



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®**  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



# Youth Program

2021 – 2022 Afterschool Parent Handbook  
George E. Simmons YMCA

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Dear Youth Program Families,

Thank you for choosing Simmons YMCA for your child's program experience! By selecting our program, you can give your child the opportunity to build confidence and create wonderful memories.

By choosing YMCA youth programs, you will experience more than just a day care service. Your child will learn and grow through our carefully planned, mission centered programs that teach your child to make healthy choices, build relationships, develop skills and become a servant leader while having fun.

Our hope is to create a safe environment in a place that will provide quality programming while instilling core values in your child. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to be a part of your family during year!

We are here to serve you in the best way we can. We appreciate and value you and your family. It is our hope that this shows in everything we do.

We look forward to meeting your family this school year!

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# Table of Contents

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<b>About YMCA Afterschool</b>	<b>4</b>
Our Mission	
Our Values	
Our Focus	
Our Goals	
Diversity and Inclusion	
Our Staff	
Our Leaders	
<b>Administrative Topics</b>	<b>5</b>
Registration	
My Y Pricing	
Insurance	
Medication Policy	
<b>Operating Procedures</b>	<b>6</b>
Discipline Policy	
Aquatics Policy	
Parent Communication	
Photo ID Verification	
Parent Visits	
Car Safety	
Late Pick Up	
Parent Intoxication	
Smoking and Tobacco Restriction	
Custody Issues	
<b>Parent Expectations</b>	<b>10</b>
Family Involvement	
Keeping Us Informed	
Lost Items	
Absentee/Illness Policy	
Early Pick Up	
<b>Daily Programming and Activities</b>	<b>11</b>
Program Offerings	
Homework Time	
Enrichment Activities	
Character Development	
Healthy Living and Physical Activity	
Snack	
Out of School Days	
What NOT To Bring	
<b>Special Situations</b>	<b>13</b>
Emergencies	
Illness	
Weather- Inclement, Severe and Transportation	
North Carolina Summer of Laws	<b>15</b>

# 2021 – 2022 PARENT HANDBOOK

## About YMCA Afterschool

We build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

### OUR MISSION

Our mission is located on our website at [www.ymcacharlotte.org](http://www.ymcacharlotte.org).

### OUR VALUES (Our Character Development Traits)

Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Faith

### OUR FOCUS

**For Youth Development:** Nurturing the potential of every child 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 before and 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 10 hours of training on topics such as child development, group management techniques, conflict resolution, and safety.

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

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

### OUR LEADERS

Daijah Johnson  
Sandra McPhaul

Family Services Coordinator  
Sr. Program Director

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## Administrative Topics

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### **REGISTRATION**

Youth program registrations are processed on a first-come first served basis. 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.

### **PAYMENT DUE DATES**

Drafts are made on the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.

### **My Y Pricing (Income-Based Pricing)**

My Y Pricing is a simple, easy-to-understand pricing model that applies the appropriate membership rate 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 his/her own accident insurance coverage. Parents should include their personal health insurance information on the child's health form. This information will only be used to facilitate medical treatment if required. Parents are responsible for prescriptions and charges incurred for outside medical treatment of their child 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 child's first day. A complete and signed medication release form must accompany all prescription medications.

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 child's name clearly written on the bag. All medications must be checked in with the site coordinator. No medications, including over the counter items such as vitamins, creams, lotions, aspirins, allergy medication or liquid medications will be distributed without parent 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 children 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 child will be praised for good work and made to feel important and successful. Negative behavior will be confronted and redirected towards positive behavior. **Participants will be dismissed from the before and 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 children to enjoy youth programs.**

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

Even though we provide low teacher-child ratios, loving care and plenty of age appropriate toys and activities, children 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 children 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.

### Parents may be assured of the following:

#### • WE DO:

- Praise, reward, and encourage the children.
- Reason with and set limits for the children.
- Model appropriate behavior for the children.
- Modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
- Listen to the children.
- Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
- Provide the children with natural and logical consequences of the behaviors.
- Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
- Ignore minor misbehaviors.
- Explain things to children on the levels.
- Use short supervised periods of "time out."
- Stay consistent in our behavior management program.

#### • WE DO NOT:

- Spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children.
- Make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
- Shame or punish the children when bathroom incidents occur.
- Deny food or rest as punishment.
- Relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
- Leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
- Place the children in locked rooms, closets, or boxes as punishment.
- Allow discipline of children by children.
- Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.
- Food and water will never be withheld as a means of discipline.
- Children will never be disciplined for toileting accidents.
- Physical discipline (shaking, spanking, slapping, hitting) will never be used.

