



Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi
SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE PARENT HANDBOOK
2022-2023

Welcome to YMCA School-Age Child Care!



Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi School-Age Child Care Program!

At the YMCA, our mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. We work hard to strengthen the community through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Our child care programs respond to working parents' critical need for reliable high-quality care for their children each day.

At the Y we believe all youth have immense potential. We are happy to have the opportunity to be a part of your child's out-of-school hours, offering a healthy balance of recreation, academic support, creative activities, and skill development. Y staff collaborate with children to model and practice the YMCA's core values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. Our emphasis on social and emotional learning provides children with opportunities to build self-efficacy, social skills, and good character.

This Parent Handbook is a helpful resource and a guide to understanding the YMCA's school-age child care program and our policies. Please keep this handbook handy to refer to as necessary. In addition, information on other YMCA programs, including our summer Day Camps, is posted on our website and is updated on a regular basis.

Check out our website at www.metroymcams.org!

Thank you again for choosing the Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi as your child care provider.

Sincerely,

Sara Pyron
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2022-2023 School-Age Child Care Sites

Care Site	Schools Served	2022-2023 Operating Hours
Clinton Family YMCA	Clinton Park Elementary* Northside Elementary* Eastside Elementary* Lovett Junior High*	School Dismissal-6:00 p.m.
Reservoir Family YMCA	Flowood Elementary* Northshore Elementary Highland Bluff Elementary* Northwest Elementary* Oakdale Elementary*	School Dismissal-6:00 p.m.
Revive Collegiate Charter School	Revive Collegiate Charter School	School Dismissal-6:00 p.m.

*The YMCA will transport children attending these schools to the Care Site at school dismissal time. Parents/Guardians** will pick up their children at the Care Site, not the school their child attends during the school day.

** The term "parents" will be used throughout the remainder of this handbook.

Child care is offered ***after school only***. Before-school care is not provided.

Program Overview

We help children learn, grow, and thrive!

The Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi offers school-age child care for children in Grades K-6, serving nine community elementary schools at two YMCA branches and one on-site school location. We offer child care after school, on school release days, and extended holiday breaks.

At the Y, we strive to fill your child's out-of-school hours with activities that enhance personal, academic, physical, and social development while providing a values-centered experience that is fun and safe. We provide a balance of choice-based arts and crafts, active play (indoors and outdoors), academic enrichment, and character development experiences, along with essential activities such as homework assistance and a healthful snack.

Ask about the benefits of becoming a YMCA member!

YMCA members receive discounted fees on school-age child care and many other YMCA activities. Contact our Member Services Desk at (601) 664-1955 or your nearest YMCA branch location today for information on membership pricing for your family and activities for your child.

YMCA School-Age Child Care Goals

YMCA child care programs focus on child development and place a high priority on serving the needs of the child, the parent, and the family.

Our goals are to:

1. Provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding of self and others and to develop social skills in a setting characterized by warmth, personal respect, positive support, and responsiveness to their needs.
2. Encourage diversity of thought, cultures, religions, and ethnic traditions, leading to improved communication and understanding among all people.
3. Provide a curriculum that encourages children to grow intellectually by experiencing a wide variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials and by pursuing their own interest within the context of community life.
4. Meet parents' and children's needs by offering safe, accessible, and affordable programs that are staffed by competent, responsible caregivers who understand and meet the needs of children.
5. Strengthen the family unit by providing opportunities for family members to work and play together, to share values, to improve their economic stability and to broaden their sense of community with other families.

Program Components

- **Afterschool Program** – This program starts the first week of school and runs through the entire school year. It provides traditional afterschool care when school is operating on a regular school day schedule, extended care on days when school dismisses early, and full-day care on school release days (such as federal holidays, parent teacher conferences) of one- or two-days' duration. The afterschool program is an ongoing weekly program; drop-ins are not permitted.
- **Full-Day Child Care** – Full-day care is provided on days school is closed (for one- or two-days' duration). This care is available only to families whose children attend the afterschool program. No drop-in care is provided.
- **School Break Day Camps** – Full-day child care is provided during extended school breaks, such as over Fall/Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, and Spring Break. As the Day Camps are open to the community, afterschool program participants are required to pre-register in order to attend Day Camps. An "early registration" window for the Day Camps will be available to afterschool program participants two weeks prior to community registration. Following the early registration window, enrollment will be available on a first come/first serve basis. Be sure to make your reservations during the early registration period to assure your child will have care on the days you need it.

If the demand for care during a scheduled Day Camp is not sufficient to meet minimum enrollment requirements (typically 10 participants), it may be necessary to cancel it or combine two or more Day Camps at one location. Decisions will be made based on preregistration reservations, so it is important to return your child’s reservation form in a timely manner. If it is necessary to cancel or combine Day Camps, parents will be notified at least one week in advance.

Licensing

The YMCA School-Age Child Care sites at the Clinton Family YMCA and the Reservoir Family YMCA are licensed by the Mississippi’s State Department of Health’s Office of Health Protection. (The site at Revive Collegiate Charter School is currently completing the child care licensing process.)

Program Activities

The Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi strives to enhance our participants’ development in spirit, mind, and body. We recognize that children have unique personalities, needs, and interests. We provide choice-based programming and routines that offer children opportunities to engage in activities they enjoy, at a pace that satisfies their needs for activity, nourishment, socialization, and rest.

While the precise daily schedule will vary depending on the site, the typical daily schedule is as follows:

Typical After School Schedule	
School Dismissal-3:00 p.m.	Transportation to Care Site (Clinton and Reservoir YMCA sites)/Program Sign-In Homework Assistance (for children who have homework) --AND-- Structured Activity (for children who do not have homework)
3:00-4:00 p.m.	Handwashing/Snack/Group Time Announcements --followed by-- Choice Recreation Activity Period #1
4:00-5:00 p.m.	APA Curriculum Activities --alternating groups-- Choice Recreation Activity Period #2
5:00-6:00 p.m.	Choice of Structured (staff-led) and/or Free Time Activities until Program Sign-Out

Snack Time

Our program follows the YMCA of the USA's Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards, which provide guidance for the amount of physical activity, suggests limits on screen time, encourages healthy eating, and includes educational information about healthy living behaviors for parents to incorporate at home. HEPA's standards for snacks in child care programs include offering fruits and vegetables as options for snacks and water as a primary beverage.

The YMCA will provide your child with a nutritious snack each day. The snack menu will be posted near the Parent Message Board. Please *do not* send snacks to school with your child. Outside food and beverage or snacks from home are not permitted in the afterschool program. We will also not allow children to bring money to purchase items from the YMCAs vending machines.

Homework

All children will be asked if they have homework when they sign into the program each day. Children who have homework are expected to work on their schoolwork as part of their first 30-minute Choice Recreation Activity Period. A staff member will be available at this time to assist your child as needed.

Children who complete their homework before the end of the Choice Recreation Activity Period may read quietly or will be provided with a quiet activity (such as books, drawing, or puzzles) they can engage in while others continue to work on their homework. At the end of this 30-minute period, the children will be free to engage in their next Choice Recreation Activity period, when applicable.

Children who do not complete all homework during this time period *will not* be required to remain in the homework area. To provide a balanced schedule and allow all children to engage in the fun activities we have planned, we will allow all children to put their homework and study materials away and engage in the next activity after the first Choice Recreation Activity Period. Your child may, however, choose to continue working on their homework during the structured/unstructured activity period at the end of the day. ***Please discuss with your child how you want them to manage the issue of unfinished homework and encourage them to follow through with your wishes. Please understand your child may not complete all of his or her homework in the afterschool program and may still need to work or study at home.***

Participants who indicate they do not have homework *will not* be required to do schoolwork or study. In the spirit of our YMCA Character Development focus on Honesty, we will trust your child to be truthful about whether they have homework. Please talk with your child about your expectations related to the completion of homework in the program and encourage them to follow through accordingly.

Daily Choice Recreation Activity Period(s)

Our staff take care to plan a balance of activities that appeal to a variety of interests, provide opportunities to try new things, and encourage children to socialize and make

friends. We strive to make the most of your child's out-of-school time and create an atmosphere of exploration and fun. At times during the program's day your child will be able to choose from a selection of activities; other times we will ask all the children to engage in the same activity. The children will be encouraged to participate, as we have found over the years that children enjoy the school-age child care program most when they are actively engaged.

The activities planned for each week will be posted near the Parent Message Board and shared via email. If we are planning to do an activity your child cannot participate in for any reason, please discuss this with the Child Care Site Director prior to the day the activity is scheduled. We will make an effort to follow through with your request if possible, however if our staffing pattern does not allow it, you may need to pick up your child early on that day.

