

**HAMPSHIRE
REGIONAL YMCA**

**SCHOOL AGE CHILD
CARE
PARENT/GUARDIAN
HANDBOOK**

2023-2024

School Year

Welcome	3
Our Philosophy	3
Parent Involvement	3
Program Information	3
Locations	4
School-Age Child Care Staff and Site Phone Numbers.....	4
Hours and Days of Operation	4
Holiday Closings	4
Program Components	4
Staffing	5
Policies and Procedures	5
Snow Day Policy	5
Tuition and Schedule Policies	5
Additional Fees	5-6
Playground Use.....	6
Vacation Weeks.....	6
Accommodation Policy.....	6
Volunteers.....	6
Pick up/Drop off Procedures	7
Authorized Releases	7
Impaired Judgement	7
Income Tax Credit.....	7
Dependent Care Accounts.....	7
Emergency Procedures	8
Contacting the EEC	8
Children’s Records	8
Health and Safety Policies	9
Sick Child Policies	9
Medical and Drug Administration.....	9
Child Injuries	9-10
Policy for Reporting Abuse & Neglect of Children	10-11
YMCA Plan for Behavior Management.....	10-11
Bullying Policy.....	12
Statement on commitment to diversity and inclusion.....	13
Termination Policy	13
Dress	13
Toys/Cell from Home.....	14

Welcome

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Hampshire Regional YMCA's School Age Child Care (SACC) Program. This handbook is designed to give you information about our program and also supply you with information regarding policies and procedures as required by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

Our Philosophy

The Hampshire Regional YMCA is committed to preparing children to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow through programs that develop the individual, strengthen the family, and build safe, caring communities. Our child care program is designed to stimulate your child's mind, develop creativity, enhance self-esteem, and incorporate the YMCA's areas of focus: youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

Our fully EEC licensed program:

- Provides a safe, constructive alternative for with after school child care needs
- Welcomes and supports the diversity of our participants
- Works closely with your child's school to keep rules consistent by adhering to school policy
- Offers choices of activities for participants
- Provides information to and communication with caregivers to develop the best possible program for your children

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Throughout the YMCA's many years of experience with caregiver-child family programs, it has been proven that shared experiences between children and parents build a foundation for positive relationships and communication. Our HRYMCA programs work to help the whole family grow and prosper. If you have a special talent or a family tradition you wish to share with the group, please inform our staff. We are always open to new ideas. Your questions, suggestions, and concerns are important to the success of our program. Your calls are always welcome. If a staff member is not available to talk to you immediately when you call, please leave a message and someone will call you to schedule a meeting. Parents/Guardians are welcome anytime at the program, and an appointment is never required.

Program Information

Hampshire Regional YMCA School-Age Child Care Programs are licensed by The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and are mandated to uphold all of the rules and regulations pertaining to school-age child care licensing. Parent/Guardians may contact EEC at the number listed below for information regarding this center's compliance history:

Region 1 – Western Regional Office

95 Liberty Street, Suite 1124, Springfield, MA 01103

Phone: 413-788-8401; Fax: 413-784-1227

Locations

Our programs are held at Jackson Street, Bridge Street, and RK Finn Ryan Road elementary schools in Northampton as well as the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School in Hadley. Programs are assigned to specific areas of the school building. Usage of the school space is at the discretion of individual principals and is subject to change. We appreciate the support of the schools that welcome our programs!

School-Age Child Care Staff and Site Phone Numbers

Please use these numbers in emergencies to inform Site Coordinators of absences, lateness, or any other necessary information:

- Lisa Candito - Senior Program Director of Youth Development 413-584-7086 ext. 107
- Jenny Vanasse - School Age Child Care Director 413-584-7086 ext. 122
- Ally Tudryn - Jackson Street Site Coordinator 413-588-1819 (site cell phone)
- Olivia Wakefield-Colly - RK Finn Ryan Road Site Coordinator 413-588-1825 (site cell phone)

Hours and Days of Operation (rates available on registration form)

- Full-time care is available Monday through Friday
- Part-time options are 2-day T/TH or 3-day M/W/F
- After School Program: School dismissal - 6:00pm
- After School ½ Days: School dismissal - 6:00pm

Half Days

Separate registration required when offered

All Days and Vacation Weeks

Please see “All Days Out and Vacation Week Calendar” for information.

Holiday Closings

Please see “All Days Out and Vacation Week Calendar” for information.