## SIMMONS FAMILY YMCA **AQUATICS POLICY**

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte has very strict guidelines on appropriate and safe pool procedures. For the sake of safety, this is one area where any type of **horseplay or non-compliance will not be tolerated**.

Children are expected to have swimsuits and towels with them in order to swim. A swim suit is defined as an article of clothing made with supportive lining for the purpose of swimming. Basketball shorts will not be permitted. If a child does not have those two things, he/she will not swim. Moreover, we will not make calls home asking for someone to bring either of these two items.

All children will be evaluated for swimming ability on the first day of Afterschool, or the participants first swim day. All children will be assigned a colored band based on their ability and height. Children who are classified as one color will be required to wear flotation vest and be within reach of an adult. Children classified as another color will not be required to have a flotation device if they are over four feet tall, and they may swim in designated areas of the pool.

The Simmons YMCA prides itself on equipping children with the tools to become excellent swimmers. To ensure the quality of our program, please see our aquatics policy below.

- **Safety Hazards:**
  - The YMCA pool contains the following items, Calcium Hypochlorite 60-80%), Sodium Chloride (10-20%), Calcium Chlorate (0-5%), Calcium Chloride (0-5%), Calcium Hydroxide (0-4%), Calcium Carbonate (0-5%), Water (5.5-10%). These chemicals could cause potential hazard if swallowed. If children are allergic to these items, skin and eye irritations may occur.
- **Supervision:**
  - Locker Room: All Youth Services participants are supervised in the locker rooms by two certified YMCA counselors at all times.
  - Pool: For every twenty-five (25) children there will be one lifeguard on duty along with two certified YMCA counselors. All YMCA certified counselors must accompany the children in the pool.
- **Discipline:** To ensure the safety of our children, our students are expected to follow the pool rules. However, when rules are not followed, discipline will go as follows:
  - Strike 1- Verbal Warning
  - Strike 2- Pool Break (3-5 minutes)
  - Strike 3- Pool Break for remainder of session.
- In the event that a field trip is planned to another aquatics facility, our staff and students will be expected to comply with both YMCA regulations as well as regulations set forth by that accompanying aquatics facility.

## PARENT COMMUNICATION

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

1. **Face to Face** communication between parents 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 any reminders, or new, program updates.
4. **Website** [www.ymcacharlotte.org](http://www.ymcacharlotte.org) our website will be a great link for you to get information on all programs offered.

## **PHOTO ID VERIFICATION**

Your child's safety is a top priority! To further protect your child, 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 child 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 written authorization by the parent or a phone call from the parent to the site coordinator to approve the change. 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 child passenger restraint device and/or who appear to be intoxicated.

## **PARENT VISITS**

We always welcome parents to visit our youth programs to talk with staff and observe their child's daily experience. ***Thank you for scheduling this time in advance with the coordinator who will assist you in signing in.***

## **CAR SAFETY**

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

The safety of your child is paramount. Your child will not be placed in a car that is not properly equipped with a child safety seat for your child. Furthermore, your child 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 late fee will be charged every minute after 6:00pm. You will be charged \$1.00 per minute, beginning at 6:00pm, and payment will be expected upon arrival. We will make every effort to contact parents and emergency contacts. After 6:45pm if a child has not been picked up, and we are unable to reach parents or an emergency contact, local authorities will be contacted at 7:00pm. If a parent becomes habitually late, a meeting will be scheduled with a director to discuss your child's continual participation in the afterschool program.

## **PARENT INTOXICATION**

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



### **SMOKING AND TOBACCO RESTRICTION**

Smoking and tobacco restriction – Children must be in a smoke free and tobacco free environment. Centers located in a residence must be smoke free and tobacco free during operating hours. Smoking and the use of any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco, is not permitted on the premises, in vehicles used to transport children, or during off premise activities. Signage regarding the smoking and tobacco restriction must be posted at each entrance and in vehicles used to transport children. Parent must be notified, in writing, of the smoking and tobacco restriction. [Rules .0604]

### **CUSTODY ISSUES**

In cases of foster care, separation or divorced parents where visitation rights are denied to one parent, we cannot deny releasing the child to such parent unless a court decree or separation documents are in our file forbidding such parents to pick the child up from the program. The court order must also be specific to the rights of visitation on the YMCA property. If you have specific custody issues that we need to be aware of **Please contact the Family Service Coordinator with any questions, comments or concerns at:** 704-716-6627 or [daijah.johnson@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:daijah.johnson@ymcacharlotte.org)

# Parent Expectations

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## **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 child gets every day while meeting other afterschool parents. Additional information about these opportunities will be included in our monthly newsletters.

