



AFTERSCHOOL HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024

LOWES YMCA

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About YMCA Afterschool

We build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VALUES (Our Character Development Traits)

Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Faith

OUR FOCUS

For Youth Development: Nurturing the potential of every participants and teen.

For Healthy Living: Improving the nation's health and well-being.

For Social Responsibility: Giving back and providing support to our neighbors.

OUR GOALS FOR THE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

As an aspect of our organization's focus in Youth Development, we strive to help participants learn and grow through carefully planned, mission-focused curriculum that teaches the following four pillars:

1. Building Relationships
2. Healthy Choices
3. Skill and Educational Development
4. Servant Leadership

We also strive to provide stimulating and fun activities and experiences that will not only enrich our participant's lives but will also strengthen families and communities.

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte recognizes that individuals, families and communities are diverse. The YMCA values and respects this diversity and chooses to be inclusive through its acceptance of all individuals regardless of race, age, gender, religion, ability or cultural identity. The YMCA, while not adhering to any doctrine or dogma, is committed to Christian principles. This includes asserting that all individuals, without exception, are intrinsically valuable.

OUR STAFF

Having positive role models is fundamental to our successful youth programming. We start by hiring afterschool counselors with excellent character, strong values, and enthusiasm to work with kids. Before the school year begins, we thoroughly interview, drug screen and background check each employee. In addition they receive over 12-15 hours of training on topics such as participants development, group management techniques, conflict resolution, and safety.

All staff are certified in: First Aid, CPR, & AED Participants Abuse Prevention

Due to our participants protection policy, our staff is not allowed to babysit for participants they meet in the program.

OUR LEADERS

Ryan Swengros

Sr. Youth Development Director

Ryan.Swengros@ymcacharlotte.org

(704) 716-4009

Administrative Topics

REGISTRATION

Afterschool registrations are processed on a first-come first served basis. There is an Afterschool registration fee. Registration begins April 1st. Registrations fees are non-refundable. Tuition may be refunded if cancellation is made two weeks in advance. Withdrawal from the program requires a two week notice from the date of when the cancellation form is received. Here is the link for support, <https://www.ymcacharlotte.org/customer-support-hub>.

Pricing: (5 Days/Week)

Afterschool Care (K-5th): \$19 per day for Members and \$26 per day for Program Participants

*Rate reductions may be available through our scholarship program.

*Rates are calculated per year and divided into equal monthly payments.

PAYMENT DUE DATES

Tuition is due the 15th of every month prior to the service an administration fee in the amount of \$25 will be charged for each payment that is late or NSF.

Scholarship Information

Our scholarships are simple and easy-to-understand. This model only applies to members. The rate is based on the number of people in your household who choose to be members and your annual household income. In order to adjust your rate, you must present a current tax return to verify household income at the time you join and again every two years. Accepted documents for income verification include the 1040, 1040A and 1040 EZ. A staff member will review line 22 of your 1040 and line 4 of your 1040 EZ.

INSURANCE

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte provides liability insurance on all programs. It is the program participant's responsibility to provide their own accident insurance coverage. Families should include their personal health insurance information on the participant's health form. This information will only be used to facilitate medical treatment if required. Families are responsible for prescriptions and charges incurred for outside medical treatment of their participant if such services are required while in attendance at the YMCA youth programs.

MEDICATION POLICY

If medications are required, please be sure to notify the afterschool director prior to your participants' first day. A complete and signed medication release form must accompany all prescription medications. These forms can be found in your welcome email.

Prescription medications must be in the original, prescribed container that identifies the prescribing physician, name of medication, dosage amount and when it should be administered. Place the medication and medication release form in a Ziploc bag with the participant's name clearly written on the bag. All medications must be checked in with the director or coordinator. No medications, including over the counter items such as vitamins, creams, lotions, aspirins, allergy medication or liquid medications will be distributed without family consent.

