



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE

Parent Handbook
YMCA BUFFALO NIAGARA



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YMCA BUFFALO NIAGARA MISSION STATEMENT

YMCA Buffalo Niagara is an inclusive association of people committed to a common effort to help individuals and families reach their fullest potential in terms of spirit, mind, and body.

YMCA SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE (SACC)

A before and after school program for elementary school age children ages 5-12 years old, YMCA School Age Child Care is more than babysitting. Caring staff are chosen for their ability to serve as role models; they lead well-planned, supervised activities. In addition, all School Age Child Care sites are licensed through the NYS Office of Children and Family Services. Please check with your local Y regarding specific program hours and locations.

Goals of the Program

- 1) To help children develop to their fullest potential physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally.
- 2) To deliver School Age Child Care in a safe, supportive, caring, and positive environment.
- 3) To support and strengthen the family unit.

YMCA Character Development

The Y is committed to teaching children the importance of good character by focusing on four core values: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. These four values, incorporated into all YMCA programming, are an integral part of our business and program philosophy.

School Age Child Care Staff

All YMCA School Age Child Care staff prior to hiring must successfully complete a criminal background investigation and are fingerprinted and screened through the New York State Central Registry for Child Abuse and Maltreatment. In addition, all staff attend at least 30 hours of workshops and trainings, and are required to successfully complete the YMCA Buffalo Niagara's New Employee Orientation, Child Abuse Prevention, and Listen First trainings prior to starting their positions.



Program Curriculum

The YMCA SACC curriculum includes diversified activities that enhance the emotional, social, physical, and intellectual growth of children through sports, games, crafts, study time, afternoon snacks and more. Learning centers provide areas for children to delve into specific topics. Hands-on activities make it fun to explore math, science, geography, reading, writing, problem solving, conflict resolution, and social skills. Activities include cooking, painting, outdoor play, board games, and building with manipulatives (toys and objects that demonstrate concepts).

Snacks

Children in our school age programs receive daily nutritious snacks. Maintaining a healthy snack policy helps children gain a greater understanding of healthful eating habits. Please indicate any dietary restrictions your child may have on the enrollment form as the Y is not a peanut-free zone. Homemade treats are prohibited. Snacks provided for celebrations must be purchased from a grocery store or bakery. Children are asked not to bring candy to the program and are strictly prohibited from sharing any food or candy without approval from the Y staff.

Change of Clothing

You may send play clothes for your child to change into upon arrival at our program. Please clearly mark your child's name on all clothing.

YMCA Financial Assistance

The Y strives to provide quality programs for all people, regardless of their ability to pay a required fee.

Within its available resources, YMCA Buffalo Niagara will award partial financial assistance to those who qualify, after completion of our confidential application process.

A limited amount of assistance, available through the **YMCA Strong Kids Campaign**, is awarded based on need and our ability to fund the subsidy. It is our intent that all individuals contribute toward the membership and/or program fee. Contact your local Y for an application.



Parental Responsibilities

Your involvement with the YMCA SACC program and cooperation with its policies and procedures is essential. Please take some time to read and understand the policies contained in this handbook. Take every opportunity to talk with YMCA staff about your child; ask your child about the program each day. You may also help by volunteering your time and talents or by joining the branch's program committee.

Program Satisfaction Surveys

The YMCA welcomes and appreciates your feedback regarding our program. We strongly encourage you to participate in our parent satisfaction survey which takes place in the fall and spring of each school year. In addition, "How Are We Doing Forms" are available at each site for you to provide your comments, concerns, and suggestions on an ongoing basis. Your feedback is critical to maintaining and improving the quality of the service we provide for you and your children.

Child Abuse and Maltreatment

All YMCA Buffalo Niagara part-time and full-time staff are mandated child abuse and maltreatment reporters in New York State. If our staff suspect abuse or maltreatment of a child participating in our program they are required by law to file a report.

In the event you suspect your child or someone you know is being abused or maltreated by a teacher, friend or family member, we can help. Please speak with the branch child care program director or executive director for guidance on documentation and reporting options. Reports may also be made anonymously by calling the NYS Child Protection Service System at 800-342-3720.



ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

Enrollment: To meet New York State Office of Children and Family Services and YMCA guidelines, children must enroll in the SACC program before they can participate. Space is limited; early enrollment will guarantee your child's place. Enrollment begins on March 1 for the upcoming school year and takes just three simple steps:

- Complete a YMCA School Age Child Care Enrollment Form (two business days minimum)
- Include payment of a deposit or your first week's Registration Calendar of Attendance
- Child and Adult Care Food Program Form (if applicable)

Deposits will be credited to your first registration. If you enroll within ten days of the start of the program or during the program, you will not pay a deposit, you will simply register.