## **KEEPING US INFORMED**

Please let us know if your child experiences any issues at home or school that may affect his/her experience with us in before or afterschool care. Examples include death of a pet, parent 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 child's needs.

## **LOST ITEMS**

Please label everything. This will minimize the opportunity for your child 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**

The Simmons YMCA takes attendance daily of all participants in its programs. This is an accountability and safety precaution by our staff for the well being of our students. Each after noon, attendance will be taken in all groups.

CCRI allows for five absences each month for children receiving subsidies. The YMCA is accountable for submitting all attendance records to CCRI. If a child misses more than the allotted five days, we are mandated to report these absences to CCRI.

In the event that your child will be absent from youth program, counselors will notify the Coordinator, and someone from the leadership team will make contact with you. In addition, if your child will be absent please contact the Youth Program office at 704-716-6627.

## **EARLY PICK UP**

Our staff is actively engaged with participants every day. If you wish to pick up early, please either send a note or call the Family Service Coordinator in advance so that we can have your child ready when you arrive.

## **RESTROOM POLICY**

Children are taken to the restroom as a group when they arrive at Afterschool and then as needed. Children 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 children 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 child. Unless your child is specifically asked to do so, we ask for your help in making sure they refrain from bringing any of the following items to program:

<b>Money</b>	<b>Alcohol</b>	<b>Drugs</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	<b>Animals</b>	<b>Weapons</b>	<b>Toys</b>
<b>Valuables</b>	<b>Cell Phones</b>	<b>IPad/iPod</b>	<b>Novelty Items</b>	<b>Balls</b>	<b>Electronic Devices</b>	

# Daily Programming and Activities

## PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Before School Care will operate Monday-Friday from 7:00 am-8:30 am.

Afterschool Care will operate Monday-Friday from school dismissal typically 2:30 pm until 6:30pm unless otherwise noted.

**The following is a partial list of schools we serve for the 2021-2022 School Year  
Please check your school for Transportation to Simmons YMCA.**

<b>Albemarle Road Elementary*</b>	<b>J.H.Gunn Elementary*</b>
<b>Albemarle Road Middle (walkers)</b>	<b>Lebanon Road Elementary*</b>
<b>Chantilly Montessori*</b>	<b>McClintock Middle*</b>
<b>Piney Grove Elementary*</b>	<b>Lawrence Orr Elementary*</b>
<b>Clear Creek Elementary*</b>	<b>Idlewild Elementary*</b>
<b>Greenway Park Elementary*</b>	<b>Brookstone School**</b>
<b>Hickory Grove Elementary*</b>	<b>Queens Grant Community School**</b>
<b>Reedy Creek Elementary*</b>	<b>Oakhurst STEAM Academy*</b>
<b>Winterfield Elementary*</b>	<b>Eastway Middle*</b>
<b>Charlotte East Language Academy**</b>	<b>Bain Elementary*</b>

**\*Participants attending Albemarle Road Elementary, Chantilly Montessori, Clear Creek Elementary, Greenway Park Elementary, Hickory Grove Elementary, Lawrence Orr Elementary, Piney Grove, Reedy Creek Elementary, J.H.Gunn Elementary, Lebanon Road Elementary, McClintock Middle, and Idlewild Elementary, along with others that are not listed.**

**Currently, our transportation program has been suspended,** however, if your child requests transportation it may be available through CMS. Transportation will be provided by the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System. Please log on to <https://www.cms.k12.nc.us/Pages/default.aspx> On the home page, navigate to "Bus Information" , Select " Forms", then click on "2021-2022 Alternate Stop Request Form" to fill out the form.

Please note that the school Simmons provides transportation to will be dependent on meeting minimum student enrollment. **Parents must sign a separate transportation waiver.**

Children 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: Children's Enrichment Programs, unlicensed Preschool, YKids (Drop In Care), and unlicensed Afterschool.

## RATIOS:

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

- Rising K - 1:8
- 1st-5th Grade - 1:10
- 25 children 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.

