



Hamilton Area YMCA

2023– 2024

**BASE
(Before and After School Enrichment)
Program**

Parent Handbook



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The following documents can be found on the "Childcare/Enrichment" Page of our website. Please read over each of the policies carefully.

Policy on the Release of Children

Medical Policies

Policy on Communicable Diseases

Positive Discipline Procedures

Expulsion Policy

Information to Parents

Tuition Payment Policy

Electronics Policy

Parental Notification Policy

Technology and Social Media Policy

Parent Information

Welcome

The Hamilton Area YMCA staff would like to welcome parents and children to our YMCA BASE Program. The YMCA provides a variety of services for families in the Hamilton Area. This includes the BASE (Before and After School Enrichment) Programs, Summer Day Camp, Y's Owls Preschool Program, Youth Sport Leagues, Swim Lessons, Preschool Enrichment, Birthday Parties and much more. We highly encourage all families to visit our website at www.hamiltonymca.org to see the variety of programs we offer at the Hamilton Area YMCA.

Mission

The Hamilton Area YMCA is a charitable association dedicated to building a healthy spirit, mind and body. Part of a world-wide movement, it puts Christian principles into practice through programs that promote good health, strong families, youth leadership, community development, and international understanding. YMCA's are open to men, women and children of all ages, incomes, abilities, races and religions.

YMCA Child Learning and Development Vision Statement

The Hamilton Area YMCA promises to provide a healthy and helpful environment focusing on programs for the entire family. Our nurturing, caring and trained professionals will provide quality services. We will promote values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility, as well as self-esteem, leadership and diversity.

Purpose

The purpose of the YMCA BASE Program is to provide a safe and enriching program for children, to promote self-image, physical fitness, and better peer relationships.

Program Goals

1. To encourage self-esteem and self-worth in each individual child.
2. To make new friends.
3. To help children develop skills to interact with peers in a positive manner.
4. To provide a consistent, daily schedule to help with feelings of security and control in the environment.
5. To offer free choice activity times to foster independent choice, sharing, cooperation, and exchange of ideas.
6. To offer a homework area where children may work on homework and receive assistance.

7. To offer a variety of new and innovative activity centers which encourage learning and promote the development of skills. YMCA centers regularly include focus areas such as arts & crafts, board games, community service projects, and STEM activities.

Registration and Payment Policies

Operating Dates and Times

YMCA BASE programs provide care during the school year on regularly scheduled school days. Before School Program: 7:15 a.m. until the start of the school day and After School Program: from the end of the school day to 6:00 p.m. School holidays and vacations are not included as regularly scheduled operational days.

Payments

1. Monthly tuition is due by the first of each month. Example: September 2022 tuition payment is due by September 1, 2022. A \$10 late fee will be assessed per child, per program, for any payment not received by 5pm on the 1st of the month.
2. There is a discount of \$20.00 per month for the second child in the family.
3. The monthly tuition is prorated. The same monthly tuition rate is charged for each month from September through June, regardless of holidays, or emergency school closings.
4. There is no credit for days missed due to vacation, illness, suspension, inclement weather, or other circumstances. There is no reimbursement of fees for days missed.
5. Payments may be made:
 - online (www.hamiltonymca.org) using a credit/debit card. Each month's payment can be made online beginning on the 20th, prior to the month of service.
 - via bank draft (for more information about bank draft, see below)
6. THE YMCA DOES NOT BILL FOR SERVICES. IT IS THE PARENTS/GUARDIANS RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE PAYMENTS ARE RECEIVED BY THE DUE DATE.
7. THERE IS AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF \$25.00 FOR CHECKS THAT ARE RETURNED. If a family has two checks returned within a contract period, personal/business checks will no longer be accepted for the remainder of the contract. Failure to comply with the payment agreement may result in termination from the program.
9. If the 1st falls on a day that the Child Care Office is closed, it is the parent's responsibility to make the payment in the office prior to the 1st or payments can be made online at any time.

