

# **ROCKLAND COUNTY YMCA**

## **School Age Child Care Parent's Handbook**

### **2009-2010**

#### **PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY**

- To support and strengthen the family unit, we focus on:
  - Improving communication among family members
  - Increasing their abilities to work and play together
  - Helping families to share their values with each other
  - Increasing their sense of community with other families
- To help develop to their fullest potential, we focus on:
  - Self-awareness, confidence and feelings of self-worth
  - Interpersonal relationships
  - Values and Development
  - Academic Achievement
  - Physical Skills
  - Health and Nutrition
- To deliver a program in a positive environment, we focus on:
  - Safety and Support
  - Having the children feel content with the program
  - Broadening the community, national and world understanding of children and parents

#### **CURRICULUM**

Our Before School Program offers a variety of free choice activities within a supportive atmosphere that eases the children into their school day. A parent or adult guardian must sign the child in with the appropriate date and time of arrival. This shows the official transfer of the child/children into the care of the YMCA SAC Program. Please understand that the YMCA will not be responsible for children who arrive before the scheduled time of 7:00 AM.

Our After School Program offers a variety of choices including arts and crafts, organized group games, outdoor play, table games, homework assistance, special events and a daily nutritious snack. Each site has its own schedule of daily activities designed to meet the needs of the children and their parents. Children are not permitted to bring toys to the SAC Program.

## **DISMISSAL/ABSENCES**

Upon regular school dismissal, all SAC children will be directed to the designated area for the SAC Program. In the SAC Program, all children will be accounted for within the first TEN MINUTES of the program. If a child who is on the attendance sheet does not arrive at the designated area the following steps are taken:

1. The cellular number voice mail at the respective site is checked for absences.
2. The absentee list from school is checked.
3. The classroom teacher is contacted.
4. A telephone call is placed to the parent/guardian.
5. If the parent/guardian is not at work, then a telephone call is placed to the home.
6. The Principal is notified.
7. The Program Director and Associate Executive of the program are called.
8. If the child cannot be located, the police are contacted.
9. When the child is located, all those concerned will be notified.

## **CHILDREN MUST BE SIGNED OUT OF PROGRAM**

The Staff will check children out to authorize persons only. We ask everyone who arrives at the program to provide identification when picking up child/children. Those individuals who are on the Pick-Up Authorization List may pick up the child/children on any given day. Parents are encouraged to send a note with their child/children stating the name of the person from the list who will pick-up on a specific day. Parents must sign the child out with the child's name, parent/guardian signature, date and time of pick-up. **Parents may not leave a voice mail message regarding an alternate pick-up person. The Site Director must speak with the parent to ensure that the child knows the individual.**

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

All children are expected to conduct themselves appropriately and to follow school rules while in the SAC Program. We believe that discipline:

- Is based on logical consequences
- Places the responsibility on the behavior
- Keeps options open
- Is an active teaching process that emphasizes teaching a person to act in a way that will result in more successful behavior
- Is friendly

### **THE FOLLOWING INTERVENTIONS WILL BE USED WHEN A STUDENT USES INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR:**

<b>VERBAL REMINDER</b>	-a verbal reminder will be given by a staff member of the inappropriate behavior.
<b>TIME IN</b>	-when the child uses inappropriate behavior, the child will earn TIME-IN. The child stays with an adult to discuss the behavior and possible options on how to handle the situation in the future.
<b>DEAR MOM &amp; DAD</b>	-the child writes a letter to his/her parents to inform them of the incident. The child delivers the letter to the parents with the Site Director.
<b>PARENT ALERT</b>	-this form indicates a parent/staff conference is necessary.
<b>BEHAVIORAL CONTRACT</b>	-is a written agreement between parent, child, Program Director and Site Director that states <b>(Any further occurrence of any behavior described on the contract will result in a one day suspension from the program. A second occurrence will result in five day suspension from the program. A third occurrence will result in termination from the program.)</b>

**NO REFUNDS OR CREDITS WILL BE ISSUED**

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

**HAND WASHING:** Children and staff must wash their hands with soap and warm running water as needed. Staff and children will wash their hands whenever hands are contaminated with bodily fluids and always wash:

- After using the toilet
- Before and after caring for a sick child
- Before any food service activity
- Before setting the table
- Before and after eating
- After handling pets or animals

**HOUSEKEEPING:** The program will keep the premises (including furniture, fixtures, toys and equipment) clean, safe, disinfected and free of debris and potential hazards.