Program Components

- Character Development, focusing on the Y Core Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility Literacy Arts, Drama and Music
- Science and Technology
- Homework Support
- Service Learning
- Social Competence and Conflict Resolution
- Healthy Snacks and Nutrition Education
- Physical Activity

Staffing

Our main objective is to nurture the developmental growth of each child. Staff are trained and committed to meeting the needs of all children. Our staff brings a wealth of experience and varied backgrounds to our childcare programs. Staff is required to complete an in-depth orientation program at the beginning of the school year. They are then required to attend additional trainings and hands-on workshops throughout the year to enhance their education and skills. All of our staff undergo a criminal background check and attend child abuse training and other YMCA child care certification trainings. All staff are required to obtain First Aid and CPR certification. The minimum staff to child ratio is 1:13 as defined by EEC.

Policies and Procedures

All of the HRYMCA School Age Child Care programs are licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and are mandated to uphold all of the rules and regulations pertaining to school age child care licensing.

Snow Day Policy

The School Age Child Care Program follows the school district's inclement weather closings. If school closes for the day, there will be NO After School program that day. If there is an early closure then there will be NO After School Care that day. If there are no after school activities, the After School Care program will run until 4:00pm or until delegated time by superintendent.

Tuition & Schedule Policies

The fee charged for School Age Child Care is distributed over the 10-month school year. The fees are based on the full school calendar and the result is the same charge each month for easier budgeting and billing. Please call 413-584-7086 and ask to speak with a Financial Aid Coordinator if you would like to apply for financial aid.

- Monthly fees are due on the first of the month for the current month's program.
- Non-payment will result in termination from the program.
- All changes require a two-week notice and must be approved by the Senior Program Director/SACC AD.
- Changes to days requested are based on the availability of slots in the program.
- Tuition may be paid by phone with a credit card, automatic bank draft, or automatic monthly credit card charges. Please see the Payment Agreement Form for the options available.
- Please do not bring payments to your child's school or send them in with your child.
- There are no credits or refunds for absences, sick days, or inclement weather days.

Additional Fees

- **Late Pick Up Fee:** After School Child Care ends at 6:00 p.m. If you are late to pick up your child, you will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. If a child is not picked up one hour after the program ends, and we are unable to reach a guardian or emergency contact person, we will contact the Child-At-Risk Hot Line, as required by DCF. We understand that emergencies do occasionally occur. If you have an emergency, contact the program via the Site Cell Phone

and/or find an alternate pick up. At the time of the late pick-up, you will be asked to sign a Late Pick-Up Form, which will be returned to the SACC Director. The Site Cell Phone will be the source to determine the exact time of the pick-up.

- **Late Payment:** If your payment is late, the HRYMCA reserves the right to add a \$10 fee to your School Age Child Care account.
- **Non-refundable Administration fee:** If you cancel your SACC enrollment PRIOR to the first day of the current school year start date, you will be charged a \$50.00 administration fee.
- **Insufficient Funds:** If your payment is returned, the HRYMCA reserves the right to add a \$25 fee to your School Age Child Care account.
- **All penalty fees must be paid within 10 days of receipt of written notice of incurred fees.** If the fee is not paid, the HRYMCA reserves the right to deny participation from HRYMCA programs until payment is received in full.

Playground Use

EEC requires that all playgrounds must provide adequate impact absorbing materials and the depth of these materials must meet federal fall zone requirements. Playgrounds or sections of play structures failing to meet these requirements may not be used during YMCA program hours.

Vacation Weeks

During vacation weeks if programs is offered, sites are combined. The YMCA requests centrally located schools/sites for vacation weeks but school use is at the discretion of the school department.

Accommodation Policy

The YMCA believes that all individuals, regardless of their need for accommodation, should be integrated into our programs. However, there may be a particular need that our staff is not trained to handle or that our staff/participant ratio is not adequate to serve. In such an instance, the family or supporting agency will be asked to assist the YMCA in finding and supporting an aide for the individual, or be referred to a program better suited to meet their needs. In addition, the School Age Child Care Director, in consultation with the Senior Program Director and parents/guardian or legally appropriate agency reserve the sole right to determine whether the program is suitable in each instance.

Volunteers

When volunteers participate in the program on a scheduled basis they will:

- Complete a volunteer application, CORI, BRC and Fingerprinting
- Submit documentation from school or volunteer agency outlining service conditions
- Submit documentation of required immunizations
- Complete volunteer orientation and training

Documentation will be kept regarding dates, hours of service and responsibilities of volunteers. Volunteers will be under the direct supervision of YMCA staff at all times. Volunteers will have NO unsupervised contact with children at any time.

