

# HAMILTON AREA YMCA

## Y CONNECTION Parent Handbook



Hamilton Area YMCA  
JKR Branch  
1315 Whitehorse-Mercerville Road  
Hamilton, NJ 08619

Dear Y Connection Participants, Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Hamilton Area YMCA Y Connection program.

The Hamilton Area YMCA is committed to providing a safe and fun afterschool experience for all middle school children. We believe character development is an important aspect of what we do. Leading by example we will challenge children to accept and demonstrate the positive values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. We will do this by providing an environment and activities that are conducive to building character development and leadership skills.

The Y Connection will offer a variety of electives that will allow you and your child to determine what programs and activities are best suited for their individual needs.

Our staff is comprised of teachers, students, part time and full-time YMCA professionals. Staff and volunteers are selected for their skills, enthusiasm, and dedication to building strong kids. All staff and volunteers complete training that includes character development, program planning, positive discipline, and child abuse prevention.

As you read through this handbook, you will receive a better understanding of how our program operates. Our hope is that it will help prepare you and your child for a positive after school experience.

Sincerely,

*Tyler Koerber*

Tyler Koerber  
Youth and Teen Development Director  
tkoerber@hamiltonymca.org  
609.581.9622 ext . 121

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **YMCA Program Goals**

YMCA programs are grounded in a set of seven objectives that characterize all Y programs, and help people:

1. Grow personally
2. Learn values
3. Improve personal family relationships
4. Become better leaders and supporters
5. Develop specific skills and assets
6. Appreciate diversity
7. HAVE FUN!

### **SCHEDULE**

The Y Connection will run Monday through Friday from 3:30 to 5:30 pm when school is in session. When schools are closed, the program will not run. The schedule is as follows:

3:30 – 4:00 pm	Arrival/Check In
4:00 – 5:00 pm	Electives
5:00 – 5:30 pm	Homework Support

On **Scheduled** Half Days, the schedule will be as follows:

Organized games in either the Kids Gym, Basketball Gym, or Youth interactive center from the time the students arrive until 4:00 p.m. At this time the students will participate in their scheduled elective from 4:00 p.m. -5:00 p.m. At 5:00 p.m. the students will move to the Conference Room in the Princeton Health Care Systems portion of the facility to begin work on their homework.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

We have contracted with Delaware Valley Bus Company to transport the children to the YMCA from the 3 Hamilton Township Middle Schools. The first 50 children to register will be able to utilize the bus. YMCA staff team members will be on the bus with an attendance sheet. It is the child's responsibility to get on the bus after school. If your child does not get on the bus from school, we will assume s/he is not attending the program. If your child leaves an item on the bus you can contact them at 609-393-9361.

**ABSENCE** – If your child is not able to attend the program, please send in a note or call the program absentee line at 609.581.9622 ext 121.

**ATTENDANCE** - We have an extensive waitlist for this program. If you are not using it on a regular basis we will ask that you give up your roster spot so we can accommodate someone who could really use it on the waitlist.

## **COMMUNICATION**

It is very important to us that we keep the lines of communication open at all times. We want to be able to reach you as needed and need to make sure we have your updated information:

- **Phone:** Please provide us with the phone number you would like us to use to contact you for accidents/incidents with your child, emergency closings, and other information we deem important.
- **Email:** Please provide us with the email address you would like us to use to contact you for any updates and important information

**Personal Meetings:** If there is an issue you would like to discuss, we will arrange meeting a time that works as soon as possible. We may also request a personal meeting with you.

## **MEDICAL POLICIES**

### **Illness:**

We are concerned with the health and welfare of each child. In order to prevent illness from being spread, we require you observe Policy on the Management of Communicable Diseases.

If any of the following symptoms occur, you will be called to take your child home. Upon notification, we require that your child be picked up within one hour.

- Temperature over 100 degrees
- Severe cold with fever or bronchitis
- Difficult rapid breathing
- Severe pain or discomfort, including ear or throat
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Rashes that cannot be identified or have not been diagnosed by the physician
- Contagious diseases such as measles, chicken pox, mumps, rosella, pink eye, or impetigo (we would appreciate a call notifying us so we can pass the information concerning potential exposure on to the other campers)
- Ear or Throat infections
- Unusual behavior; for example, extreme lethargy, refusing food or drink

Children sent home may not be able to return the next day. To return they must be:

- Free of symptoms (i.e. vomiting, fever) for twenty-four hours
- On the appropriate medication for twenty-four hours

### **Injury**

If emergency medical care is necessary, any of the following steps might be taken:

1. Attempt to contact parent or guardian.
2. Attempt to contact person on the emergency form.
3. Take child to hospital if no responsible person can be reached.
4. An ambulance or paramedics may be summoned.