Bank Draft

Bank Draft option is available for your monthly tuition payment. Bank Draft allows you the convenience of having payments automatically withdrawn from your account. Payments will be automatically taken from your checking account or credit card on the first of each month September-June. If you would like to sign up for Bank Draft, you must do so at the time of registration. If you use a credit card that expires prior to the end of the draft contract, it is the parent's responsibility to update the bank draft form before the card's expiration date to avoid a service charge. **If you need to remove your child from the**

program, a 15-day written notice is required to stop a monthly draft payment. Withdrawal with less than 15 days notice will result in a forfeit of the payment. There is a non-waivable \$25.00 service charge for any draft (credit card or checking account) that is returned or declined.

Tuition Rates

There is a \$20.00 discount per program, per month for the second/subsequent child in the family. The Hamilton Area YMCA reserves the right to raise the fees of the Before and/or After School Program with 30 days notice to the parent. The Hamilton Area YMCA does not bill for services and that it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make the monthly tuition payments on time. If tuition payments are not made by the deadline, there will be a late fee of \$10 per child per program for all payments received after 5:00p.m. on the 1st.

Program Fees

Before School - 7:15a.m. until the start of the school day

5 days per week = \$139.00/month

3 days per week = \$125.00/month

After School - end of the school day until 6:00p.m.

5 days per week = \$239.00/month

3 days per week = \$218.00/month

Partial Week Schedule - 3 days per week

If you choose to register for the before/after school program 3 days per week, you must choose which days of the week you would like your child to attend at the time of registration. Once the days are chosen, you will be locked in to those days. If a situation arises and you must change the days of the week your child attends the program, we need written notice by the 15th of the month prior to the change. If a change must occur more than once in a school year, there will also be a \$15 change of schedule fee for each change.

Financial Assistance

It is the mission of the Hamilton Area YMCA to provide financial assistance to individuals and families who do not have the ability to pay the full fee. Individuals may be eligible for financial assistance based on a sliding scale criterion. If you are in need of financial assistance, please request a confidential application from Stacy Derrico, Program Office Manager or complete the application form available on our website at www.hamiltonymca.org.

New Jersey Cares for Kids Certificate Program

Parent Responsibilities:

- Must immediately notify the provider when there are changes affecting eligibility of child care services
- Must adhere to the providers program rules or policies
- Ensure that designees are at minimum the required age under Office of Licensing regulations and meet the provider's rules for authorized person to pick up and drop off
- Payments for unauthorized services, including periods of ineligibility, are the responsibility of the parent

Special Circumstances

Sick Days

Credit will not be given for sick days. If your child has an illness which will keep him or her out of school for an extensive period of time (longer than one week), please submit a doctor's note and we will gladly suspend your contract until your child is ready to return to school.

Half Days

All scheduled half days have been included in the fee schedule for After School Care. This means that there will be no extra charge for half days, when our program runs from 1:15 p.m. The children will be served snacks as usual in the program on half days, however it is suggested you provide your child with a "nut free" lunch on half days.

School Holidays and Vacations

In determining the fees for service, we have already deducted all school holidays and vacations as listed in the school calendar

School Emergencies and Weather

If a school has a situation where they must evacuate and close the building early, parents are required to make the necessary arrangements to have their child picked up at the closing time. The After School Program will not operate on days the school building closes at or before 3:35p.m. due to Inclement Weather. If there is a delayed opening, the before school program will not operate. In the event that school is canceled due to the inclement weather, the Before and After School Programs **will be closed** as well. Tuition will not be prorated for delayed openings, early dismissals or school closings. **All parents are required to sign up to receive closing alerts via email or text through the Rained Out Alert System.**

Late Pick-Up

The After School Program ends at 6:00 p.m. We understand that emergencies can and will arise. *Please arrange for emergency pick-up personnel that you can contact in these instances to pick up your child.* They must be listed on your child's paperwork and orange emergency card.

Late pick up

Parents will be charged \$15.00 up to the first ten minutes they are late and \$2.00 per minute after that per child. EXCESSIVE LATENESS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Pick up persons who are late more than three times, will be terminated from the program with no reimbursement of funds.

