses this technology daily after communication between YMCA staff and the classroom teacher.

## **PROGRAMMING & ACTIVITIES – CATCH**

### **Coordinated Approach To Child Health**

CATCH is an after school program proven to reduce the rate of child obesity and improve children's health-related behaviors. It is the only coordinated nutrition education and physical activity program with 15 years of solid research and evidence to support its design and content. Every day CATCH is making a difference to children's lives across North America and beyond. We are proud to make this program, an included benefit to all SACC children.

### **Healthy U, a partnership between The Horizon**

### **Foundation of New Jersey and the New Jersey YMCA**

State Alliance, is a four-year program designed to lower obesity rates by 10 percent in children taking part in the program. A year-one evaluation of Healthy U conducted by evaluators from The University of Texas, School of Public Health, shows improvements in key health measurements including increased physical activity and healthier eating. Healthy U uses the Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) curriculum developed by the University of Texas Science Center School of Public Health. It is a national, award winning program with over 15-years of research documenting its success in reducing the rate of childhood obesity.

In the last few decades, childhood obesity rates have soared. Nationally, one in three children is obese or overweight, which puts children at risk for chronic diseases often seen in adults, such as high cholesterol, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure and type-2 diabetes. This health crisis sheds light on the need to provide children and their parents or guardians with the resources and the support they need to live healthier. With a presence in nearly 10,000 communities nationwide, the Y is uniquely positioned to address this issue.

The Capital Area YMCA is also committed to achieving the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards in our early learning and school age childcare programs as outlined by YMCA of the USA, and reports outcomes on an annual basis.

## **PROGRAM STAFF**

The After School Program operates under direct supervision of the School Age Child Care Director and Senior Director. Each site is led by a Site Director, whose responsibility is the entire operation, including but not limited to the supervision of children and staff,

program planning and implementation, communication and parent relations.

Most of our staff are college students, post college grads, high school seniors, teacher aides, retired school workers or education professionals. All have cleared mandatory background checks as well as national sex offender checks and most are certified in CPR, AED, First-Aid, and Child Abuse Prevention, Sexual Harassment, and Bloodborne Pathogens. Each staff member is also required to complete hours of trainings as mandated by the State of New Jersey Office Of Licensing. They have had a successful experience working with children, have been trained by YMCA Directors and are looking forward to getting to know your family.

## **PROGRAM SUPPLIES**

The YMCA will provide the necessary enrichment toys, educational games, arts and crafts, and school supplies to successfully run the program.

Our sites are required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the Consumer Product Safety Commission website: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at 1-800-638-2772.

The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items your child brings to the Before & After School Program. As we are not responsible for items, please have your child leave their valuables at home (including money, video paraphernalia and toys).

Please label all of your child's items (books, bags, jackets, coats, hats, etc...) Personal Computers, iPods or other MP3 players, iPads or other Tablets, cell phones, DS's, PSP's or other video game systems not permitted unless otherwise noted.

## **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or authorized individuals by parents to be responsible for the child. Please CLEARLY discuss with us, and have in writing in the enrollment packets, your plans for your child's departure from the site.

Children are allowed to be signed out only by individuals authorized by the children's guardian on the registration forms who are 18 years or older. If there are any additions or changes to these names, please inform the Director in writing or via email. By law, we cannot release any child unless we have authorization from a parent/guardian.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access, to a child by a court order, the center shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with terms of the court order.

No child will be released to any person(s) or parent who appears to be physically or emotionally impaired, to the extent that in the judgment of the Director, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual. This includes individuals who may seem to be intoxicated or under the influence of narcotics. In such a situation, the Director will attempt to contact the child's other parent or authorized pick-up person. It is important to always list two backups other than the parents. If we are unable to make an alternate arrangement within one hour of the center closing, the Director will call the 24 Hour State Central Registry Hotline (1-877-NJ-ABUSE) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

Late pick-up fees will be charged for each child picked up after 6:00pm. Payment must be received upon pick up or will be charged to their account that afternoon. Late fees are charged at a rate of \$15 per 15 minutes beginning at 6:01pm. Chronic late pick-ups will be grounds for dismissal.