Academic Enrichment Program

The YMCA partners with the Mississippi Department of Human Services and other state agencies to provide the Afterschool Program Activities (APA) program. This program includes an enhanced educational curriculum with lessons and activities in literacy, mathematics, and character development. All sites participate in activities utilizing the APA curriculum for 30 minutes every day in small groups.

Activity Specialists

As part of our staffing plan for this school year, we have added staff members who specialize in curriculum areas school-age children find appealing, such as arts and crafts, sports, music, and other special interests. These Activity Specialists will be scheduled to visit all of the afterschool program sites on a routine basis, conducting staff-led activities for the children as part of their Free Choice Activity Periods. Some of these activities will be available on a casual basis, with the children deciding whether to participate on the same day the specialist is present; other activities will be part of organized clubs (see below), which will involve the children signing up ahead of time and committing to long-term participation.

Check the activity plan posted on the Parent Message Board at your child's site for the daily schedule and any upcoming activities.

Afterschool Clubs

With the addition of the Activity Specialists to our staff team, we are also adding a "club" component to your child's afterschool experience. Children will be provided with opportunities to sign up for a variety of clubs that will meet during one or more Choice Recreation Activity Periods. The subject matter of the clubs will be planned according to the children's interests and the availability and expertise of the Activity Specialists and our staff team.

The clubs will take place over a specific number of weeks. Staff will introduce the clubs during the children's group time and provide a fixed period of time when the children

can sign up to participate. As much of the instruction and projects related to the clubs are cumulative, participation in a club will involve a time commitment for the full-time span of the club.

Participation in clubs is optional; we will provide at least one alternative activity during the times clubs are meeting if your child is not participating in the club.

Character Development

YMCA School-Age Child Care is built on a foundation that strengthens youth through character development, with an emphasis on four core values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. Daily activity plans will frequently include lessons and activities to foster positive character development. Staff will model these and other character traits and will encourage the children to do so as well.

Transportation

Afterschool Program Transportation (*Clinton Family YMCA and Reservoir Family YMCA sites only*)

Transportation from the schools served by the Clinton Family YMCA and Reservoir Family YMCA to the YMCA branch (see above) is provided using YMCA-operated buses (which comply with the requirements of the Mississippi State Department of Health's guidelines for child care transportation) or buses operated by the local school systems.

Parents are responsible for picking up their children from the YMCA branch; transportation back to the school and/or home is not provided.

Full-Day Child Care and Day Camp Transportation

The YMCA does not provide transportation of any kind to the care sites providing full-day care on school release days or to the Day Camps. Parents are responsible for transporting their child to these sites.

Field Trip Transportation

All transportation for field trips (full-day child care on school release days or Day Camps only) is provided using either the YMCA's buses or hired commercial buses. Children are not transported in private vehicles at any time.

Transportation Conduct Guidelines

All children are expected to abide by the same Code of Conduct while being transported to the care site and field trips as during any other time in the program, along with the following guidelines for behavior on the bus:

1. The children will enter and exit the bus in an orderly manner.
2. The children will wear their seat restraints for the entirety of the trip.

3. The children will talk quietly, without disturbing others.
4. The children will remain seated and face the front at all times.
5. The children will keep the aisles clear and place personal items in their laps.
6. The children will refrain from placing anything outside windows.
7. The children will not talk to or otherwise distract the driver.
8. The children will not eat or drink while riding.
9. The children will treat the driver with respect.

Field Trips

Parents will be notified in advance of all field trips and their cost (if any) and will receive a permission slip, which must be signed and returned to the Child Care Site Director prior to the field trip.

All children are expected to go on the field trips. Parents must sign their child into the program before the scheduled leaving time for the field trip and may pick them up only after the field trip concludes and the children return to the care site. Parents *may not* – for any reason – drop their child off or pick their child up at a field trip site.

If you do not wish for your child to attend the field trip or if your schedule does not allow you to drop off or pick up the child within the required time frame, the child may not attend the program that day. Fees will not be prorated or refunded for any days of care missed due to not participating in field trips and the child may not attend on an alternate date to make up for the day of care missed.

Meals and Snacks

USDA Food Program

The YMCA School-Age Child Care program participates in the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All eligible persons have access, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap, to the benefits available through the operations of this food service program. Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against should immediately write to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Afterschool Program

As described above, the YMCA will provide your child with a nutritious snack each day. The snack menu will be posted near the sign-in area. Please do not send snacks to the program with your child. Snacks from home are not permitted. We also will not allow children to bring money to purchase items from vending machines.

Full-Day Child Day Care and Day Camps

On school release days when full-day care is provided and during Day Camps, the YMCA will provide a morning and afternoon snack for your child. No breakfast will be provided; parents will need to provide breakfast before signing their child into the program.

Lunch is provided for participants attending the site at the Clinton Family YMCA.

Parents whose children attend the program at the Reservoir Family YMCA are responsible for providing a nutritious cold lunch and a drink for their child. Please include healthful foods from all food groups – protein, grains, fruits and/or vegetables, and low-fat dairy. Avoid “junk” foods, candy, or other foods high in sugar, soda, etc.

Clearly label your child’s lunch with both their first and last names. While limited refrigerator space is available, we encourage parents to pack their child’s lunch in an insulated lunch bag and use ice packs to keep the contents fresh, or to pack foods that will hold well without refrigeration. Please *do not* pack foods that require heating; staff *will not* warm food for participants. If you wish to provide a warm lunch for your child, you will need to pack it in a thermal container. Be sure to include a napkin and any utensils your child will need to eat their lunch.

Children may only eat the food their own parents send with them for lunch. They may not share or trade food with other children and will not be permitted to purchase food or beverages from the YMCA’s vending machines.

To protect children with allergies and/or food sensitivities, we ask that you do not send any foods containing peanuts or tree nuts in your child’s lunch. Our programs operate in shared spaces, so even if no children attending the YMCA School-Age Child Care program are allergic to these items, we must also ensure the space is safe for the participants in the other YMCA and community programs using our space.

Enrollment Policies and Procedures

Registration Procedure

To fully comply with the standards of the Mississippi State Department of Health and the YMCA’s recordkeeping requirements, ***parents must complete a new set of enrollment forms for each of their enrolled children each school year***. In the event any information provided on these forms changes during the school year, parents must provide updated information in writing.

Enrollment is not complete until ***all*** of the required forms included in the registration packet are ***completed in full*** and are ***received*** at the YMCA ***no later than the Wednesday prior to the child’s first scheduled week of attendance at the school-age child care program***. You may mail your child’s registration materials to the YMCA’s Corporate Offices at the Flowood Family YMCA – 690 Liberty Road; Flowood, MS 39232 – ATTN: Senior Director of Youth Development) or drop them off in person at the Flowood Family YMCA’s Member Services Desk (same address). If you are mailing registration materials to the Y, we must *receive* these materials on or before the Wednesday prior to your child’s first scheduled week of care.

The completed registration packet must be accompanied by a \$40 nonrefundable registration fee and payment in full (check or credit card) for the first week of care.

Please take care to complete *every form* provided to you in the YMCA School-Age Child Care registration packet. No child will be allowed to attend the program until *every form* has been received.

Participation Schedule

Participation in YMCA School-Age Child Care program is an ongoing, weekly commitment that begins upon enrollment and ends at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year or until the parent officially withdraws the child from the program (2-week written notice required).

Enrollment is offered as a full-time commitment, with the same rate charged regardless of how many days per week the child attends.

Parents must indicate the *specific* days of the week their child will attend the program each week on the registration form to reserve their child's care. Parents with flexible work schedules – those whose work schedules do not follow specific days of the week and/or change from week to week must submit a written monthly schedule of planned days of attendance to the Child Care Site Director at least 7 days prior to the first day of every new month.

Drop-in/casual scheduling will not be permitted under any circumstances.

Holiday Closures 2022-2023 School Year

YMCA School-Age Child Care will be closed on the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Holiday (Thanksgiving Day and the following day [Friday])
- Memorial Day

NOTE: YMCA School-Age Child Care may also be closed for one or two school days over the course of the school year for program transition and staff training. Parents will be given at least one month's advance notice of such closures.