Pick-Up/Drop Off Procedure

When picking your child up from After School Care, you must go into the program location to sign your child in or out, indicating the time of drop off or pick up. A picture ID must be shown. Children must also be signed in and out of the All Days Out programs.

If your child will be absent, please call your site's cell phone as soon as you know they will not attend that day. If we do not receive a phone call and your child is not on the school absent list, someone will call you.

Authorized Releases

SACC Staff will only release a child to parents or legal guardian(s) or to people identified on the Enrollment Form as being authorized to pick the child up. In the event a relative or friend not identified on the form needs to pick up a child, parents should provide advance notice. If an emergency or unexpected need should arise for an unauthorized person to pick up the child, precluding advance written notification, a telephone call from the parents or legal guardian(s) must precede the arrival of the unauthorized person. Identification from this person will be required. Changes to the list of people authorized to pick up your child may be made any time during the school year by asking the Site Coordinator to update your file. If only one parent has custody of the child and the other is not authorized to pick up the child, the parent must inform the program and must provide the Director with a certified copy of the Court Order/Restraining Order confirming that one parent does not have the right to pick-up the child from the YMCA. If there are any changes in legal custody of the child while the child is enrolled in the program, the parent must immediately notify the program and must provide the director with a certified copy of the notarized Court Order confirming the change in custody.

Impaired Judgment

If a parent or guardian arrives to pick up a child, and the staff's opinion is that the person's judgment is impaired by the use of alcohol and/or drugs, the HRYMCA reserves the right to refuse release of the child and is mandated to report the incident to Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Income Tax Credit

You may qualify for a child care tax credit if you itemize your tax returns. Annual statements showing the total amount paid for the year to SACC and Camp, can be sent upon request by our Administration Department.

Dependent Care Accounts

If you have a dependent care account and need statements for reimbursement, please contact the Accounting Coordinator, Stephanie Kirkendall, 413-584-7086 ext. 114

Emergency Procedures

Each site has a Site Cell Phone with emergency contacts to local authorities in case of an emergency. Each site will follow appropriate emergency procedures according to HRYMCA and EEC policy.

Contacting EEC

Regarding the regulatory compliance history of our program, any parent can at any time contact the Department of Early Education and Care. The EEC Regional Office is located at: 1441 Main St, Suite 230 Springfield, MA 01103 and can be reached at 413-788-8401.

Children's Records

The following forms (contained in the Enrollment Packet) are to be completed and on file prior to enrollment in the program:

- Child and Parent Basic Information
- Emergency Medical Information
- Desired Schedule
- First Aid and Emergency Medical Care Consent Form
- Transportation and Authorization Plan
- Consent for Child to Leave (only submitted when needed)
- SACC Authorization Form
- SACC/YMCA Waiver of Liability Form
- Individual Health Care Plan and Medication Consent Form (if applicable)

Changing a Record

Any changes in contact address or phone numbers, medical information, or authorized/unauthorized pick up must be immediately reported to the Child Care Director at the HRYMCA. A parent or guardian has the right to add or remove information from a child's file. However, all records must be complete for a child to be enrolled according to EEC regulations.

Maintenance of Records

Each child's records are updated yearly.

Transferring a Record

A parent or guardian has the right to request, in writing, the transfer of their child's record to any other person after that child has left the School Age Childcare Program.

Confidentiality of Records

Information in children's records is confidential and will not be released without written consent from a parent or guardian. A guardian may have access to their child's records at reasonable times. A log will be kept in each child's record indicating every person who requested and received a copy of the record.

Progress Reports

As required by the EEC, all parents/guardians with children enrolled in the SACC Program will be given a mid-year progress report.

Health and Safety Policies

Sick Child Policies

These guidelines have been established for the health and well-being of your child and the other children enrolled in School Age Child Care.

- If your child becomes ill at child care and needs to go home, you will be notified and must pick your child up within one hour.
- According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Publication: Health and Safety in Child Care, Second Edition; 1995, we use the following criteria for excluding an ill or infected child (see pages 330-331). Children will not be permitted to come to the program and you must keep your child home for 24 hours if any of these symptoms occur: Fever over 100 degrees, diarrhea, vomiting, or any communicable disease.
- A note from the child's physician is required stating that treatment has begun and the child is healthy before the child may return to the program.

Please notify the SACC Director immediately if your child has a communicable disease so proper notification stating illness and symptoms can be given to other parents and guardians.

Medical and Drug Administration

Children with chronic medical conditions that require either an Epi-Pen or inhaler to manage the condition are required to have an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) signed by a licensed health care practitioner, as well as the necessary medication, on-site prior to the child starting care.