Materials dangerous (toxic) to children will be secured in a way that is inaccessible to children, far from food storage and preparation areas. Staff will protect children from potential hazards, such as, caustic or toxic art materials, cleaning agents, medications, hot liquids or overexposure to heat or cold.

All garbage and refuse receptacles will have a tight fitting lid, be durable and will be constructed of materials that will not absorb liquids. All bathrooms will have toilet paper, soap and disposable towels kept at a height that is accessible to children. Signs showing proper hand washing must be posted in all hand washing areas.

**SICK CHILDREN:** When a child is not feeling well, the parent will be notified and asked to pick up the child at that time. If the parent cannot come, the child will be separated from the other children. The child will be made comfortable and will be continually monitored.

The YMCA will send a child home when:

- The child's oral temperature is at or above 100.4 °F and he/she shows signs of illness.
- The staff observes signs of a contagious disease or a severe illness.

The program will have a cot or mat available for sick children that will be disinfected and cleaned after each use. Children may not attend the SAC Program if they have any diseases listed as communicable.

**MEDICATION:** Any medication prescribed or over the counter, needs to be in its original container. The medication must state the child's name, type of medication, date and dosage. The original insert (directions) from the medication, a picture of the child, a written medical and prescription form are required.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:** The director will treat any minor injuries that occur with first aid. In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called. All efforts will be made to notify you and/or those persons designated by you. Upon the advice of medical personnel, staff will accompany your child to the hospital if necessary.

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:** Prior to acceptance, the Blue Information Card must be completed. If your child has any allergies, please remember to indicate this on the Blue Information Card. You will be notified if any of our children have been exposed to a contagious disease. We urge you to contact us immediately if your child has been similarly exposed or contracts an illness that could be contagious.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** It is the responsibility of the staff to protect the health of the children enrolled in the program and to maintain a safe environment.

**PROCEDURE:** The staff makes a daily health check of each child. At that time, a decision is made whether the child's condition suggests illness or simply tiredness from overexertion. This may only warrant further observation.

Any children who show signs of illness are isolated from the other children. Parents are then called to pick up the sick child from the program. While waiting, the child is provided with a place to rest quietly under the observation of the staff.

Children exhibiting the following symptoms should be kept at home:

- Fever
- Thick, runny, discolored discharge from the nose
- Discharge from the eye(s)
- Sneezing and/or profuse coughing
- Head Lice

If a child is sent to the program with these symptoms, the parents will be called and asked to bring the child home. If we are unable to contact the parents, we will then refer to your Authorization List. Under the leadership of the director, the entire staff serves as good health role models and gives daily instruction in good hygiene and the following good health habits.

- Washing hands after going to the bathroom and/or before handling food
- Covering mouth when sneezing or coughing
- Developing good eating habits
- Dressing properly for the weather

## **OUTDOOR WEATHER SAFETY**

All children are expected to go outside every day (weather permitting). Outside play gives the child an opportunity to run off excess energy generated during their regular school day.

The YMCA staff will monitor the local weather broadcast during the day to determine whether or not the children should go outside.

Staff will use their own discretion on days when it may be:

- raining outside
- snowing outside
- frigid temperatures
- excessively hot outside

Please be sure that the children are dressed appropriately for the weather. It is extremely important to have adequate “active play” times for elementary children.

### **Lightning**

At first sign of threatening weather or lightning, staff will bring all children indoors into a safe area. Staff will monitor weather information.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Admission is granted on a first come, first serve basis with special consideration given to children needing five (5) days a week. We require a minimum registration of two (2) days per week. Upon registration, specific days must be chosen and adhered to.

## **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Any changes in the schedule **must be made** through the SAC Office. The number is (845) 727-1037. Changes may NOT be made at the Before and/or After School Sites. Changes will only be permitted if there is room on the days requested.