Required Registration Forms

All participants in YMCA School-Age Child Care must have a complete registration packet on file. This includes:

- ***YMCA School-Age Child Care Registration Form*** – Every section of this form must be completed in full, with no blank spaces. In the event an item on this form does not pertain to your child, please indicate this by writing "N/A" in that section.
- ***Family Meal Application for Child and Adult Care Food Program*** – The YMCA School-Age Child Care Program participates in the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which reimburses the program for a portion of the cost of the snacks provided to the children. The USDA requires this form to document the

number of students participating in our program. (Note: Parents whose children attend the site located at the Clinton Family YMCA or Revive Collegiate Charter School will not need to complete this form.)

- **Electric Funds Transfer/Bank Draft Form** – All families (except for those receiving reimbursements from third party payers such as the Mississippi State Health Department Child Care Payment Program) must complete this form.

Program Fees and Payment

Registration Fee

A nonrefundable registration fee of \$40 and the first week’s child care fees must be paid at the time of registration. The YMCA accepts credit cards and personal checks only.

Weekly Afterschool Care Fees

Weekly fees* are as follows:

	YMCA Members (1-5 Days/Week)	Community Participants/Non- Members (1-5 Days/Week)
Afterschool Care	\$55/week	\$73/week

These weekly fees have been calculated using a formula that considers the cost of providing care over the full school term and distributes this amount evenly over the weeks of the school year. As such, the weekly fee will remain the same, regardless of school release days, extended breaks, and any closures due to inclement weather. Fees will not be prorated for absences, illness, suspension, holidays, school release days, extended breaks, etc.

YMCA Family Members are offered a reduction in weekly fees, as noted in the chart above. In order to pay the reduced rate, the family’s YMCA Family Membership must be active and in good standing at all times. In the event the membership is cancelled or interrupted for any reason, the weekly child care fee will be increased to the Community Participant/Non-Member rate, effective beginning the week of care in which the YMCA Family Membership was deactivated. Any difference between the weekly rate paid and the amount due at the Community Participant/Non-Member rate must be paid in full before care can resume.

In the event early school dismissal or a single school release day occurs on a day your child is regularly scheduled to attend the afterschool program, care will be provided on this day at no additional charge above the weekly fee paid.

School Break Day Camp Fees

Care will be available during extended school breaks (beyond one- or two-days' duration) through School Break Day Camps. Parents will be provided an opportunity to make advance reservations for full-day care for their child prior to the Day Camp. Reservations are required; drop-ins will not be accepted.

Enrollment is available on either a daily or weekly basis. The fee schedule for Day Camps will be included on the reservation form.

Day Camp fees must be paid in advance via EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer)/bank draft, on the same schedule as regular afterschool care is paid. Fees paid for reserved Day Camp care will not be reduced or refunded for absences, illness, suspension, or any other reason.

Payment of Fees

Beyond the first week of your child's scheduled attendance at YMCA School-Age Child Care (which must be paid in advance at the time of enrollment), all child care fees must be paid using an Electric Funds Transfer (EFT)/bank draft. No exceptions will be permitted; all fee payment must be managed using EFT/bank draft. This can be set up through a checking account, savings account, credit card (Visa, Mastercard, American Express, or Discover) or debit card.

Bank drafts will take place on the Friday prior to each week of care your child is scheduled to attend. Please be prepared for this draft and take care to keep your account information up to date.

In the event your account information changes at any time, or you wish to pay your child's fees using a different account, you must provide updated information no later than one week prior to your next scheduled bank draft. To update your payment information, contact the Member Services Desk at any YMCA branch or speak with your Child Care Site Director.

Late or Unsuccessful Bank Drafts

Should any EFT/bank draft be refused by your financial institution or credit card company for any reason, the YMCA will make additional attempts to process the payment. You are responsible for any and all charges (due to insufficient funds, inactive account, expired account information, lack of available credit, etc.) associated with these bank drafts/payments. If the attempted redraft is not successful you will be required to provide another form of payment (payable in person at the Member Services Desk at any YMCA branch) during regular business hours. A \$30 service charge will be added to your fee for every unsuccessful attempt to draft funds from your account.

In the event your payment cannot be successfully processed by the end of the business day on the Friday prior to your child's next attendance date, you will not be permitted to sign your child into child care on your child's first scheduled day the following week, until

payment in full has been processed. You will not receive credit or a refund for days missed.

Be advised the YMCA reserves the right to cancel your child's enrollment in the program if fees are not paid. Re-enrollment at a later will require a zero balance on the past due account, payment of a new nonrefundable \$40 registration fee, and adherence to the weekly fee payment schedule.

Absences

No refunds or prorating of fees will be provided for days missed due to absences of any kind, with the exception of a one week-long unpaid absence families are permitted each school year, arranged in advance of the absence (see below).

In the event a child is absent from the YMCA School-Age Child Care program without payment, the child's enrollment will be discontinued.

Unpaid Absences

One week of unpaid absence is allowed for each family during the school year, which can be used at any time during the school year. To take advantage of this opportunity to take time off from the program due to vacation or other reasons, the child must be absent for the entire week of care (Monday-Friday). The parent must notify the Senior Director of Youth Development of this absence – in writing – no later than one full week prior to the Monday of the week the absence will occur. Failure to do so will result in your account being drafted for the week, with no refund after the fact.

Changes in Attendance Schedule

If you must change your child's attendance schedule, these changes must be submitted in writing. All changes must be communicated to the Senior Director of Youth Development no later than one week prior to the Monday of the week the change will occur. Verbal notification will not be accepted.

Payment Using Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) Child Care Certificates (Clinton Family YMCA Care Site Only)

The Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi is currently able to accept Mississippi State Health Department Child Care Payment Program vouchers at the Clinton Family YMCA program site only.

The Child Care Payment Program (CCPP) is a federally funded program administered by the Division for Early Childhood Care and Development (DECCD) at the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS). The program is designed to provide qualifying parents and guardians with child care tuition assistance. The CCPP assists low-income Mississippi families by offering a seamless system of high-quality child care through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) subsidy program.

Parents whose child is eligible for partial payment of child care fees through Mississippi's CCPP must provide the YMCA with a copy of the program's official determination letter, which indicates the amount of weekly tuition the CCPP will cover. Be aware that parents are responsible for making their required co-pay (the difference between the CCPP payment and full weekly fee) in advance of care received. Payment of the parent co-pay must be made using a once-monthly Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)/bank draft. These EFT/bank drafts will be run between the first and fifth days of each month, in advance of care received. Payments will not be accepted at the child care program site under any circumstances.

Any EFT/bank draft that is not successfully completed by the 5th of the month will be subject to a \$40 Late Fee. All child care and other YMCA services will be terminated immediately until the account is brought current. Partial payments are not accepted; the YMCA does not accept post-dated checks and will not hold checks.

Failure to make the required co-payment in a timely manner will be reported to the parent's CCPP case manager; this may result in the termination of the child care voucher.

The parent is responsible for any field trip fees and any registration fees required. The State of Mississippi allows child care providers to be reimbursed for up to 15 days of vacation/absence during each certificate year (October 1 to September 30). Once a family has exhausted these 15 days of absence, the parent will be responsible for paying the full daily reimbursement rate for the child for any days absent throughout the remainder of the certificate year. Payment for these unreimbursed days will be due by the 5th of the following month, without exception. If payment is not received by the 5th of the following month, the account will be subject to a \$40 Late Fee. All child care and other YMCA services will be suspended immediately until the account is brought current. Partial payments are not accepted; the YMCA does not accept post-dated checks and will not hold checks.

Parents are also responsible for the difference between the state's reimbursement rate for care and the YMCA's child care fees. Failure to comply with this requirement will be reported to the parent's case manager which may result in the termination of the child care voucher.

In the event a parent's child care voucher is terminated, the parent will be responsible for the full child care fees due each week via EFT/bank draft, in advance of care.

Please note that the YMCA does not accept partial payments of fees. All fees must be paid in full when due.

Financial Assistance

The Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi is committed to turning no one away due to the inability to pay the stated fees for programs or services. Through the generosity of donors to the YMCA's Annual Support Campaign, financial assistance toward school-age child care fees is available for families with limited financial means on a sliding fee basis, based on need. Contact the Senior Director of Youth Development or the Member

Services Desk at any YMCA branch for further information or to obtain an application for financial assistance.

We require families attending care sites that accept State of Mississippi Department of Human Services Child Care Payment Program (CCPP) vouchers to first seek assistance from the CCPP program before applying for the YMCA's financial assistance program. To apply for the Child Care Payment Program, visit <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/eccd/parent-information/> or call (601) 359-4500 for information.

Applicants for financial assistance for YMCA child care programs located at sites accepting CCPP vouchers (currently the care site at the Clinton Family YMCA only) will be asked to submit evidence of application to the CCPP program and the agency's determination letter responding to the CCPP application.