Medication for temporary illnesses will only be administered under the following guidelines:

- Prescription medication will not be administered to a child without the written permission of a physician. The label on the prescription medicine is acceptable as written consent. There must be instructions stating specific dosage, number of times per day, and criteria for the administration. Standing orders for medication are valid for one year from the date signed. No medication will be administered if the product is expired.
- A parent must give consent to administer the prescription by completing an Authorized Medication Form which must be signed and dated.
- Medication must be given to a staff member upon the child's arrival at the program. All medication is secured within a locked area.

Please note that not all Before/After School sites have access to refrigerators. If your child's medication requires refrigeration, please speak to the SACC Director prior to the start of the program to be sure accommodations can be made.

- All medications will be administered by the Site Coordinator or designated person.
- All medications must be in their original containers; no medication will be accepted in baggies or unlabeled prescription bottles.
- Any unused medication is to be taken home that day unless other arrangements have been made. If any medications are left at a site, SACC staff will call the MA Dept. of Health in order to receive proper instructions on how to dispose of the medication.
- The medication you wish your child to receive must have been previously administered to the child. This is to ensure your child does not have an allergic reaction to the medication.
- If the staff does not have written consent from both a physician and a guardian, they will not administer any medication to a child. There are no exceptions.
- All staff will be trained in how to properly administer medication and will periodically be evaluated by the Child Care Director to ensure proper procedures are being followed.

Over the Counter Medication

Non-prescription medication will not be administered.

Sunscreen and Bug Repellant

Authorization forms for sunscreen and bug repellant are available upon request and must be completed and signed by a guardian before they will be administered. Parents or guardians must supply their own product.

Child Injuries

All School Age Child Care staff is required to be certified in First Aid and CPR. If an injury is minor and can be taken care of by a staff person, appropriate treatment will be administered and an injury report will be completed for parents to sign. If a staff member feels an injury may require additional medical treatment (but not emergency care), parents or guardians will be notified immediately to pick up their child and decide if they wish to seek medical attention. In the case of an injury that requires immediate medical treatment, the following steps will be taken:

- An ambulance will be called.
- The parent or guardian will be notified.
- A School Age Child Care staff will accompany the child to the hospital
- A HRYMCA staff member will remain with the child until a parent or guardian arrives
- An incident report will be filled out on all injuries and a copy will be made available to the parent.

Policy for Reporting Abuse & Neglect of Children

Child abuse is injury to a child for which there is no “reasonable” explanation. Child abuse includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual molestation and emotional abuse. The increasing incidence of reported child abuse has become a critical national concern. It is a special concern of the YMCA because of the organization’s role as an advocate for children and its responsibility to enhance the personal growth and development of both children and adults in all YMCA programs. For the protection of its children, families, members and employees, the Hampshire Regional YMCA has established the following policies to aid in the prevention and reporting of child abuse cases:

- Any caregiver may request a complete copy of the YMCA Child Abuse Policy.
- All children in Before and After School Care shall be protected from abuse and neglect. As child care workers, all YMCA staff are mandated by the State of Massachusetts to report the suspected case of abuse or neglect to DCF. This includes the reporting of guardians who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol. These reports will be in writing and will include factual information and observations of the child in question. The report will be dated and signed true to the best of the reporter's knowledge.
- Any suspected cases of abuse or neglect will be reported to the HRYMCA Child Care Director immediately who will then contact the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
- Any case of suspected child abuse that has allegedly occurred while the child was under the care of the YMCA staff will be reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- The YMCA will cooperate fully in all investigations of abuse and neglect. Cooperation will include identifying guardians of children currently or previously enrolled in the program to EEC (or any agency or person specified by EEC) as necessary for the prompt investigation of any allegations.
- Any staff member who is under investigation for suspected child neglect or abuse will be removed from direct care responsibilities until the DCF investigation is complete and until the Department of Early Education and Care clears the individual to return to work. If the investigation proves the complaint valid, the staff member will be dismissed immediately.

YMCA Standard of student behavior

Discipline and guidance at the school age programs shall be consistent and based on an understanding of individual needs, level of maturity of each child and will follow the Northampton Public Schools Elementary Code of Conduct. Our programs will follow the three main goals of the Northampton Public Elementary Schools' Kids Code of Conduct:

- 1) To have a respectful environment where everyone is treated with dignity,
- 2) To have a safe and orderly environment where all children can learn and
- 3) To teach and model behaviors of responsible citizens in school, community and country.