Operating Procedures

DISCIPLINE

The philosophy of our programs is based on the golden rule with respect shown for all participants. Good manners and personal empathy are traits we will foster. We work with participants on an individual basis. Rules, expectations and consequences are clearly communicated to participants at the beginning of the before and afterschool program. Encouraging good behavior helps discourage unacceptable behavior. Therefore, using this principle of positive reinforcement, each participants will be praised for good work and made to feel important and successful. Negative behavior will be redirected towards positive behavior. **Participants will be dismissed from the afterschool program who are (1) of danger to themselves (2) of danger to others (3) a disruption to the normal activities making it unreasonably difficult for other participants to enjoy youth programs.**

In order to provide the positive kind of discipline desired, we must first begin with the proper student-counselor ratios. The next step is ensuring that our counselors understand the age group they supervise and are well-prepared with a variety of activities. Within each classroom positive rules and guidelines are established. When a participants does not follow the rules, he/she will be reminded. If the reminder is ineffective, the participants' attention will be redirected or there will be some time allotted out of the activities for a participants to think and prepare himself for appropriate behavior. Discipline problems that persist or are disruptive to the class will be shared with the families so teachers and families can work together to correct the inappropriate behavior.

Even though we provide low teacher-participants ratios, loving care and plenty of age appropriate toys and activities, participants will sometimes show aggressive behavior (hitting, kicking, pushing, biting, etc.) toward a classmate. All signs of aggression are unacceptable but are not considered abnormal for young participants who are learning to get along in group situations.

- Please note there will not be a refund or financial compensation for missed time due to negative behavior.

Families may be assured of the following:

- Food and water will never be withheld as a means of discipline.
- Participants will never be disciplined for toileting accidents.
- Physical discipline (shaking, spanking, slapping, hitting) will never be used.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Communication with our families is important. Our program will utilize four main components of communication.

1. **Face to Face** communication between families and our staff.
2. **Newsletters** will be available on a monthly basis to inform you of upcoming events.
3. **Email** as a form of information for surveys, major announcements and promotion of any new program.
4. **Website** www.ymcacharlotte.org our website will be a great link for you to get information on all programs offered at the Lowe's YMCA.

PHOTO ID VERIFICATION

Your participants' safety is a top priority! To further protect your participants, a list of authorized pick up names should be included on the registration form. During pick-up, our staff will request to see a photo ID from any person picking up a participants and we will verify that the individual is approved. In the event of a last minute change by someone not on the original pick up list, the YMCA will request that you go online and update your pick-ups. The YMCA reserves the right to deny custody to all persons who do not show ID, who are not on the list of persons authorized for pick-up, who do not have a properly-secured participants passenger restraint device and/or who appear to be intoxicated. We use the YMCA Childcare platform, when you pick up your participants we can take your picture and have it on file. We however ask that you have your ID daily for pick up. You can add and delete pick-ups for your participants on our website, for assistance please see our Sales and Service desk.

CAR SAFETY

All participants must be buckled up when leaving our program. Participants under eight years old and weigh less than 80 pounds must be in a properly-secured participant's passenger restraint device (CRD) that meets federal standards and is appropriate for the participants' weight and height. This device must be in the back seat of the car.

The safety of your participants is paramount. Your participants will not be placed in a car that is not properly equipped with a participant's safety seat for your participants. Furthermore, your participants will not be released to or placed in a vehicle with anyone that a YMCA staff member suspects is under the influence drugs or alcohol.

LATE PICK UP

A \$15.00 fee will be charged and payment expected upon arrival for the first ten minutes after 6:00pm that a family is late. An additional \$1.00 per minute will be charged for each additional minute after 6:10pm that a participants remains in our care. We will make every effort to contact families and emergency contacts after 6:10pm if a participants has not been picked up. Local authorities will be contacted at 7pm if we are unable to reach families or an emergency contact. If a family becomes habitually late, a meeting will be scheduled with a director to discuss your participants' continual participation in the afterschool program.

FAMILY INTOXICATION

At times we are called to make judgments concerning the safety of our participants. If a YMCA staff member believes a family is intoxicated when they arrive to pick up their participants, we will detain the participants until an alternate plan can be established for the transportation of the participants and family. Our plan will be to begin contacting emergency contacts. If we cannot reach a family member, we will try to contact someone on the emergency contact list. If a family is unruly, uncooperative, or out of control physically, the staff will contact the local authorities to provide assistance.

CUSTODY ISSUES

In cases of separation or divorced families where visitation rights are denied to one family, we cannot deny releasing the participants to such family unless a court decree or separation documents are in our file forbidding such families to pick the participants up from the program. The court order must also be specific to the rights of visitation on the YMCA property. Please contact Francine Molina 704-716-4043 if you have specific custody issues that we need to be aware of.

Family Expectations

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

We will host special events for families occasionally throughout the school year and we encourage you to participate. This is a great way for you to experience a little of the fun your participants gets every day while meeting other afterschool families. Additional information about these opportunities will be included in our monthly newsletters.