No reduction in child care fees will be provided until the YMCA financial assistance application is approved. No reimbursement of any fees paid prior to the award of financial assistance will be given.

Responsible and Billing Parties

The parent who submits a child's registration for the program is considered the "Responsible Party" in terms of the payment of all program fees. The Responsible Party will be held responsible for all fees related to the child's participation in the program. Upon written request, the YMCA will send account statements to a "Billing Party" other than the Responsible Party.

The YMCA will also provide attendance information to the State of Mississippi Department of Human Services Child Care Payment Program (CCPP) – without written request – on behalf of families receiving CCPP vouchers.

Please note the Responsible Party is responsible for payment of all fees due in the event a Billing Party does not pay.

Income Tax Information

Please keep all your fee payment receipts and/or bank or credit card statements for evidence of payment for income tax purposes. One complimentary copy of your payment history for your tax return will be provided upon request. To obtain your copy, contact the Senior Director of Youth Development. Please allow seven business days to process your request.

For tax filing purposes, the Metropolitan YMCAs of Mississippi's federal Tax ID number is 64-03030399.

Withdrawal from Program

While we hope your child will attend the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program throughout the entire school year, we understand that occasionally situations arise when families' schedules and school-age child care needs change. If you must withdraw from the program, you must notify us – in writing – *no later than two FULL weeks prior to the week your child will no longer attend*. You must submit this notice to the Senior Director of Youth Development. This will enable our business office to adjust your family's automatic bank draft schedule accordingly.

Failure to notify the YMCA two weeks in advance will result in the bank draft being processed for the equivalent of the two-week notice timeframe. No refunds will be issued.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Program Hours

The YMCA School-Age Child Care afterschool program operates from the time school is dismissed at the schools served until 6:00 p.m.

The hours for full-day child care on school release days and for Day Camps are 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Children may not be dropped off before 7:00 a.m. for any reason. We expect all children to be picked up promptly by 6:00 p.m. Staff are not permitted to open early or stay late to care for your child, neither as a YMCA employee nor through a private arrangement.

Procedures

Afterschool Program Sign-In

Please talk with your child about the importance of reporting directly to the YMCA School-Age Child Care program's designated meeting site at school immediately upon dismissal from his or her classroom at school. Remind your child to take everything he or she will need at home (outerwear, backpack, school books, homework assignments, etc.) with them when leaving their school classroom/locker and signing in at the afterschool program.

Upon arrival at the designated meeting site, children will be signed into the program and staff will mark them as present for the day.

Your child is expected to be signed into the program every day he or she is scheduled to attend. Parents *must* notify the YMCA every time the child is absent from school or will not be attending the afterschool program for any reason. (See *Reporting Absences* below for the procedure.)

Full-Day Child Care and Day Camp Sign-In

The YMCA is not responsible for your child until he or she is signed in at the program site by a responsible party. All children attending the program must be escorted into the YMCA School-Age Child Care program space ("Home Base") by a parent/guardian or other responsible adult and signed in by that adult. Children will not, under any circumstances, be allowed to walk in on their own or sign themselves in. Please plan ahead to allow sufficient time for parking, walking into the program site, and signing in.

We respectfully ask that parents sign their child into the program no later than 9:00 a.m. each day.

A staff member will greet you as you enter the program space. The staff member will have the sign-in binder. To sign in, sign your name (full signature required, initials are not allowed) and enter the time you are dropping off on the daily sign-in sheet.

Afterschool, Full-Day Child Care, and Day Camp Sign-Out

All groups of children will return (from outdoors, the library, gymnasium, or other program spaces around the YMCA branch or school) to their Home Base by 5:00 p.m. each day. For your convenience, we encourage you to plan your arrival for afternoon pick up for 5:00 p.m. or after when possible. If you must arrive before 5:00 p.m., you will be responsible for going to your child's activity location at the program site to sign your child out. This location will be posted on the door of the program space whenever any group leaves Home Base. Under no circumstances are staff permitted to leave their group or activity to take a child back to Home Base for pick up.

All children must be signed out by a parent, guardian, or other authorized responsible adult (see below) each day. The person picking up must go to the Home Base and physically sign their child out. Staff will not escort children outside the Home Base or permit them to sign out on their own for any reason.

To sign out, sign your name (full signature required, initials are not allowed) and the time you are picking up your child on the sign-in/sign-out sheet.

Reporting Absences

If your child will be absent from school or will not be attending the afterschool program for any reason (illness, afterschool activities, appointments, family vacations, etc.) you must inform the YMCA no later than 12:00 noon on the day the absence will occur.

To report an absence, you must contact your Child Care Site Director, via telephone. If you reach voicemail, please be sure to provide your child's name, the date the absence will occur, the school your child attends, and the Care Site your child attends.

Please be aware that if you do not report your child's expected absence and your child does not sign into the program as expected after school on that day, staff will initiate the program's "missing child" procedures. Please help us prevent the stress this situation

places on both the program staff and school personnel and the disruption this creates by reporting your child's absence properly and in a timely manner.

Adults Authorized for Pick-Up

YMCA School-Age Child Care staff may only release children to the parents/guardians or the other authorized adults listed on the child's registration form. The parent *must* list all persons authorized to pick up the child on this form. All individuals authorized for pick-up must be 18 years of age or older.

If your child will need to be picked up by someone who is not listed on this form, we require prior notification in writing. This notification must be sent to the Senior Director of Youth Development via email. Include in your message the child's full name, site attended, the name of the person you are authorizing to sign the child out, and a recent photo of that person. Please inform this individual of the pick-up location and procedures and instruct them to be prepared to present a photo ID (such as a driver's license or state-issued identification card).

Families with Custody Agreements

If you have shared custody of an enrolled child, we must have a notarized copy of the court order that describes the custody arrangements for the child on file. In the event the legal custody arrangements for your child change, be sure to provide us with a notarized copy of the updated court order immediately.

Please be aware that our staff cannot legally refuse to release a child to a parent unless the court order we have on file specifically states the individual does not have custodial rights. One parent stating on the enrollment form that another parent may not pick up the child is not sufficient documentation to allow us to refuse.

Release of Children to Impaired Persons

Staff cannot release children to any person who displays signs of being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or who otherwise is unable to provide safe supervision and/or transportation for your child. Should this occur, the staff member in charge will contact the child's parents to make alternate arrangements for picking up the child. If the parents cannot be reached, staff will call the emergency contacts on file.

If no one can be reached by 6:30 p.m., staff have been instructed to call the Sheriff's Department and the child will be released to the Sheriff's Department for care.

Late Pick-Up

YMCA School-Age Child Care ends promptly at 6:00 p.m. If an emergency arises and you know you will not be able to pick up your child by 6:00 p.m., please contact the Child Care Site Director.

In the event a child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m. and we have not received advance notification a parent will be late, staff will attempt to contact parents and the emergency contacts listed on the child's enrollment form. If neither you nor your emergency contacts can be reached, staff will wait with your child for 30 minutes. After that time, the Sheriff's Department will be notified and the child will be released to the Sheriff's Department for care.

A non-negotiable Late Pick-Up Fee of \$25 will be assessed for all incidents of late pick-up (defined as 6:01 p.m. or after). This fee will automatically be drafted from the bank account or credit card you have on file.

Excessive incidents of after-hours pick-up will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the program.

Guidance and Discipline

Guidance and Discipline

The YMCA uses a guidance approach to discipline. Staff provides positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviors and redirects misbehavior, in an effort to maintain a warm and nurturing environment, encourage positive choices, and build children's self-esteem. Using the YMCA's Character Development focus as a guide, our program staff works with the children to develop and practice **caring** and **respect** for themselves and others by taking **responsibility** for their own actions.

As our goal is to work in partnership with parents to keep all participants in the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program safe and happy, we strive to be **honest** and respectful when communicating with parents about their child's behavior within the program. We respectfully ask parents to do the same, as we partner together to develop plans to help their child participate successfully in the before and afterschool program.

Procedure for Handling Behavior Concerns

If a participant engages in behavior that falls outside the rules of the Code of Conduct (see below), staff will first discuss the behavior with the child and redirect that behavior to a more positive choice. Continued misbehavior will result in logical consequences and a follow-up discussion between the child and staff member.

In the event these actions do not resolve the issue, staff will prepare a Behavior Report, which will be sent home to parents. Should the misbehavior continue, a second Behavior Report will be issued. After two Behavior Reports, parents will be asked to meet with the Senior Director of Youth Development to discuss the behavior and future consequences.