Registration: Once enrolled, you will receive a monthly Registration Calendar of Attendance, where you may register your child for the days of the week that you need child care. To ensure proper staffing, registration and payment must be received at least 10 days prior to the start of the week(s) for which you are registering. You have three registration options:

Weekly - To accommodate a changing work schedule or to make it easier for you to budget, you may register for one week at a time. Registration and payment are due by Thursday of the week prior to services needed.

Monthly - To keep paperwork to a minimum and reduce the number of checks you write, you can register your child for all of the weeks each month.

Whether you choose the weekly or monthly option, just complete a registration form (calendar) to let us know which day(s) your child will be participating and send the registration with payment to your branch.



Recurring - If your schedule does not change from week to week, you can avoid completing a registration every month by electing a recurring registration. Let us know which day(s) of the week that you need child care and we'll automatically register your child and send you a bill each month or it can be electronically drafted from your bank account or credit card. Payment will still be due 10 days prior to the start of the weeks for which you are registered.

Vacations: You can place your enrollment on hold for up to two weeks during the school year without forfeiting your spot. Call your YMCA branch to make arrangements.

Drop-In Care: For those unexpected instances, child care may still be available on days that you are not registered for. Regulations require that we maintain adequate staff to child ratios. If staffing allows, your child can attend on an unscheduled day and we'll bill you later at the drop-in child care rate (check with your branch for fee). **To utilize drop-in care, you must first contact your YMCA branch to make arrangements for your child to attend that day. NOTE: Your child must be enrolled for the School Age Child Care program prior to participation in drop-in care.**

Payment: Payments can be made by mail or in person at your YMCA branch. We accept cash, checks, money orders, Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover Card, and YMCA gift certificates. Credit card and bank drafting is also available. The charge will appear on your monthly statement. For your protection, YMCA child care staff are not authorized to accept payments.

Credit Vouchers: You will receive five credit vouchers (per program, AM and/or PM) that you can use at any time during the current school year to receive a credit for days your child is registered and paid but does not attend. Credit vouchers are non-transferable, have no cash value, and expire at the end of the school year.

Additional Fees: A late pick-up fee of \$1 per minute per child (for additional administration costs incurred by the Y) will be charged for children that are picked up after the site has closed. Please call if you know that you may be late. A phone call does not waive the late fee.



PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 1. Enrollment:** New York State Office of Children and Family Services and the YMCA require that certain items be obtained for program participants prior to their start in the program:
 - YMCA Buffalo Niagara School Age Child Care Enrollment Form
 - YMCA Buffalo Niagara Monthly Registration Calendar
 - Any required program deposit
 - Individual Health Care Plan Form (as necessary)
 - Any other items as prescribed by your YMCA branch
- 2. Attendance:** Parents are required to pre-register for SACC by submitting a monthly calendar of attendance to the branch. It is also the parent's responsibility to notify the school that their child is enrolled in the YMCA School Age Child Care program. Within the first ten minutes of school dismissal, attendance is taken. If a child is absent from the program but not on the school's absentee list and the YMCA has not received prior notification, you will be contacted immediately.
- 3. Absence/Illness:** A sick child should be kept at home, both for his/her sake and that of others. Please inform us about the nature of any illness, especially if it is a communicable disease. **If your child is absent for any reason, you must contact the YMCA at least one hour prior to the start of the program.** We need this information for your child's safety and accountability.
- 4. Injury/Illness at Site:** In case of a minor injury, YMCA staff will administer first aid and you will be informed of the incident when you pick up your child. If your child is seriously injured or becomes ill, the coordinator will attempt to contact a parent or guardian immediately. If a parent or guardian is unavailable, the YMCA will contact the individuals listed on your child's emergency information form. If we cannot contact a responsible party, we reserve the right to call an ambulance and if necessary have a YMCA staff member accompany your child to a hospital.
- 5. Medication:** Medications refer to both over-the-counter and prescribed items (aspirin, inhalers, etc.). This also includes medication your child is regularly taking or medication your child may need to take while in our care (example: epi-pen or asthma medication given on an "as needed" basis). Not every site may be currently certified

to administer medication. Contact the branch program director for details. If your child needs to take medication while in the program, the medication must be brought to the YMCA staff directly by a parent or guardian along with the following items:

- (a) **Written Medication Consent Form** – A mandatory New York State generated consent form must be signed by your health care provider and yourself before we can administer any medications (either ongoing or as needed). We recommend that you keep extra copies of this lengthy form at home, so in the event your child should become sick, you will have a copy to take to your health care provider to fill out upon completion of your child’s health examination.
- (b) **Written instructions from your health care provider** authorizing the School Age Child Care program to administer such medication and specifying the circumstances, if any, under which the medication or prescription may not be administered.
- (c) **Medications** must be in their original container with the child’s complete name, the medication name, recommended dosage, time intervals, method of administration, and expiration.
- (d) **Under no circumstances** is any child enrolled in YMCA School Age Child Care permitted to have his/her own medication in his/her possession, including back packs. This is against policy and creates a very dangerous situation. If we find any child with medication in his/her possession it may be grounds for IMMEDIATE termination from our program. This includes, but is not limited to: cough drops, insulin, asthma inhalers, epi-pens, and sunscreen. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please speak with a YMCA employee.