After school students will be expected to model school these expectations during program hours:

Treat everyone with respect:

- Speak in a courteous tone of voice (no whining, yelling, or dissing)
- Use respectful language (no curses, swears, putdowns, name – calling)
- Disagree without being disagreeable
- Take turns
- Wait patiently
- Listen when someone else is speaking

Behave Safely:

- Walk in the hallways, classrooms, library, offices, and cafeteria
- Leave dangerous objects out of school (weapons, matches, and lighters)
- Follow safety rules for playground games and equipment

- Follow safety rules for walking on the street, riding bikes, scooters or skateboards to school and riding the bus
- Follow directions of adults in charge of the bus, playground, cafeteria, classroom

Act Responsibly:

- Come to school on time, prepared for class, and ready to learn

Repeated behaviors that threaten the physical and/or emotional safety of the child, other children, or staff (such as hitting, biting, verbal assault, kicking, throwing objects, pushing, temper tantrums, etc.) will result in the following:

- **First Occurrence:** The child will be removed from the situation and have the opportunity to discuss the incident with a staff person. Alternate appropriate behaviors will be suggested at that time. An incident report will be written to document the behavior.
- **Second Occurrence:** The child will again be removed from the situation and given the chance for discussion. An incident report will be completed and the guardian will be informed upon pick-up of the child.
- **Third Occurrence:** There will be a meeting between the guardian(s), Child Care Director/Assistant Director, and Site Coordinator to develop a Behavior Support Plan. During this meeting the Director/Assistant Director will be willing to offer referrals to parents for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services. During the meeting, we can also pursue options for supportive services to the program including consultation and educator training.
- **Fourth Occurrence:** The child will be asked to leave the program.

** Extremely violent, disruptive and/or threatening behavior (such as housing a weapon in the program, inflicting serious injury, threatening to hurt other children or staff, property damage, etc.) can result in immediate termination at any time.

Bullying Policy

The Hampshire Regional YMCA core values are caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. The Y does not tolerate any form of bullying. We will investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, including cyberbullying and will take prompt, effective action to end that behavior and prevent its recurrence. This prohibition includes anyone associated with the YMCA including but not limited to members, staff, administrators, parents, program members, and guests. The YMCA will perform all due diligence with regard to bullying response and prevention, including penalties for false claims. Our efforts to prevent bullying include staff training and program curriculum.

Definition of Bullying

The Hampshire Regional YMCA will use a modified version of the state definition and defines "Bullying" as the following: The repeated use by one or more students/members/participants [aggressor(s)] of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property
- Creates a hostile environment at within our programs or facilities for the target
- Infringes on the rights of the target within our programs or facilities
- Materially and substantially disrupts a program or membership benefits or the orderly operation of a program or at a Y facility.

Statement on commitment to diversity and inclusion:

The Hampshire Regional YMCA is an inclusive organization open to all. We welcome all people regardless of ability, age, background, ethnicity/race, faith, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The Y believes that, in a diverse world, we are stronger when we are inclusive, when our doors are open to all and when everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. We work proactively and collaboratively to build organization and individual capacity, as inclusion is important to our strategy and impact. We welcome individuals with diverse abilities and if reasonable accommodations or modifications are needed, please contact your program director or our ADA Compliance Officer, Ivy Lenihan. ADA Compliance Office: Ivy Lenihan – Finance Director ivy.lenihan@hrymca.org

Termination Policy/Ending Care

The YMCA requires a two-week-advanced notice for all terminations from the program. Caregivers who fail to do so will still be responsible to pay for the billing period.

If the HRYMCA asks a family to leave the program, caregivers will receive written documentation of the termination. Possible reasons for suspension and/or termination from child care services are:

- Inappropriate physical and/or verbal behavior by a child or guardian that continues after the meeting with the Child Care Director.
- Extremely violent, disruptive, and/or threatening behavior.
- Overdue fee payment(s).

Dress

Children should wear clothes that are comfortable, practical and wash easily. Program activities may involve the use of paint, glue, or other messy materials. Children are scheduled to go outside on a daily basis, except in extremely inclement weather. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather.

Toys and Valuable Items

Items from home including toys, games, sporting equipment, electronics, trading cards, stuffed animals, and electronics are not allowed in the Before and After School programs and are to remain in the child’s backpack if brought to school. A child is responsible they bring to the program. for any jewelry We are not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen personal items brought into program from home.

Cellphone

We recognize that some parents and guardians feel their child needs to have their cell phone, but it must be kept in their backpack and turned off while at the after-school program. During program hours, texting and recording are not allowed at any time. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in confiscation of the phone and it may be retrieved by the parent or guardian at the end of the day.

Please reach out to the SACC Director with any questions. We look forward to working with you to provide a great SACC experience!