The YMCA staff will treat medical emergencies – minor injuries, i.e. scrapes, cuts, bug bites and illness. **Be sure your emergency phone numbers are up to date.** Injured person's will be transported to Robert Wood University Hospital at Hamilton. Please know that emergency action plans are in place and will be practiced on a regular basis.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

It is the YMCA's goal to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment for all participants. Children who attend the program are expected to follow the behavior guidelines based on the four core values and to interact appropriately in a group setting.

As stated in the New Jersey Youth Camp Safety Act Standards 8:25-2.4a.

- a. Policies and procedures for discipline of a child shall be clearly stated and furnished in writing to all employees of the camp. A child shall not be deprived of food, isolated or subjected to corporal punishment or abusive physical exercise as a means of punishment either by staff or by another camper.
- b. Reasonable grouping according to age and the capabilities of each child shall be observed in all activities, including contact sports.

### **Behavior Guidelines:**

- We will **CARE** for ourselves and for those around us.
- **HONESTY** will be the basis for all relationships and interactions.
- People are **RESPONSIBLE** for their actions.
- We **RESPECT** each other and the environment.

### **Expulsion:**

If your child continuously displays inappropriate behavior (i.e. fighting, stealing, bullying, abusive language, etc.), he/she may be dismissed from participating in the program indefinitely.

### **What should your child bring to the Y:**

- Extra Snacks and Drinks or money to purchase from the Café.
- Sneakers and Socks
- Bathing Suit/Towel and Plastic Bag for wet clothes if participating in the pool)

### **Snack Machines:**

The kids will have access to the snack machines during their time at the JKR Branch. Healthy snacks and drinks are sold at reasonable prices.

### **What Should Not Be Brought to the Y:**

- I-pods/MP3 players
- Gum or any type of candy
- Handheld Video Games
- Toys
- Any valuables
- Money\*
  - Only bring what is needed for the café.

## Pick Up Procedures

Pick up will be at the PHCS entrance on the side of the YMCA building. Please park in front of the Y before the turn of the building and walk to the PHCS doors. Children will be released from the conference room.

### Authorization on the Release of Children

We will not release a child to anyone NOT on the emergency contact form authorized by the parent. A child will not be released to anyone under the age of 18. We will ID anyone we do not recognize, therefore if you have someone picking up your child make sure they have photo ID with them. If there is someone prohibited from picking up your child, we must have legal documents stating the restrictions. Please do not be offended if our staff asks for ID. This procedure is to ensure the safety of your child. Whether we already know you or not, you must bring your ID to the sign in/sign out table at all pick up locations.

## Special Situations

The Program Director should be notified in writing of any changes in routine, or any legal issues involving any camper.

## Late Pick Up Fee

The fee for late pick up after 5:30 p.m. is **\$10.00 for the first five minutes and \$1.00 for every minute after**, to be paid at the time of pick-up. Late payments must be paid by check. Cash will not be accepted at the pick up location.

## POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN

- A. The YMCA's policy on the release of children shall include:
  1. The provision that each child may be released only to the child's custodial parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the custodial parent(s) to take the child from the YMCA and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the custodial parent(s) cannot be reached.
  2. The provisions that if a non-custodial parent has been denied access to a child by a court order, the YMCA shall secure documentation to that effect and maintain a copy on file.
- B. Procedures to be followed by staff member(s) if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) as specified above in A.1., fails to pick up child at the time of camps daily closing, shall require that:
  1. The child is supervised at all times.
  2. Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s).
  3. An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his or her parent(s) or authorized by the parent(s) have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the camp, the staff member should call the Division's 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick up the child.
- C. Procedures to be followed by a staff member(s) if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), as specified above in A.1, appear to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk or harm if released to such an individual, shall require that:
  1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual.
  2. Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s).

3. If the camp is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the Division's 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

No child shall be released from the program unsupervised except upon written instruction from the child's parent(s).

**NOTES:**