You are responsible for the FULL AMOUNT contracted even if your child/children are absent. Changes in days may be made at any time provided the total contracted amount is **NOT REDUCED** and space is available. If space is available, days may be increased at any time.

## **REGISTRATION**

If for any reason your child/children need to withdraw from the SAC Program during the school year, there will be an additional **\$100 registration fee to return to the program.**

## **RIGHT TO REFUSE SERVICE POLICY**

The Rockland County YMCA School Age Program reserves the right to refuse service for the following reasons:

1. Failure of parent or child/children to follow the School Age Care Policy and Procedure guidelines.
2. Parents or child/children are physically or verbally abusive to staff and or other children.
3. Failure to pay fees on time as scheduled.
4. Failure to provide updated information and records.
5. Failure to adhere to site closing time.
6. When the Site Director, Program Director, or Associate Executive of SAC, at their discretion, believes that this continued service is not in the best interest of the child/children.

**NO REFUNDS OR CREDITS WILL BE ISSUED**

## PARENT PARTICIPATION PLAN

**WHAT WE GAIN FROM PARENTS:** Your insights into what may be at the root of your child's behavior. Your ideas and strategies would help us if the child has special needs, i.e.: communicating with a specialist or in accessing resources. A commitment to meet periodically and brainstorm together. Without our guidance, many parents will take feedback about their child's behavior to mean they are expected to fix the problem, often by punishing the child. This is not the case. Parents are usually relieved to find out that we are not blaming them for the problems and are not holding them solely responsible for the solution.

The purpose of brainstorming with parents and staff is to come up with a plan that would carry out programming changes to better engage the interests and abilities of the children. The *NAA Standards for Quality School Age Care* call on us to help children find ways to pursue their own interests, to empower children to take leadership roles and to give children choices of what they will do, how they do it, and with whom. Whenever a child is not meeting our behavioral expectations, we must ask whether we have done all we can do in order to shape the program in ways that engage this particular child's attention and energy before we go any further along on the pathway of discipline.

**COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS:** Parent communication is one of the most important aspects of childcare. Staff communicates with parents each day to let them know how their child is doing. Parents can be an asset if staff is having problems with a child/children. They can give insights in resolving behavior problems.

- Verbal communication is the most common type, but written communication is also necessary.
- Surveys are used to determine what parents want to see in the program, what children like and dislike and which days parents would be interested in helping at the program.
- Newsletters will be produced monthly. The newsletter is an excellent method of sharing upcoming events, schedules, and staff changes with parents. Activity schedules are another means of communication.

The *Parent Alert* is a form that communicates to the parent/guardian that the staff is having difficulty dealing with behavior problems. The intent of this form is to alert everyone that there is a serious problem that must be dealt with. Typically, the first *Parent Alert* triggers a conference with the parent/guardian. If the behavior does not improve, the child, parent, and staff enter into a *Behavioral Contract*. The Parent Handbook is the most comprehensive communication document that is given to the parent/guardian.

Exchange of information between parents and staff gives insight for both. The format may be informal or formal. We encourage parents to inform us of any changes happening in their life. Changes at home include: Moving, hospitalization of a parent or sibling or alterations in the parent's relationships, etc. These situations may influence the way a child relates to others. Staff members can better provide for children's needs if they are aware of the situation.

Any difficulties a child may have at school will affect their behavior at the SAC Program. Parents are asked to inform us of any such problems so that we can be sensitive to their child/children needs. The staff works as a team with the school and family. This enables us to provide the best environment for the child's growth and development. If homework time is needed, we can discuss how we can be of assistance.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the program, assist the regular staff and complement or work on special projects as their time permits. Activities involving parents are designed by the site staff and are based on the individual needs of the program. For example, parents may be included as guests when children are learning about careers. They may assist in supervising on field trips or volunteer to assist the children with reading, art projects, or science experiments. Parents should always work with the staff in the program.