6. Drop Off/Pick Up:

- Only those authorized on your child's registration form may pick up your child from the program.
- Photo I.D. is required. Your child will not be released to anyone without proper identification. Person must be at least 18 years of age or older.
- To help our staff ensure your child's safety at all times, you must enter the School Age Child Care site to sign your child in or out whenever you drop off or pick up your child.
- Children will not be permitted to walk or bicycle home without a written consent signed by a parent/guardian.
- The YMCA must be notified in writing of any changes in people authorized to pick up your child.
- If drop-off and pick-up are subject to any court orders, you must notify and provide proper documentation to the YMCA for your child's file.
- Please call the YMCA if you know you may be late.
- If your child is not picked up by the site closing time (check with site for hours), staff will attempt to reach the parent/guardian. If YMCA staff members are unable to contact the parent/guardian, the emergency contacts listed on your child's registration form will be called and your child will be released to him/her. If no one is reached by 6:30 pm, your child will be transported to the YMCA branch facility and the executive director, corporate duty officer, and local Child Protective Services Agency will be notified.
 - Late pick-up will result in monetary fees and may lead to dismissal from the program (see Additional Fees, pg. 6).



7. Visitation Policy: You may visit your child at any time he/she is in attendance. All visitors are required to sign in and out and to state the purpose of the visit in our visitor log located at each site, as we do not allow strangers to observe children in our program.

8. **Inclement Weather Policy:** When weather conditions close school before the normal start of the day or before the normal end of the school day, School Age Child Care will also be cancelled and you are to follow the school's inclement weather policy. If you are unsure of a program cancellation, please contact your local YMCA. YMCA program cancellations are aired on local TV and radio stations. Some branches may offer Vacation Club on snow days. (Credits will automatically be issued for snow days.)
9. **Discipline Policy:** The safety and well-being of each child in our care is our number one priority. When behavior expectations are not met, YMCA staff will implement our progressive discipline policy to help correct the undesired behavior. Listed below are the steps utilized by our staff:
- a. Verbal warning given: explain why behavior is inappropriate.
 - b. Time out - time to refocus and redirect.
 - c. Verbal communication between parent and site coordinator.
 - d. Parent conference with site coordinator and program director, followed by a written summary of meeting. Child, parent, and site coordinator sign a written contract agreeing to acceptable behavior and alternative solutions.
 - e. If inappropriate behavior continues, child may be suspended from program for up to one week.
 - f. Prolonged disruptive and inappropriate behavior will result in dismissal from the SACC program.

Extreme Behavior Issues: In extreme cases, a child's behavior may warrant immediate suspension or expulsion from the program. Such cases include the use of profane or abusive language or any aggressive behavior which threatens or causes physical harm to other participants or staff.

10. **Personal Belongings:** We take pride in our ability to provide your child with a variety of activities that entertain and challenge. Please do not allow your child to bring valuable personal belongings to the program site. These include video games, portable music devices, cell phones, and other toys/games. **The YMCA assumes no responsibility for any items lost or stolen at a School Age Child Care site.**

YMCA BUFFALO NIAGARA LOCATIONS

YMCA School Age Child Care is operated at more than 30 locations across Western New York in YMCA branches, local schools, and extension sites. If you have any questions regarding program locations, policies or procedures, please contact the YMCA Corporate Office or your YMCA branch.

DELAWARE FAMILY YMCA

2564 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14216
716-875-1283 (p)
716-875-0305 (f)

NIAGARA FALLS FAMILY YMCA

1317 Portage Rd.
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
716-285-8491 (p)
716-285-1030 (f)

ELLICOTT-MASTEN FAMILY YMCA

585 William St.
Buffalo, NY 14206
716-845-5440 (p)
716-845-5443 (f)

NORTHEAST FAMILY YMCA

4433 Main St.
Amherst, NY 14221
716-839-2543 (p)
716-839-2352 (f)

KEN-TON FAMILY YMCA

535 Belmont Ave.
Kenmore, NY 14223
716-874-5051 (p)
716-874-5054 (f)

SOUTHTOWNS FAMILY YMCA

1620 Southwestern Blvd.
West Seneca, NY 14224
716-674-9622 (p)
716-674-9522 (f)

LANCASTER FAMILY YMCA

5 West Main St.
Lancaster, NY 14086
716-684-2395 (p)
716-651-9745 (f)

YMCA CAMP WEONA BUSINESS OFFICE

301 Cayuga Rd., Suite 100
Buffalo, NY 14225
716-565-6008 (p)
716-565-6007 (f)

YMCA BUFFALO NIAGARA CORPORATE OFFICE

301 Cayuga Rd., Suite 100
Buffalo, NY 14225
716-565-6000 (p)
716-565-6007 (f)

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