Should redirection and discussion not successfully resolve behavioral issues, it may become necessary to suspend or dismiss a child from the program. When this occurs, parents will be asked to find alternative care immediately. In the event of suspension or dismissal from the program, no refunds will be given.

The YMCA does not permit corporal punishment of a child under any circumstances. Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force as a disciplinary measure. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, etc.

The YMCA does not support the use of isolation (defined as separating the child from normal association with activities) as a means of punishment. In the event it may become necessary to separate a child from his or her peers for the purpose of preventing the child from harming himself/herself or others, the child will be appropriately supervised and all others in the groups will be supervised within appropriate staff-to-child ratios.

Children will not be allowed to discipline other children under any circumstances.

Children will never be deprived of meals or snacks as a form of discipline.

Code of Conduct

All participants in the YMCA School-Age Child Care program are expected to abide by the following Code of Conduct. Please discuss these expectations with your child:

Caring

- Use and care for equipment, toys, and games properly so that everyone can enjoy them.
- Treat others with kindness and caring at all times.
- Bullying of any kind is not acceptable; children may not bully others and must tell a staff member if they see others engaging in bullying behavior.

Honesty

- Always tell the truth.
- Give 100% effort in all activities.

Respect

- Treat others as you would like to be treated.
- Listen to and always follow staff members' directions.
- Use language that is appropriate and respectful when speaking with other participants and staff; avoid any sort of behavior (language, expressions, gestures, etc.) that is disrespectful or impolite.
- Respect other children's and staff members' belongings and the YMCA's property.
- Use resources wisely and avoid waste (food, supplies, water, energy, etc.).

Responsibility

- Arrive at the program with everything needed (coat/jacket, backpack, homework/study materials, etc.).
- Always stay with your group and within sight and sound of the YMCA staff
- Take proper care of your own belongings.
- Clean up after yourself and help keep the program's spaces neat and clean.

Failure to abide by the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary actions to be taken, including suspension and/or dismissal from YMCA School-Age Child Care.

Bullying

The YMCA has a zero-tolerance policy relating to bullying of any kind. Any behavior by a participant or family member – whether it is in physical, verbal, or electronic form – intended to intimidate or harass another child or staff member or to cause harm to a person or their property is unacceptable. Any form of bullying behavior may lead to dismissal from the program.

Respect for Property

All participants in the YMCA School-Age Child Care program are expected to treat all equipment, program materials, furnishings, and facilities with respect and to follow the rules for proper use. Should a child deliberately break, damage, or destroy YMCA property, the child's family will be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement.

Dismissal Policy

Behavior that endangers the health and safety of the child, other children, or YMCA staff will not be tolerated and can result in suspension or dismissal from the program. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Physical assault or intentionally inflicting bodily harm
- Excessive disruptive behavior
- Possession of knives, firearms, or any other item(s) with the potential to harm others
- Bullying
- Persistent refusal to follow the program's rules
- Defacing the YMCA or program site property or facilities
- Leaving the YMCA program premises or going into unauthorized areas
- Engaging in physical or verbal violence
- Stealing or intentionally damaging another child's or staff member's property
- Failing to stay with their assigned group
- Possession of or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, or illegal substances

Additionally, failure on the part of parents or guardians to meet their obligations, as outlined in the YMCA School-Age Child Care Parent Handbook, may result in a child's dismissal from the program. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Nonpayment or persistent delinquent payment of weekly program fees
- Noncompliance with the program's policies and procedures
- Physical or verbal abuse of any participant or staff member
- Failure to cooperate with staff to resolve issues related to their child's behavior in the program

Depending on the severity of the issue, the child may either be suspended or dismissed – immediately, or with advance warning to allow parents to make alternative arrangements. This determination will be made with consideration of the seriousness of the behavior, the frequency of the misconduct, and the impact of the behavior on the safety of other children and staff in the program.

Should an incident warrant immediate suspension or dismissal from the program, the child’s parents will be contacted and required to pick up their child. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed in the child’s registration form will be contacted. Once a parent or emergency contact has been notified, they must pick up the child within 30 minutes.

In the event of suspension or dismissal, no refunds or credit will be given for fees previously paid.

Health and Safety

Allergies

The YMCA School-Age Child Care Registration Form provides a space for you to describe your child’s allergies. We ask that you include details that clearly describe the nature of your child’s allergies, symptoms to watch for that might indicate exposure to an allergen, and instructions for how staff should respond.

If your child has allergies with serious or life-threatening consequences that require immediate intervention (such as exposure to peanuts/tree nuts, insect stings, etc.) please contact the Senior Director of Youth Development and complete a Medical Authorization Form prior to your child’s first day of attendance and discuss your child’s needs in detail.

Food Allergies and Sensitivities

Be aware that **YMCA School-Age Child Care sites are peanut-free and tree nut-free spaces.** To avoid exposure to serious allergens in the program space, the YMCA must avoid the risk of potentially contaminating surfaces or equipment with residue from peanuts or tree nuts, even if no children with allergies are attending on a particular day. To that end, **no peanuts or tree nuts will be allowed on site.** We will not serve and do not allow any foods containing these products.

All staff will be notified of children’s food allergies. We will take precautions to avoid exposing your child to food(s) that he or she is not permitted to eat. ***Apart from children who require special consideration due to medical reasons, we will not permit any children to eat food that is not provided by the program.*** For the protection of children with food allergies or sensitivities, please do not send any food or beverages from home for your child’s snack. No outside food or beverages are allowed.

If the day’s menu contains an item your child is allergic or sensitive to, we will offer an alternative snack. If your child’s allergy or food sensitivity is severe and you are more

comfortable providing the food for snacks yourself, you are welcome to provide a week-long supply of healthy snacks for your child on the first day your child attends that week. In such cases, please give the food directly to the Child Care Site Director, who will store it safely and provide it to your child at snack/meal time. We ask that you provide the alternative snack in separate one-serving portions and clearly label each portion with your child's first and last name. As storage space at the program sites is extremely limited, we are unable to store more than a week's supply at one time. Any unused snacks will be returned to you on the last day the child attends in a given week.

Illness

Communicable Disease

The YMCA follows the guidelines of the Mississippi State Department of Health for the prevention and control of communicable diseases in child care settings (file:///C:/Users/rcoll/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/0N V3UK8K/Childcare%20Regulations%202022.pdf). These guidelines advise the temporary exclusion of children who exhibit symptoms of communicable disease until these symptoms are resolved or are appropriately treated.

To protect participants and staff, children who exhibit the following symptoms may not attend the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program:

<i>Fever</i>	Defined as 100°F or higher taken under the arm, 101°F taken orally, or 102°F taken rectally
<i>Diarrhea</i>	Frequent (3 or more episodes in a 24-hour period) runny, watery, or bloody stools. According to CDC recommendations, a child who is not toilet trained and has diarrhea should be excluded from child care settings regardless of the cause.
<i>Vomiting</i>	Two or more times in a 24-hour period
<i>Rash</i>	Body rash with a fever
<i>Sore Throat</i>	Sore throat with fever and swollen glands
<i>Severe Coughing</i>	Coughing which causes the child to become red or blue in the face or make high-pitched whooping sound after coughing
<i>Eye Discharge</i>	Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye
<i>Jaundice</i>	Yellow eyes and skin
<i>Irritability</i>	Continuous irritability and crying

Children who exhibit these symptoms or have been diagnosed with communicable disease (see below) may not return to the program until they are absent these

symptoms for 24 hours or until the recommended time since the start of treatment or contagious period has elapsed. In some cases, written clearance from a medical professional may be required before returning to care.