Each site will provide a family event annually. The families may coordinate this event. This experience will help to build positive feelings between staff and families.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY**

The YMCA will work with families to devise a plan that will enable us to meet the individual needs of each child. We are required under the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* to make reasonable accommodations to provide fully inclusive school-age care for any child/children with special needs. Reasonable accommodation may include adapting space and activities so that all children can participate fully. When the participation of a child requires a level of staff or resources that go above and beyond the reasonable accommodations, we will invite the family to help us identify an additional source of support before determining that we cannot accept or continue the enrollment of the child.

## **CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY POLICY**

The YMCA will strive to hire staff that can relate to the children's home language and culture in order to maximize the congruence between the expectations at the home and in the program. The YMCA will prepare written information, such as parent manuals in the child's language whenever possible or necessary.

## **FAMILY ORIENTATION, INFORMATION AND INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

The YMCA will provide an orientation for new families annually. We have an open door policy. This encourages family members to visit the program at any time. A variety of opportunities will be provided for families to be involved in the program.

## **TUITION**

**FEES:** The fees are listed on the following page for the Before School Program and the After School Program. There is a 5% discount for the second child. Payments must either be mailed or brought to the YMCA SAC Office at 37 South Broadway, Nyack, NY 10960. We accept credit card and electronic check payments. No payments will be accepted at the sites.

At the time of registration, a non-refundable registration fee is required. Fees are based on your child/children's enrollment schedule, **not attendance**. There are no refunds or credits given for days that your child/children are absent for any reason including illness, vacation, suspension, early dismissal, inclement weather or if the program is cancelled due to an emergency situation. For questions regarding payment, please call the billing department at (845) 727-1037.

The fees for the SAC Program for the 2009-2010 school year are as follows:

### **A.M. PROGRAM** **(Montebello & Cottage Lane)**

<b>FIVE DAYS</b>	<b>\$210.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>FOUR DAYS</b>	<b>\$185.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>THREE DAYS</b>	<b>\$155.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>TWO DAYS</b>	<b>\$125.00 PER MONTH</b>

### **P.M. PROGRAM** **(Nyack & Ramapo)**

<b>FIVE DAYS</b>	<b>\$270.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>FOUR DAYS</b>	<b>\$235.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>THREE DAYS</b>	<b>\$195.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>TWO DAYS</b>	<b>\$150.00 PER MONTH</b>

### **P.M. PROGRAM** **(Clarkstown & South Orangetown)**

<b>FIVE DAYS</b>	<b>\$275.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>FOUR DAYS</b>	<b>\$240.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>THREE DAYS</b>	<b>\$200.00 PER MONTH</b>
<b>TWO DAYS</b>	<b>\$150.00 PER MONTH</b>

## TUITION PAYMENTS

- Please write the **NAME OF THE SCHOOL** and your child's name on your check.
- If paying by DEBIT CARD and/or CREDIT CARD, please be sure that by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month your account has sufficient funds and your credit card is in good standing. **If your debit/credit card declines for any reason you will be charged a \$20.00 fee to your account. If your account does not cover the tuition charge and it is declined for any reason on more than THREE occasions, you will be removed from the credit card list and you will be required to send another means of payment to the SAC Office.**

**Any check returned from the bank will incur a fee of \$40**

- If any changes occur to your credit card account, please notify the financial manager as soon as possible @ (845) 727-1037.
- Continuous late payments will result in the termination of your child's participation in the SAC Program.

**LATE PAYMENTS:** Payments must reach the SAC Office by the **1st** of each **month** or you will incur a late fee. Late notices and billing statements will no longer be mailed. After the **5<sup>th</sup>** of the month, a **\$20** late fee will be incurred. After the **20<sup>th</sup>** of the month, a **\$30** late fee will be incurred and your child/children will not be permitted to attend the program until the balance is paid in full.

**EMERGENCY CARE:** If you need your child to attend on a day they are not registered, kindly call the SAC Office, (WITH A MINIMUM 24HR NOTICE), for authorization. If the staff ratio permits, we will accommodate your child. There is a **\$35.00 fee** which will be billed to your account. Once you call to reserve an emergency day, you are responsible for payment whether you use the service or not.