KEEPING US INFORMED

Please let us know if your participants experiences any issues at home or school that may affect his/her experience with us in afterschool care. Examples include death of a pet, family divorce/separation, death in the family, fight with sibling, changes in health, etc. Staying aware of these issues will help us ensure that we are prepared to meet your participants's needs.

LOST ITEMS

Please label everything. This will minimize the opportunity for your participants to lose an item while in our care. Lost and Found items will be kept at the Afterschool Program for no more than two weeks. At the end of two weeks all items that are not claimed will be donated to the local non-profit agency.

ABSENTEE/ILLNESS POLICY

In the event of a scheduled absence from the program, families must provide a note in advance to the site coordinator with the dates that the participant will be away. In the event of a last minute absence, families must contact our afterschool director no later than 2:00pm on the day of the absence to communicate this change. This ensures the safety of every participants!

EARLY PICK UP

Our staff is actively engaged with participants every day. If you wish to pick up early please come inside and a staff member will check out your participant. Please wait in the lobby until they arrive. A staff member will not be able to walk them to your car prior to 4:45pm.

RESTROOM POLICY

Participants are taken to the restroom as a group when they arrive at Afterschool and then as needed. Participants must be potty trained in order to attend the program as our facilities are not equipped to care for changing diapers, pull ups or plastic pants.

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO AFTERSCHOOL

We ask for your support in not allowing participants to bring specific toys/props for use in the program. It is very easy for something to be lost or damaged that is precious to your participants. Unless your participants is specifically asked to do so, we ask for your help in making sure they refrain from bringing any of the following items to camp:

Money	Alcohol	Drugs	Vehicles	Animals	Weapons	Toys
Valuables	Cell Phones	Ipads/Ipods	Novelty Items	Balls		
Electronic Gaming Devices (including Nintendo Switch etc.)						

2023 – 2024 FAMILY HANDBOOK

Daily Programming and Activities

PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Afterschool care will operate Monday-Friday from school dismissal until 6:00pm unless otherwise noted.

The following schools will be served for the 2023-2024 School Year

The following schools will be served for the 2023-2024 School Year	
Coddle Creek Elementary	Lake Norman Elementary
Lakeshore Elementary	Woodland Heights Elementary

****Lowe’s YMCA will transport participants from their school to the Lowe’s YMCA***

Please note that site operation is dependent on meeting minimum student enrollment and participation standards. In the event that a school site will no longer be operating, the YMCA will provide advance notification in addition to any alternative options for these students.

Participants may not participate in the following programs or a combination of the following programs for more than four hours in a 24 hour period in a Charlotte YMCA or a combination of Charlotte YMCA’s: Participants’ Enrichment Programs, unlicensed Preschool, Participants Watch (drop in care) and unlicensed Afterschool.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE Afterschool Care

2:30-2:45pm	Dismissal from school to afterschool
2:45-3:30pm	Snack and Character Development
3:30-4:00pm	Homework/Enrichment Time
4:00-5:00pm	Clubs
4:45-6:00pm	Rides-Out
6:00pm	Afterschool Program Ends

Ratios: The following are the minimum staff to participant ratios for ALL Afterschool Programs:

- Rising K - 1:10
- 1st-5th Grade - 1:10
- 25 participants max per group

In cases where participants are grouped in multi-age groups, the minimum ratio for the youngest participant shall be used. A minimum of 2 staff must be present during program operating hours.

HOMWORK TIME

Our staff will assist each participants in their assigned daily homework Monday-Thursday. Friday we will use this activity period for other enrichment activities. If a participants does not have homework they will read for 20 minutes and given an enrichment sheet for the duration of this time. We will make every attempt to strive toward completion and accuracy during our 30-45 minute homework period. Thank you in advance for reviewing your participants’ homework once they are at home to ensure completion.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Enrichment opportunities allow students the opportunity to explore other exciting areas of learning and interest. Examples could include: Art, Literacy, Sports, Fitness, etc. Activities will be age appropriate and will vary each month.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT/ SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

As we work to develop future leaders, we will be emphasizing a different character development trait each month. Staff will lead engaging activities and dialogue around these focus areas. Participants will also be engaged in social emotional learning. This will give our participants a time to learn how to react to different emotions, feelings and how to deal with peer to peer conflict positively.