Children who are ill with the following communicable diseases must be excluded from care until they are no longer contagious:

Illness	Requirements for Child to Return to Program
Chicken Pox	The child may return to child care on the sixth day after the blisters first appeared or earlier if all the lesions are crusted and dry and no new ones are forming.
Shingles	The child who has shingles may attend child care if the lesions can be covered by clothing. If the lesions cannot be covered, the child should be excluded until the lesions are crusted and dry.
Cytomegalovirus (CMV)	Children diagnosed with CMV may attend child care if they do not have a fever.
Diarrheal Diseases (e.g., campylobacteriosis, cryptosporidiosis, giardiasis, rotavirus, salmonellosis, shigellosis)	In most cases, a child may return to care once free of fever and diarrhea.
E. COLI O157:H7	Children may return to the center when his/her diarrhea has ceased and two consecutive negative stool samples are obtained/collected not less than 2 hours apart and not sooner than 48 hours after the last dose of antibiotics.
Fifth Disease	Children may attend child care once they are free of fever.
Influenza ("Flu")	The child may return to child care when free of fever and feeling well.
Hand-Foot-and-Mouth Disease	Children may return to care only when the lesions are crusted and dry and the child is free of fever.
Head Lice	The child may return to child care after the first treatment has been given.
Hepatitis A	The child may return to child care one week after the onset of jaundice (yellowing of the eyes and skin) or one week after the onset of other signs and symptoms if no jaundice is present.
Impetigo	The child may return to child care 24 hours after treatment has been started if free of fever and the lesions are not draining.
Measles	The child may return to child care when free of fever and the rash is fading (usually within 5-7 days).
Meningitis	The child may return to the center whenever he or she has been released by his/her personal physician.
Mumps	The child may return to child care 9 days after the beginning of the salivary gland swelling.
Conjunctivitis ("Pink Eye")	The child may return to care after being cleared by a physician or when the redness/discharge is improving.
Pinworms	The child may return to child care 24 hours after receiving the first treatment.
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	The child may return to the center when free of fever and feeling well enough for full participation in activities.

Illness	Requirements for Child to Return to Program
Ringworm	The child may return to child care after the treatment has been started.
Scabies	The child may return to child care 24 hours after the treatment has been completed.
Strep Throat and Scarlet Fever	The child may return to child care 24 hours after treatment has been started if free of fever.
Tuberculosis (TB)	Persons suspected of or diagnosed with active TB disease will need written permission from the Mississippi State Department of Health Tuberculosis Control Program to return to the center.
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	The child may return to child care 5 days after their treatment has begun.

We ask that you notify the Child Care Site Director if your child will be absent due to illness.

Fees for days missed due to illness will not be refunded.

Illness During Program Day

Should your child become ill or exhibit symptoms of illness during the program day, a parent/guardian will be called and asked to pick up the child immediately. In the event a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will attempt to reach the emergency contacts listed on your registration form. The child will be isolated from other participants and kept comfortable and under staff supervision until the parent/guardian or other authorized adult arrives.

Injury

All YMCA School-Age Child Care staff members are trained in emergency First Aid and CPR. If your child becomes injured, staff will assess the severity of the injury and respond appropriately. Should an injury require treatment beyond basic First Aid, a parent/guardian will be contacted. In the event a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will attempt to reach the emergency contacts listed on your registration form. If the injury requires immediate medical care, emergency services will be contacted and your child will be transported to the nearest hospital, accompanied by a staff member.

Insurance

The YMCA does not provide insurance (medical, dental, or otherwise) coverage for the children in the event of injury or illness while attending YMCA programs. Parents are responsible for any and all expenses incurred as the result of their child sustaining an injury and/or becoming ill, and for filing any necessary paperwork for reimbursement from their own insurance provider(s) as appropriate.

Medication

Any medications your child *requires* during the program day – whether it is prescription medication, inhalers, or non-prescription medications – must be checked in with the Child Care Site Director by the parent when the child is signed in (Full-Day Child Care and Day Camps) or the child when he or she arrives (Afterschool Program) each day. Under no circumstances will children be allowed to keep medication of any kind in their backpacks. All medications will be stored in a locked container used only for medication storage until it is needed.

Your child's medication will be returned to you at the end of every day. Except for EpiPens and inhalers, we will not store *any* medication for your child at the program site. You must bring it to the program and take it home with you every day.

For any medication to be administered to your child, we must have a completed and signed Medication Authorization Form on file. If your child's medications change (including changes in the dosage of a current medication), please ask the Child Care Site Director to provide you with a new form and return it with your child's medication.

All prescription medication must be provided in its *original* container labeled with your child's name, the name of the medication, dosage, and physician's name. All over-the-counter medication must in its original container and be clearly and permanently labeled with your child's first and last name and the required dosage.

We have a refrigerator available on-site. Please notify the staff member receiving your child's medication if the medication requires refrigeration.

Our staff is not authorized to administer any over-the-counter medication (such as pain relievers, fever reducers, cough medicine, etc.) to your child to treat illness that arises over the course of the program day. All medication will require a completed and signed Medication Authorization Form.

Epi-Pens and Other Emergency Medications

If your child requires emergency medication or devices to be available at all times – such as an EpiPen or rescue inhaler – you will be allowed to keep one at your child's regular care site. As with all other medication, you will need to have an up-to-date Medication Authorization Form on file, and the medication must be clearly and permanently labeled with your child's first and last name and the required dosage. Parents are responsible for monitoring this medication's expiration date and replacing it as needed.

Be aware this medication will be kept at the site your child regularly attends *only*; it will not be transferred to any other location, such as another YMCA facility where full-day care is provided on school release days or Day Camps. If your child will be attending a full-day program or Day Camps, you must complete an additional Medication Authorization Form and provide it, along with the medication, at that site.

COVID-19 Safety

To provide your child with a safe and healthy school-age child care experience, we are observing the recommendations of the Mississippi State Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) protocols for group child care (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fschools-childcare%2Fchild-care-guidance.html). The YMCA monitors these resources on an ongoing basis and will update the program's COVID-19 safety strategies to reflect the most current guidelines and recommendations.

Key COVID-19 prevention strategies we are implementing include but are not limited to:

- Requiring our staff and campers to stay home if sick or having symptoms of COVID-19
- Universal recommendations for respiratory hygiene
- Physical distancing, including placing children in small groups
- Encouraging handwashing and the covering coughs and sneezes
- Engaging in outdoor activities whenever possible
- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols

In accordance with current CDC guidelines for programs for children at the time this handbook was updated (August 2022), face coverings are not mandatory at this time, but are encouraged. Be advised this situation may change over time. Should local, state, or federal infections rates change in the future and face coverings be mandated again, the YMCA will abide by these mandates.

COVID-19 Precautions

Children who exhibit the following symptoms associated with COVID-19, or have been exposed to family members or others who have these symptoms, will not be permitted to attend the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program until appropriate quarantine or clearance from a medical professional is completed:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

The YMCA observes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's most current guidance related to the exclusion of children who may have or have been exposed to

persons with suspected or active COVID-19 infection. At the time this handbook was written, these guidelines can be found at the following website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/sick-at-child-care-flowchart.html>

Children with Special Needs

The YMCA School-Age Child Care Program makes reasonable accommodations to include children with special needs under the guidelines dictated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Upon enrollment, the Senior Director of Youth Development will meet with parents to discuss the child's needs and work with the parent to develop a participation plan. Decisions related to the enrollment and placement of a child with special needs will be made in partnership with the parents, medical professionals, and (when applicable) the school team involved with the child's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) at school. The participation plan will be revisited on a regular basis to ensure the child's needs are being appropriately met.

Children with severe or debilitating medical conditions (including, but not limited to life-threatening allergies, asthma, diabetes, etc.) must have an up-to-date Specialized Care Plan and Medical Authorization Form – signed by your child's physician and/or other care providers – on file. This is a requirement of the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting of Suspected Abuse and Neglect

All YMCA staff receive training in the prevention and recognition of child abuse. As mandated reporters, YMCA staff who have reasonable cause to believe a child under the age of 18 has had physical injuries inflicted upon him/her other than by accidental means, has been neglected or exploited, or has been sexually assaulted ***must report or cause reports to be made to the Mississippi Department of Human Services/Mississippi Department of Child Protective Services.***

In the event a parent of a child enrolled in the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program suspects child abuse or neglect has occurred, this should be reported to the Senior Director of Youth Development. Suspected abuse can also be reported to the Mississippi Department of Child Protected Services' child abuse reporting hotline at 800-222-8000.

YMCA Child Protection Policy

All YMCA staff members are prohibited from having contact with children outside of the YMCA programs in which they are enrolled. This includes, but is not limited to babysitting, birthday parties, sleepovers, transportation, and any other non-YMCA events or activities.

YMCA employees are prohibited from having social media contact with any child enrolled in a YMCA program.

These and other policies are aimed at safeguarding children from child abuse or exposure to harm. The YMCA recognizes that in some cases an employee may have a previous relationship with a program participant prior to becoming employed at the Y or

prior to the child participating in a YMCA program. Any requests for exceptions to this policy must be provided to the YMCA's chief executive officer in writing and prior to the activity; requests will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Visitor Policies and Procedures

Parents are always welcome to visit the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program; no appointment is necessary. When visiting, we ask that you quietly observe the activities with as little disruption to the program as possible. Keeping in mind that the staff members' priorities are engaging with the children during their activities, please make an appointment with the Child Care Site Director to discuss any issues or concerns at a time when no children are present. This will enable staff to provide their undivided attention, without compromising staff-to-child ratios or the children's activities.