## HOMEWORK TIME

### **Afterschool Homework Assistance Policy:**

Homework assistance will be provided to students who need it. Our counselors must circulate around the room to provide assistance to all students. In addition, homework is offered as an option. For parents who desire for their children to have homework completed, a "homework contract" must be completed. Homework contracts will be provided by leadership staff.

### **Please Note:**

**We cannot guarantee that all homework will be completed within our program hours.**

**We encourage all parents to double check their child's homework at home.**

**We also encourage all parents to have frequent contact with their child's teacher(s).**

***We do not offer individual homework time within our program.***

**Access to technology for online homework is available but not guaranteed for each child daily.**

At Simmons our goal is to offer a well balanced program. While we understand the importance that homework plays in the life of a child, we strive to meet the needs of the whole child. In addition to helping children meet personal academic goals, we recognize our responsibility to give children a chance to be socialized and have unstructured play.

Our current schedule reflects current research showing children concentrate better and produce more work once they've had a physical break. It also reflects current licensing standards to take children outside everyday when weather permits.

**It is a requirement that we offer 3 activity choices during a 3 hour time frame.**

**For those choosing to do homework we offer a 40-50 minute homework assistance time.**

We support homework by offering help when needed, paper, pencils, and basic resources such as books, a thesaurus and dictionary. Access to technology for online homework is available but not guaranteed for each child daily.

**Counselors cannot sign reading logs or other documents that require parent signatures.**

## SNACK

An afternoon snack will be provided for each child when they arrive to our program. Snack items will be peanut-free and will include fruit or vegetable at least twice a week. We will also encourage participants to stay hydrated by drinking lots of water!

**NOTE:** Please do not send snacks that need to be heated up with your child, we will not be able to heat up food items in the microwave.

## Special Situations

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### OUT OF SCHOOL DAYS

We will provide all day programs during teacher workdays. Any afterschool participant can attend. A calendar of these scheduled days will be provided to you in advance. Hours of operation will be from 7:30am-6:00pm. Parents will be responsible for following things:

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

Additional daily fees will be assessed for members or program participants. Participants not currently enrolled in afterschool may participate as well.

### EMERGENCIES

Our staff will treat routine cuts, scrapes, and bumps. If your child is injured during program hours we will take the necessary steps to care for him/her. If necessary we will contact the parents 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 child 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 children while they are participating in YMCA services and programs. For the safety and well being of all children and staff, the following health and wellness policies will be strictly enforced. Children should not participate in YMCA Programs if one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in childcare activities.
2. The illness results in a greater need than the YMCA staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
3. The child has any of the following conditions:
  - a. A fever higher than 100 degrees. Child must be fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication before they can return to childcare 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.)

## 2021 – 2022 PARENT HANDBOOK

If children exhibit any of these symptoms during their stay, the parent/guardian will be asked to pick their child up promptly. Children may return to childcare programs if they are symptom free after 24 hours or if a written note from a child's physician is provided to the YMCA. A doctor's note can be provided for seasonal allergies. If a child displays a combination of symptoms, a doctor's note can also be provided.

**If a child 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 children 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 children.

### **WEATHER- INCLEMENT, SEVERE and TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES**

Our Afterschool program will follow the decisions made by Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) officials. We trust them to make the necessary decisions for the safety of our students. Below we have listed the plan of action for each scenario that may arise.

#### **Early Dismissal (CMS)-**

If CMS dismisses schools early due to inclement weather, we will not open Afterschool for that respective day.

In the event that inclement weather takes place while Afterschool is in session, we will run programming as planned and contact all parents to pickup students as soon as possible.

#### **School Closing-**

In the event that CMS decides to cancel school due to inclement weather, we will not facilitate Before or After School programming for that, respective, day. We do not refund for cancelled days, delayed start or early dismissal.

# Child Care Weather Watch

**Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)**

		Wind Speed in mph								
		CALM	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
Air Temperature	50	50	48	40	36	32	30	28	27	26
	40	40	37	28	22	18	16	13	11	10
	30	30	27	16	9	4	0	-2	-4	-6
	20	20	16	4	-5	-10	-15	-18	-20	-21
	10	10	6	-9	-18	-25	-29	-33	-35	-37
	0	0	-5	-21	-36	-39	-44	-48	-49	-53
	-10	-10	-15	-33	-45	-53	-59	-63	-67	-69
	-20	-20	-26	-46	-58	-67	-74	-79	-82	-85
	-30	-30	-36	-58	-72	-82	-87	-94	-98	-102