HEALTHY LIVING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

As we strive to provide total well being opportunities for participants, during the afterschool day participants will participate in 30 minutes of physical activity. These activities could be organized games, team sports, or teambuilding activities. During full day programs when participants are out of school, participants will engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity. In addition, a health education component will be included in our daily programming.

SNACK

Families are to provide an afternoon snack for their participants.

OUT OF SCHOOL DAYS

We will provide all day programs during some teacher workdays at the Lowe's YMCA. We will serve all schedules early release days at no additional cost to our families. A calendar of these scheduled days will be provided to you in advance. Hours of operation will be from 7:00am-6:00pm. Families will be responsible for following things:

1. Signing their participants up in advance for these days to ensure appropriate staffing structure and programming needed.
2. Providing each participant with a morning snack/drink, lunch and afternoon snack/drink. Participants will also need their bathing suit and towel for swimming in the indoor pool.
3. Apply and/or provide sunscreen to protect your participants from sun exposure. Out of School Days will be ran like a camp day, where students will spend time outside if weather permits.

Participants not currently enrolled in afterschool may participate as well.

EMERGENCIES

Our staff will treat routine cuts, scrapes, and bumps. If your participants is injured during program hours we will take the necessary steps to care for them. If necessary we will contact the families to inform them of the injury and the care that has been given. In the case of a serious injury we contact 911 while giving care. After calling 911 and getting the best care for your participants we will contact a guardian. If a guardian cannot be reached we will attempt to contact other emergency contacts.

ILLNESS

It is our sincere desire to provide quality care for your participants while they are participating in YMCA services and programs. For the safety and well-being of all participants and staff, the following health and wellness policies will be strictly enforced. Participants should not participate in YMCA Programs if one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. The illness prevents the participants from participating comfortably in YMCA activities.
2. The illness results in a greater need than the YMCA staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other participants.
3. The participants has any of the following conditions:
 - a. A fever higher than 100 degrees. Participants must be fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication before they can return to YMCA programs.
 - b. Continuous and/or Colored Nasal Drainage. A current note from a physician can be provided if drainage is caused by an allergy.
 - c. Diarrhea
 - d. Vomiting within a 24 hour period
 - e. Communicable diseases (Including but not limited to pink eye, head lice, skin rash, etc)

If participants exhibit any of these symptoms during their stay, the family/guardian will be asked to pick their participants up promptly. Participants may return to YMCA programs if they are symptom free after 24 hours or if a written note from a participants' physician is provided to the YMCA. A doctors' note can be provided for seasonal allergies. If a participant display's a combination of symptoms, a doctor's note can also be provided. **If a participants is sent home from a program they are discouraged from participating in any other YMCA program within a 24 hour period.**

This is in the best interest of all the participants who visit our programs. As usual we will continue to disinfect our facility to eliminate as many germs as possible. Please assist us in our efforts to maintain a healthy environment for our participants.

WEATHER- INCLEMENT, SEVERE and TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

In the event of school closing due to inclement weather, the Afterschool Program will not operate and out of school days will not be offered at YMCA unless schools close for multiple days. In the event of school closings multiple days due to inclement weather, the Youth Development Director will assess the road conditions based on the weather report. The safety of our staff and participants is our #1 priority. At the time of road assessment, it will be decided whether the Out of School Days will operate on a full day schedule at the Lowe's YMCA Branch. The decision to have a full day will be made by 5:00am and we will leave our decision on the voicemail greeting to the program office phone as well as send an email. This number is 704.716.4043. It is the family's responsibility to check this number for the decision made. If we are open then you can drop your kids off on your way to work and register your participants for the \$25 for members and \$28 for program participants' full day cost.

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The YMCA will also not offer Afterschool Care on days that school is dismissed early due to inclement weather or last minute changes in the school district. The YMCA reserves the right to cancel YMCA transportation and scheduled program due to inclement weather. We will not charge extra for make up schools Monday-Friday. We do however do not refund for cancelled days, delayed start or early dismissal.

2023 – 2024 FAMILY HANDBOOK
**Before and Afterschool
Family Acknowledgement**

I have been provided a copy of the 2023-2024 Afterschool Family Handbook and I have read and understand the content.

Participants' Name: _____

Adult Signature: _____

Date: _____

***Please sign and return this form to the Youth Development Director, Francine Molina. Thank you for your attention to these guidelines and for helping us make the YMCA Afterschool program a success.**