Visitors to the Care Sites may go directly to the child care center. For the safety of the children and our staff, all visitors must check in with the Child Care Site Director (at programs located within YMCA facilities); visitors to school-based sites (Revive Collegiate Charter School) are asked to step into the program space and wait for a staff member to acknowledge them. All visitors to the program – including parents – are required to sign in and out using the site's Visitor Log.

Parents and other visitors are not permitted to be outside the supervision of a staff member and may not be alone with any child (including their own) for the duration of their visit.

Play-Safe Attire

YMCA School-Age Child Care is an active program. The children will engage in vigorous physical activity – indoors and outdoors – as a part of the daily curriculum. Please ensure your child is prepared for active play by sending them to the program site with clothing that is appropriate for the weather and program activities. Participants must wear shoes with both a covered toe and enclosed heel. Athletic shoes/sneakers or other flexible fully enclosed shoes are preferred. Sandals, Crocs, flip flops, or other loose-fitting shoes are not permitted. "Heelies" or any other shoes with wheels are not acceptable.

For safety purposes, we ask that your children do not wear long or hoop earrings, necklaces, rings, or any jewelry when attending the program.

Playground Safety

For the safety of all participants, all children are expected to observe important safety guidelines during outdoor play and at the playground:

- 1) Play with care, respect, and kindness.
- 2) Observe the safety rules for the equipment and play spaces, as outlined by staff.
- 3) Stay within their assigned groups and staff members.

- 4) Remain in the designated play boundaries and within sight of staff at all times.
- 5) Wear clothing, shoes, and outerwear that is appropriate for the weather and the activity.
- 6) Everything found on the ground (such as mulch, sticks, gravel, dirt, sand, pinecones, etc.) must stay on the ground.
- 7) Wear sunscreen when conditions require it.

Sun-Safe Practices

The YMCA School-Age Child Care program incorporates sun-safe practices. During the spring, summer, and early fall months when the children engage in longer periods of outdoor play – especially during the full-day programming on school release days and Day Camps – they will be exposed to the sun. We encourage you to send sunscreen with your child every day. Please provide a container of spray-on sunscreen, permanently labeled with your child’s name. Staff will help the children apply spray-based sunscreen only; if you provide sunscreen lotion, the child must apply it without staff assistance.

Water Safety

One of the benefits of participating in the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program is the ability to take part in activities in the Y’s gymnasium and swimming pools and at the waterfront at the Reservoir Family YMCA. Parents will be notified in advance of waterfront and swimming activities so they can determine if they wish their child to participate in such activities and plan ahead to bring the items their child will need.

All children who participate in activities involving water will be assessed to determine their ability to swim. Children are identified according to their swimming level to enable the lifeguards and program staff to closely monitor all swimmers. Any child who is not able to swim will be required to wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device.

Protection of Sensitive Information

Be assured the YMCA will keep your family’s contact and other personal information in a secure place and will not release any of this information without your permission unless doing so is legally mandated.

If your family is experiencing any circumstances that may affect the care of your child in the program (such as custody agreements, restraining orders, changes in family structure, etc.), please arrange a meeting with the Senior Director of Youth Development to discuss strategies to appropriately address your family’s needs.

From time to time, it may be necessary for YMCA School-Age Child Care staff to discuss confidential or sensitive information with agencies, educational professionals, case

workers, etc. related to the care of your child. In many cases, we will require your permission to do. If you are aware of service providers that require a signed release to share information concerning your child, please provide a release form at the time of enrollment, or before the need arises. If we do not have this information on file, please understand that having to request this at a later date may delay our ability to address your child's needs in a timely manner.

Weather-Related Closures

School Closures Due to Inclement Weather

In the event schools are closed for the day due to inclement weather, the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program **will not** operate. Weekly fees will not be prorated due to weather-related closures or reductions in hours of operation.

Should the school district elect to close schools early due to adverse weather conditions, the YMCA will evaluate the weather and other factors to determine whether it will be safe to transport children and/or be open for child care.

Please make sure the YMCA has your up-to-date contact information and email address at all times. The YMCA will notify parents of the status of the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program via email. You may also sign up to receive text alerts at registration and at your center. Ask the staff at your child's Care Site or contact the Senior Director of Youth Development for details. Information will also be posted on the YMCA's website (www.MetroYMCAs.org).

Emergency Preparedness

Facility or Weather Emergency

Parents are asked to be alert to changing weather conditions and to consult local media outlets (radio or television), the YMCA's website (www.MetroYMCAs.org), and your child's school website to be aware of the school's status when early closure due to weather may be possible.

In the event of a weather-related emergency or the need to evacuate the building for any other reason (extended power outage, loss of running water, etc.), staff will accompany the children to the area designated in the program site's School-Age Child Care Emergency Plan. Appropriate precautions will be taken for the safety of the children and the situation will be monitored.

In the event it becomes necessary for a center to close before the typical closing time, parents will be notified and asked to pick their children up. If you cannot be reached, staff will attempt to reach the emergency contacts you listed in your child's enrollment file. We will also post information on the YMCA Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter, the YMCA's website, and local television stations (WLBT and WAPT).

Emergency Evacuation Plan

The safety of your child while attending the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program is our primary concern. Staff receive training to prepare them to keep your child safe in the event of an emergency and to evacuate the program space or facility if necessary.

Should evacuation be necessary due to an emergency situation, staff will use the daily attendance sheet to ensure every child is present at the time the evacuation is initiated and again at the evacuation site to ensure all children in attendance are accounted for. Staff will be prepared to engage the children in appropriate activities while sheltering at the evacuation site. Every school-age child care site has an emergency information binder that includes contact information for the parents and emergency contacts of all children present in case parents will need to be called.

When appropriate and possible, staff will contact parents to notify them of the emergency situation and provide additional information (such as changes in pick-up times or procedures, current conditions, etc.). The YMCA will use all means available (such as phone calls, texts, email, YMCA website, and/or social media) to keep families informed. Keep in mind, however, that in some cases telephone communication and/or Internet access may not be possible.

Severe Weather

In the event of severe weather (windstorms, tornado, thunderstorms, etc.) during the school-age child care program day, staff will act appropriately to move the children to safety in the area of the facility designated for emergency shelter. Parents who arrive for pick-up during severe weather will be encouraged to remain onsite until conditions are safe.

Transported Sites Only: In cases when severe weather conditions occur at school dismissal times, transportation will be suspended until the National Weather Service deems it safe to drive; the children will remain at school until it is safe to transport them.

Fire Safety

Every YMCA School-Age Child Care Program site has an emergency plan in the event of a fire-related emergency. This plan includes evacuation routes from all parts of the facility where the program operates, with the children and staff leaving from the closest safe exit and meeting at a designated location.

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis.

Chemical Spill or Gas Leak

In the event of a chemical spill, YMCA staff will consult with the appropriate authorities (police department, environmentalist, hazardous materials team, etc.) to determine whether it is necessary to evacuate the facility or shelter in place and will act as advised.

Loss of Power and/or Plumbing

In case of power failure or the loss of plumbing, YMCA staff will evaluate the conditions (location, severity, and expected duration of utility loss) on a case-by-case basis. In the event a facility's HVAC system is not functional and the indoor temperature exceeds 90 degrees Fahrenheit, or if the facility's temperature drops below 50 degrees Fahrenheit, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their children.

Emergency Evacuation Locations

Clinton Family YMCA

In the event evacuation is necessary, the children and staff at the YMCA School-Age Child Care program will move to the main Clinton Family YMCA facility, located next to the child care facility. If this is not safe or possible, they will evacuate to Morrison Heights Baptist Church (201 Morrison Drive – 601-924-5620).

Reservoir Family YMCA

Should it become necessary to evacuate the main YMCA facility, the staff and children will move to the front soccer field at the Reservoir Family YMCA. If evacuation outside the immediate area is required, the children will be transported by bus to the Flowood Family YMCA (690 Liberty Road – 601-664-1955).

Revive Collegiate Charter School

If evacuation outside the immediate area is required, the children will be transported by bus to the Clinton Family YMCA (400 Lindale Drive – Clinton, MS; 601-924-5812).

Outdoor Play

Fresh air and active play are an important part of developing children's daily routines. Whenever possible, the YMCA School-Age Child Care Program will offer an option for outdoor play. Children will be encouraged to choose outdoor play as a Choice Recreational Activity; however, they must be properly dressed for the weather. To make this experience as safe and enjoyable as possible, we ask that you send your child to school with appropriate outerwear for the season's weather (such as a seasonally appropriate jacket/coat, hat, scarf, gloves, and footwear).