Parents are required to contact emergency pick up person(s) FIRST, if they suspect that they will be late picking up their child. If unsuccessful in contacting emergency pick up person(s), then parents must immediately contact the Site Supervisor. Please use the phone numbers listed in this handbook to notify the staff when these circumstances occur. This allows staff to prepare the child for the late arrival and to rearrange their own schedule or secure a substitute for the child's care. Staff will take into consideration weather emergencies when determining a late pick up fee. If a child has not been picked up by 6:00 p.m. and the parent has not made arrangements for the child to be picked up by an authorized adult, then the following actions will be taken:

1. Staff will attempt to contact a YMCA Director of After Care, Alysha Wilson and the alternate adult(s) on the child's emergency card to come and pick up the child.
2. If pick up arrangements have not been made within 30 minutes after closing, the Hamilton Police Department or Division of Youth and Family Services will be called.
3. Parents will be charged \$15.00 up to the first ten minutes they are late and \$2.00 per minute after that per child.

Please be respectful of our hardworking staff by being on time!

Program Cancellation

PARENTS ARE REQUIRED TO GIVE A WRITTEN NOTICE PRIOR TO CANCELLATION BY COMPLETING THE "SCHEDULE DROP/CHANGE" FORM BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR. If the form is not submitted, or if the notice is after the 15th, 1) Any deposits will be forfeited 2) the Parent/Guardian will be responsible for the tuition payment. The YMCA reserves the right to terminate for lack of payment. Termination for behavior, illness or other reasons will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Parents may bring the schedule drop/change form to the Child Care Administrative Office or email to Stacy Derrico, Program Office Manager at sderrico@hamiltonymca.org

Health & Safety Regulations

Medication Policy

By law, medications can be administered to a child only under the following conditions:

- Parents must complete and sign a medication authorization form.
- Prescription Medication must come in its original prescription container with medication name, dosage, directions, physician's name, pharmacy name, and telephone number. Over and under the counter medications must be accompanied by a doctor's note which prescribes the medication, gives the dosage instructions, and has the doctor's signature.
- All medication is to be given directly to the Site Director.

We are required to keep emergency medications on site for any child that is prescribed a life-saving medication such as a Benadryl and an EpiPen, inhalers, nebulizers, glucagon, etc. The before and after school programs do not have access to the medication that the school nurse keeps. In addition to the medication, we are required to have the proper medical forms completed by the parent and doctor, which allows the BASE staff to administer the medication in the event of an emergency. If a child is prescribed a life-saving medication and the parent elects not to provide the medication to the BASE programs, the parent must sign off on the Medication Opt Out Form.

First Aid

All YMCA School Age staff are trained in First Aid. To treat for minor injuries the YMCA will use soap, water, ice/cold pack (if needed) and a Band-Aid. A form will be completed and given to the designated pick up person to help keep parents informed of any minor injury.

Management of Communicable Disease

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she should not attend the program. If such symptoms occur during the hours of the program, parents will be called to take the child home. The child may not return to the program until he or she is symptom free for 24 hours.

1. COVID-19
2. Acute Diarrhea
3. Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.
4. Difficult or rapid breathing
5. Yellowish skin or eyes
6. Conjunctivitis
7. Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit or auxiliary temperature of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or over in conjunction with behavior changes.
8. Untreated infected skin patches
9. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool, blood in urine
10. Stiff neck
11. Severe pain or discomfort
12. Vomiting
13. Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
13. Visibly enlarged lymph nodes

The child will be separated from the group and the parents will be called immediately and asked to promptly pick up their child. Upon departure from the site, parents/guardians will be notified verbally or by written statement that a child is exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness or has been exposed to a communicable disease.

An ill child will be isolated and will be supervised by an adult until picked up. If the child is well enough to attend school, he/she may return to the YMCA program. If the child has a communicable disease, a return note from the physician may be requested. For COVID-19, we will follow current guidelines set for Child Care Centers by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families.

Care for Mildly Ill Children

A mildly ill child is defined as one of the following:

1. A child who is experiencing minor common cold symptoms, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms listed above.
2. A child who does not feel well enough to participate in activities, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified above.

The child will be cared for within the child's group. The child shall be observed for signs and symptoms of a worsening condition. Parents will be notified if necessary.