■ Comfortable for out door play     
 ■ Caution     
 ■ Danger

**Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit)**

		Relative Humidity (Percent)															
		15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
Temperature (F)	110	108	112	117	123	130	137	143	150								
	105	102	105	109	113	118	123	129	135	142	149						
	100	97	99	101	104	107	110	115	120	126	132	138	144				
	95	91	93	94	96	98	101	104	107	110	114	119	124	130	136		
	90	86	87	88	90	91	93	95	96	98	100	102	106	109	113	117	122
	85	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	93	95	97	99	102
	80	76	77	77	78	79	79	80	81	81	82	83	85	86	86	87	88
75	71	72	72	73	73	74	74	75	75	76	76	77	77	77	78	79	

The following requirements apply to both centers and homes.

## Transportation

Child care centers or family child care homes providing transportation for children must meet all motor vehicle laws, including inspection, insurance, license, and restraint requirements. Children may never be left alone in a vehicle and child-staff ratio must be maintained.

## Program Records

Centers and homes must keep accurate records such as children's attendance, immunizations, and emergency phone numbers. A record of monthly fire drills and quarterly shelter-in-place or lockdown drills practiced must also be maintained. A safe sleep policy must be developed and shared with parents if children younger than 12 months are in care.

## Discipline and Behavior Management

Each program must have a written policy on discipline, must discuss it with parents, and must give parents a copy when the child is enrolled. Changes in the discipline policy must be shared with parents in writing before going into effect. Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all centers and family child care homes. Religious-sponsored programs which notify the Division of Child Development and Early Education that corporal punishment is part of their religious training are exempt from that part of the law.

## Parental Rights

- Parents have the right to enter a family child care home or center at any time while their child is present.
- Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.

The laws and rules are developed to establish minimum requirements. Most parents would like more than minimum care. Child care resource and referral agencies can provide help in choosing quality care. Check the telephone directory or talk with a child care provider to see if there is a child care resource and referral agency in your community. For more information visit the Resources in Child Care website at: [www.ncchildcare.nc.gov](http://www.ncchildcare.nc.gov). For more information on the law and rules, contact the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829 (In State Only), or visit our homepage at: [ncchildcare.nc.gov](http://ncchildcare.nc.gov)

## Reviewing Files

A public file is maintained in the Division's main office in Raleigh for every center or family child care home.

These files can be

- viewed during business hours (8 a.m. -5 p.m.);
- requested via the Division's web site at [www.ncchildcare.nc.gov](http://www.ncchildcare.nc.gov); or
- requested by contacting the Division by telephone at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829 -800-859-0829.

## How to Report a Problem

North Carolina law requires staff from the Division of Child Development and Early Education to investigate a licensed family child care home or child care center when there has been a complaint. Child care providers who violate the law or rules may be issued an administrative action, fined and may have their licenses suspended or revoked. If you believe that a child care provider fails to meet the requirements described in this pamphlet, or if you have questions, please call the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6500 or 1-800-859-0829.

## Child Abuse, Neglect, or Maltreatment

Every citizen has a responsibility to report suspected child abuse, neglect or maltreatment. This occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. It may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. It also occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, discipline, or when a child is abandoned. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child maltreatment at a child care facility to report the situation to the Intake Unit at Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829.** Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith. The operator of the program must notify parents of children currently enrolled in writing of the substantiation of any maltreatment complaint or the issuance of any administrative action against the child care facility. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect in a family to report the case to the county department of social services.**



# Summary of the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules

Division of Child Development  
and Early Education

North Carolina Department of  
Health and Human Services  
820 South Boylan Avenue  
Raleigh, NC 27699

Revised March 2016

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or provision of services.



## What is Child Care?

The law defines child care as:

- three or more children under 13 years of age
- receiving care from a non-relative
- on a regular basis - at least once a week
- for more than four hours per day but less than 24 hours.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for regulating child care. This is done through the Division of Child Development and Early Education. The purpose of regulation is to protect the well-being of children while they are away from their parents. The law defining child care is in the North Carolina General Statutes, Article 7, Chapter 110.

The North Carolina Child Care Commission is responsible for adopting rules to carry out the law. Some counties and cities in North Carolina also have local zoning requirements for child care programs.

## Star Rated Licenses

Centers and homes that are meeting the minimum licensing requirements will receive a one star license. Programs that choose to voluntarily meet higher standards can apply for a two through five star license. The number of stars a program earns is based upon the education levels their staff meet and the program standards met by the program.