The YMCA School-Age Child Care Program utilizes the National Weather Service "Black Flag" alert system when evaluating conditions for outdoor play during all seasons. These guidelines incorporate factors such as air temperature, wind chill/heat index, and air quality to determine safety for outdoor play for children of all ages. Staff will monitor weather conditions daily and evaluate them against these guidelines to ensure outdoor play is conducted safely.

For example, during warmer months, program staff will monitor the heat index and move activities indoors when the National Weather Service issues a Black Flag warning. In addition, during periods of rain or days with poor air quality, active play will take place indoors.

During the winter months, staff will evaluate air temperature and wind chill to determine whether the children will be able to play outdoors, and the length of time they will be able to do so safely. Staff will make adjustments as needed during conditions warranting caution and will plan indoor active play when it is too cold for outdoor play.

Caring for Children's Belongings

Lost Articles

Unclaimed or unlabeled items will be placed in a Lost and Found box kept on-site for a period of two weeks. Many parents make it a habit to check the Lost and Found box every Friday to look for items their child may have misplaced. Anything left unclaimed after two weeks will be donated to a local charity. Please note the YMCA is not responsible for lost items.

Please be sure to label all of your child's outerwear, backpack, school supplies, and any other items your child brings to school and/or child care program each day. Use your child's full name; initials are not as helpful. This will enable your child and the school-age child care staff to help these items find their way home at the end of each day and prevent them from becoming lost.

Items Brought from Home

Please do not allow your child to bring any toys, sports equipment, electronic items, money, jewelry, pocket knives, trading cards, or anything else of value with them to school or the program. Please talk with your child to reinforce this rule, which is in place both to help your child participate fully in all program activities without distraction and to prevent their belongings from becoming lost, damaged, or stolen. The Y will not assume responsibility for any personal belongings.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

The children are not permitted to have or use electronic devices of any kind (including mobile phones, games, tablets, laptops, etc.) during the hours they are signed into the YMCA School-Age Child Care program. If it is *absolutely necessary* for your child to have a mobile phone (for use *after* school-age child care hours only), the phone must be kept in the child's backpack *at all* times. In the event a child uses a mobile phone or other device during the program day, staff will place the device in a locked container in the Child Care Site Director's office; they will be returned to the parent at sign-out.

Be aware the use of mobile phones is not permitted in YMCA locker rooms, wellness areas, or child care areas at any time.

Field Trip Fees

When bringing money to pay for field trip fees to the program site, please place it in an envelope with the completed field trip permission slip, seal it, and label it with your child's name. Give the envelope directly to the Child Care Site Director at pick-up time. Please do not send field trip fees with your child, in your child's backpack, etc.

Communication

Daily Communication with Parents

When you sign out your child each day, please check for up-to-date information and/or notices on the Parent Message Board near the sign-out sheet.

Monthly Calendar

Monthly calendars with enrichment themes, highlighted activities and other essential information are displayed on the Parent Message Board at the Care Site and will be distributed to parents via email. Please review the calendar carefully, as it may include information on upcoming field trips and events, deadlines for registering for Full-Day Child Care and Day Camps, and other important announcements.

Photo/Publicity Release

Photos of children participating in our programs may be taken from time to time and may appear in newspapers, magazines, brochures, or other publicity materials. A photo/publicity release is included in the YMCA School-Age Child Care Registration Form. Please notify us immediately if your child cannot be photographed.

The YMCA does not compensate parents and/or their children when photographs are used.

Please note: Parents may not take photographs or videos of other family's children at any time when visiting the program or attending YMCA activities or events.

Important Contact Information

Clinton Family YMCA

400 Lindale Dr.
Clinton, MS 39056
YMCA Branch General Phone: (601) 924-5812
School-Age Child Care Site Phone: (601) 926-9243

Reservoir Family YMCA

6023 Lakeshore Park
Brandon, MS 39047
YMCA Branch General Phone: (601) 992-9118
School-Age Child Care Site Phone: (601) 326-0554

Flowood Family YMCA

690 Liberty Road
Flowood, MS 39232
YMCA Branch General Phone: (601) 664-1955

Revive Collegiate Charter School

786 East Northside Drive
Jackson, MS 39206
Email: revivecollegiate@metroymcams.org
School-Age Child Care Site Phone: (601) 664-2411

Questions About the Program

Sara Pyron
Senior Director of Youth Development
Phone: (601) 926-9243
Email: youthdevelopment@metroymcams.org

Questions About Your Account/Billing

Sara Pyron
Senior Director of Youth Development
Phone: (601) 926-9243
Email: youthdevelopment@metroymcams.org

Operations Director

Tom Bontrager
Phone: (601) 664-1955
Email: execoperations@metroymcams.org

Chief Operating Officer

Stella Patino
Phone: (601) 326-4703
Email: spatino@metroymcams.org

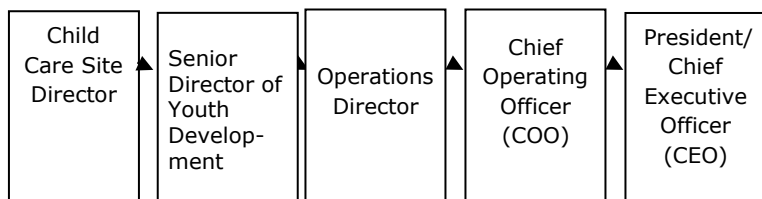
President/Chief Executive Officer

Jeffrey Collen
Phone: (601) 326-4702
Email: jcollen@metroymcams.org

Program Concerns and Communication Chain

We encourage open and frequent communication between parent and the school-age child care program staff to ask questions or address concerns. In the event you have a concern that cannot be managed to your satisfaction by the Child Care Site Director at the site where your child receives care, please contact the Senior Director of Youth Development.

If the matter cannot be resolved by the Senior Director of Youth Development, you may contact the Operations Director. If an acceptable outcome cannot be achieved with the Operations Director, you may contact the Chief Operating Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will become involved if the Chief Operating Officer cannot offer a satisfactory solution.



Parent Involvement

Parent Conferences

The exchange of information between parents and staff perspective can be helpful as we work together to provide the most rewarding out-of-school experience possible for your child. Parent conferences may be scheduled as necessary, by either the parent or the YMCA. You may contact the Senior Director of Youth Development to schedule a conference.

Monthly Newsletter

Parents will receive a monthly newsletter via email that includes program news and information about activities, upcoming events, and YMCA family programming. Please be sure to keep your email address up to date to help us keep you abreast of important program information.

Policy Updates

The Metropolitan YMCAs of Jackson reserves the right to update the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, and to add policies and procedures as deemed necessary for reasons including, but not limited to: changes in compliance or regulatory requirements, health and safety needs, etc. In the event of changes to the YMCA School-Age Child Care Parent Handbook, all parents will receive written notification.

Mississippi State Department of Health Child Care Regulations Summary for Parents

A license to operate a child care facility has been required by law in Mississippi since 1972. In the 1990 regular session of the legislature, the law was required to provide regulation of child care up to age of 13 for any part of a 24-hour day.

The new regulation, which went into effect on October 1, 1990, requires that parents be informed with a summary of the licensing standards. These standards include the following.

1. Purpose of child care licensure.
2. Legal authority, legal action, and penalties.
3. Types of licenses and their display.
4. Inspections, sanitation.
5. Food service, nutrition.
6. Staffing ratio-number of teachers to number of children.
7. Program of Activities – daily schedule.
8. Building and Ground requirements.
9. Infant and toddler care and children with special needs.
10. Night care.
11. School age care.
12. Pre-Kindergarten half day programs.
13. Summer day camps.
14. Hourly care facilities.
15. Facility policy and procedures.
 - a. Administration
 - b. Personnel requirements
 - c. Parental involvement
 - d. Records and reports
16. Health and safety.
 - a. Staff and child health.
 - b. Excluding sick children and exclusion guidelines.
 - c. Medication records and documentation.
 - d. Transportation policies.

The child care center must have a copy of the regulations available for parents to review when requested. (Contact the Senior Director of Youth Development if you would like to see a printed copy of these regulations or you may view them online at https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/resources/78.pdf.)

Contact the Mississippi State Department of Health if you have any questions, problems, or complaints by calling (601)-960-7613. Complaints must reflect a clear violation of the regulations.

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If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/compliant_filing_cust.html or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

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