In the event a child is left one hour past 6:00pm with no contact from a parent, the following procedure will be followed:

- The child will remain supervised at all times
- With no success at the above, the site director will contact the School Age Child Care Director.
- The Director will go to the site; at this time, they will call the appropriate local Police Department to have someone go to the child's home.
- If no contact has been made from parents or emergency contacts, the police will take the child to the appropriate police station. If the police are unable to provide appropriate care, the center shall call the 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

## **SNACKS**

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The YMCA will provide children with a healthy afternoon snack daily. This snack is not a meal. Our typical snacks include: granola bars, fruit, cheese, crackers, yogurt, sun chips, popcorn etc. An occasional dessert may be served as a special treat. If your child has food allergies or other dietary restrictions, please make sure that you communicate with the School Age Child Care Director, the Site Director and Site Staff. In case of severe allergies certain food items may be restricted from the site. If this should apply to your child's site, you will be notified.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA, COMMUNICATION AND PHOTO RELEASE**

The Capital Area YMCA may take photos, videos or sound recordings of your children in our child care programs. We often use them for crafts, projects, or posted online. The Capital Area YMCA reserves the right, and if granted permission by the parent as indicated in the registration packet, to photograph or film any child while they are participating in any activity. The Capital Area YMCA may also use said pictures and video files for any form of advertising or promotion, at no compensation to the family, as deemed appropriate as well as publish them on the YMCA website or social media outlets such as Facebook for publicity purposes.

Parents and YMCA staff are able to communicate directly through each program's site cell phone. Contact between staff and parents via personal phones, email, and social media outlets is prohibited.

Posting of photographs or videos of children other than your own taken at Before/After School sites or Before/After School sponsored events is prohibited.

## **STAFF/CHILD RATIOS**

All children will be supervised by a YMCA Staff Member at all times, including during outdoor activities, walking through hallways, in the gymnasium etc. The mandated staff to child ratio set forth by the State of New Jersey is 1:15.

## **STATE OF NEW JERSEY LICENSING**

All of our After School locations are required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our sites.

To be licensed, our sites must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our sites must have a current copy of the Manual of Requirements of Child Care Centers and at each location for parents to review. If you would like to review a copy, please speak with your site director at your school. You may also view a copy of the Manual on the DCF website at:  
<http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCMannual.pdf>.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns you may have about the policies and program or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1-877-667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate you bringing these concerns to our attention too.

Parents are entitled to review each site's copy of the Office of Licensing's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are issued after every State inspection. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the Office's Complaint Investigation Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the site during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review anything and we will make them available for your review.

### **WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS POLICY**

When school has a weather-related early dismissal the After School Programs may be cancelled. Parents/guardians or authorized individuals are responsible for picking up children from their school or informing them to take the bus home. The school district policies take effect in cancellations and/or early dismissal and delayed openings.

The YMCA has the authority to close the After School program early when needed. In some cases, the school district will have us make a decision to close early. Please understand that if the After School program is opened, but weather and road conditions worsen throughout the late afternoon, we have the right to close early and will contact parents accordingly. This is for the safety and well-being of the children and all staff.

In case we are closing our program for any reason, the YMCA will send out a text and an email to all parents with this notification. Alerts of closings and program disruptions will also be made via Playerspace alerts (see "Playerspace Alerts" for more details). If a state of emergency is declared there will be no programs offered.

Please remember, no credits will be given for disasters, emergencies, or days we are scheduled to be closed.

### **THANK YOU!**

We are happy that you have selected the Capital Area YMCA School Age Child Care Program for your family. We offer days filled with happiness, wonderful activities and educational fun. We thank you for sharing your child with us.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the policies/rules set forth in the Capital Area YMCA After School Child Care Program Booklet.