## Family Child Care Homes

A family child care home is licensed to care for five or fewer preschool age children, including their own preschool children, and can include three additional school-age children. The provider's own school-age children are not counted. Family child care homes will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants. Licenses are issued to family child care home providers who meet the following requirements:

- Home providers must be 21 years old with at least a high school education or its equivalent, and mentally and emotionally capable of caring for children.
- He or she must undergo a criminal records background check initially, and every three years thereafter.
- All household members over age 15 must also undergo a criminal records background check initially, and every three years thereafter.
- All family child care home providers must have current certification in CPR and first aid,

complete an ITS-SIDS training (if caring for infants 0 -12 months) every three years and the Emergency Preparedness and Response in Child Care training and plan. They also must complete a minimum number of training hours annually.

All family child care homes must meet basic health and safety standards. Providers must maintain verification of children's immunization and health status. They must provide developmentally appropriate toys and activities, as well as nutritious meals and snacks for the children in care. All children must participate in outdoor play at least one hour per day, if weather conditions permit.

## Child Care Centers

Licensing as a center is required when six or more preschool children are cared for in a residence or when three or more children are in care in a building other than a residence. Religious-sponsored programs are exempt from some of the regulations described below if they choose to meet the standards of the Notice of Compliance rather than the Star Rated License. Programs that operate for less than four consecutive months, such as summer camps, are exempt from licensing. Child care centers may voluntarily meet higher standards and receive a license with a higher rating. Centers will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants.

Licensed centers must meet requirements in the following areas.

## Staff

The administrator of a child care center must be at least 21, and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Administration Credential or its equivalent. Lead teachers in a child care center must be at least 18 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. If administrators and lead teachers do not meet this requirement, they must begin credential coursework within six months of being hired. Staff younger than 18 years of age must work under the direct supervision of staff 21 years of age or older. All staff must complete a minimum number of training hours including ITS-SIDS training for any caregiver that works with infants 12 months of age or younger. At least one person on the premises must have CPR and First Aid training. All staff must also undergo a criminal records background check initially, and every three years thereafter. One staff must complete the Emergency Preparedness and Response in Child Care training and plan.

## Staff/Child Ratios

Ratios are the number of staff required to supervise a certain number of children. Group size is the maximum number of children in one group. Ratios and group sizes for licensure are shown below and must be posted in each classroom.

Age	Teacher: Child Ratio	Max Group Size
0-12 mths	1:5	10
12-24mths	1:6	12
2 years old	1:10	20
3 years old	1:15	25
4 years old	1:20	25
School-age	1:25	25

*Small centers in a residence that are licensed for six to twelve children may keep up to three additional school-age children, depending on the ages of the other children in care. When the group has children of different ages, staff-child ratios and group size must be met for the youngest child in the group.*

## Space and Equipment

Centers must have at least 25 square feet per child indoors and 75 square feet per child outdoors. Outdoor play space must be fenced. Indoor equipment must be clean, safe, well maintained, and developmentally appropriate. Outdoor equipment and indoor furnishings must be child size, sturdy, and free of hazards that could injure children.

## Curriculum

Four and five star programs must use an approved curriculum in their four-year-old classrooms. Other programs may choose to use an approved curriculum to get a quality point for the star-rated license. Activity plans must be available to parents and must show a balance of active and quiet, and indoor and outdoor activities. Rooms must be arranged to encourage children to explore, use materials on their own and have choices.

## Health and Safety

Children must be immunized on schedule. Each licensed center must ensure the health and safety of children by sanitizing areas and equipment used by children. Meals and snacks must be nutritious, and children must have portions large enough to satisfy their hunger. Food must be offered at least once every four hours. Local health, building, and fire inspectors visit licensed centers to make sure standards are met. All children must be allowed to play outdoors each day (weather permitting) for at least an hour a day for preschool children and at least thirty minutes a day for children under two. They must have space and time provided for rest.

## Youth Program Parent Acknowledgement

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**\*Please sign and return this form to the Family Service Coordinator. Thank you for your attention to these guidelines and for helping us make the YMCA Afterschool program a success.**

I have been provided a copy of the 2021-2022 **Operational Policies** and Youth Program Parent Handbook which have been explained to me. I have read and understand the content.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

I have received the Simmons YMCA Youth Services Swimming Procedures and Policies. I have read and agree to all the policies set forth by the YMCA of Greater Charlotte and by the Simmons YMCA Youth Services Department. (LOCATED IN PARENT HANDBOOK).