**WITHDRAWALS:** Before withdrawing, please use the remainder of your tuition payment (days). If you choose not to use these days, as of the date of your withdrawal, you will be issued a 50% tuition refund minus a \$15.00 bookkeeping fee. All September withdrawals must be made by July 31, in order to get 100% refund. After August 1, 50% refund applies. Withdrawals must be made through the **SAC OFFICE ONLY.**

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

As a program whose purpose is to serve the community, financial assistance will be available when funds permit. These funds will be provided on a first come, first serve basis and be awarded based on a demonstrated financial need without regard to race, religion, national or ethnic origin or sex of the applicant.

## **ABSENCES**

Please be aware that every precaution is taken by the staff to ensure your child's safety. Failure to notify the YMCA of your child's absences causes unnecessary alarm. If your child does not appear for his/her session, the YMCA staff will call your Emergency Phone Numbers in an effort to locate your child. **Please inform us if your child/children will be absent from the YMCA Program by calling the site cell number before 12:00 P.M. that day.**

## **COMPLAINT POLICY**

Complaints that are not adequately addressed at the site level may be referred to the assigned Program Director. The YMCA will investigate any complaint in which the health, safety, or welfare of a child could be in danger. The following actions will be taken:

1. The YMCA will provide a phone call or written letter on the results of the investigation both to the SAC Staff person who is the subject of the complaint and to the person who is submitting the grievance.
2. If the complaint is unsubstantiated, it will be so deemed and no further action will be taken.
3. If the complaint is substantiated, it will be documented in the School Age Care employees file. The following additional actions will be taken at the discretion of the Associate Executive of the SAC Program. The Associate Executive will require the SAC employee to submit and comply with a written plan of correction or the YMCA will file criminal charges and/or pursue civil remedies.

## **SITES**

The Rockland County YMCA SAC program serves residents of Clarkstown, Nyack, Ramapo Central and South Orangetown School Districts:

### BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Montebello Elementary  
Cottage Lane Elementary

### AFTER SCHOOL CARE ONLY

Bardonia Elementary  
Cherry Lane Elementary  
Cottage Lane Elementary  
Connor Elementary  
Lakewood Elementary  
Laurel Plains Elementary  
Liberty Elementary  
Little Tor Elementary  
Montebello Elementary  
Strawtown Elementary  
Tappan Zee Elementary  
West Nyack Elementary  
Woodglen Elementary  
Upper Nyack Elementary  
Viola Elementary  
William O Schaefer

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The school district will provide transportation for your child from the home school to the program site. (Clarkstown, Ramapo and South Orangetown). The parent is responsible for making arrangements for transportation.

## **PICK-UP POLICY**

If your child is enrolled in the After School Program, he/she must be picked-up by **6:30PM**. Enrollment will be suspended if you consistently arrive late. No child will be released to anyone not listed on the PICK UP AUTHORIZATION FORM.

Anyone picking up a child (including parents) should be prepared, if necessary, to show proper identification.

## CLOSING

**DELAYED OPENINGS:** In the event that the start of school is delayed, the YMCA Before School Program will run on an hour delay:

	<u>Normal Starting Time</u>	<u>Delayed Starting Time</u>
Montebello	7:00A.M.	8:00A.M.
Cottage Lane	7:00A.M.	8:00A.M.

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS:** There will be no program on school holidays, snow days, vacations or early dismissals. The program will be canceled if school closes early due to unforeseen emergencies. In these events, there will be no YMCA Staff at the sites.

**YMCA CLOSING:** We reserve the right to cancel the program due to any emergency situation. A decision will be made by 12:00 noon. We will make every effort to contact parents. **It is imperative that you make alternate arrangements for your child/children by school dismissal.** Our utmost concern is for the safety of all the children, parents, and staff.

You may call the YMCA SAC Office at 845-727-1037, for closing announcements, or log onto [www.cancellations.com](http://www.cancellations.com) OR [www.worschoolclosing.info/](http://www.worschoolclosing.info/)

## IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please inform us immediately of any change in:  
Home Address or Work Address  
Home, Work, or Cell Phone Number  
Emergency Numbers  
Authorized Pick-Up Person/Persons & Custody Arrangement