Medical Emergency Procedures

In the event that a child is injured, sick or in need of emergency medical attention, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the YMCA will then notify the contact person on the child's emergency card. When warranted, Emergency Medical Services will be notified immediately.

Safety and Insurance

While in the YMCA BASE program, every precaution is taken to assure that each child has a safe and fun experience. If an accident should occur while in our program, please note that the YMCA does not furnish accident insurance. All medical bills are the responsibility of the child's parent or guardian.

Program Operations

Conflict of Interest

It is a violation of the policy for the YMCA employees to relate to children who participate in the YMCA programs outside of scheduled YMCA activities. This includes, but is not limited to, babysitting, social outings, phone conversations, e-mail, and conversations on social networking sites.

Safety Regulations

For the child's protection, parents are responsible for dropping off the child in person to the YMCA BASE staff in the morning and picking up the child in person, from the site, in the evening. Names of those authorized to pick up the child must be on the Program Registration Form. The person(s) authorized to pick up a child must be at least eighteen years old and must show ID. If any parent or authorized individual arriving to pick up a child is observed as being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the child will not be released, pending notification of properly authorized personnel. Changes in persons authorized to pick up a child in special circumstances must be put in writing and approved by the YMCA Site Director.

- Children may not receive phone calls except in emergency situations. The site cell phone is for emergencies and staff use only. Children will not be permitted to use the phone unless it is an emergency.
- Once children have signed into the YMCA BASE program, they will not be permitted to return to any other parts of the building for any reason.
- New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services mandates the YMCA to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities for investigation.
- Parents may not leave a child at the YMCA or a program site unless a YMCA staff person or volunteer is there to receive and supervise the child. Staff members and volunteers are not allowed to transport children at any time outside of the YMCA program.
- Children must be signed into the program by an adult at drop off and Children must be signed out of the program by an authorized pick up person at the time of pick up.

Absent Child Procedure

If a child is not going to be attending the after school program on a scheduled day, parents must call the site cell phone to notify the staff. Phone numbers are listed on the last page of the handbook.

Attendance is taken within the first five minutes of the children's arrival. If a child who is expected to be in attendance at the site does not show up, and the parent does not provide a verbal or written excuse, then the following procedure will be taken.

1. The staff will check with the school office and review the school absentee lists.
2. If warranted, a follow-up call to parent or guardian is made immediately.
3. If parent is not accessible, the staff will make contact with emergency numbers for verification of the child's whereabouts.
4. In cooperation with the parent and other emergency numbers, in the event of a "no show," an incident report must be issued, and the YMCA Executive Director will be notified. If the child cannot be located, the police will be called immediately.

If a child does not attend school for any reason, he or she may not attend the YMCA program on that day.

Confirmation Fee (After School Program Participants only)

Parents/Guardians must call the site cell phone to notify the after school staff if their child will not be attending. If the parents/guardians fail to report their child absent from the after school program, and the staff must call to check on the child's attendance, there will be a \$10.00 confirmation fee attached to the child's account for each occurrence.

What to Wear

- Appropriate outdoor clothing
- Sneakers and socks
- In the winter, gloves, hats and boots

What to Leave at Home

- Toys
- Gum
- Candy
- Videos/Video Games
- Cell Phone (not permitted while attending the before/after school programs)

All items brought should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

We are not responsible for any lost items including hats, jackets, and book bags.

Lunches and Snacks

If a child is enrolled on half days where they will be eating lunch while in the After School program, he or she must bring a nut free lunch that has been prepared at home. The Hamilton Area YMCA Programs are "nut free environments". Absolutely no products containing peanuts, peanut butter, or nuts of any kind will be allowed. The Hamilton Area YMCA will not provide breakfast or lunch for children. However, the Y does provide a morning and afternoon snack to all children in attendance.

Homework

Time and space is available at each site for children to complete their homework. If parents desire homework to be completed, they must inform the staff at that site so that they may encourage the child to do their homework. Y staff members support children in developing good homework habits, however it is a Y policy that staff refrain from forcing a child to complete his or her school assignments. Parents should check their child's work at home later on in the evening.

Surveys

Over the course of the school year, your child may be asked to participate in paper and/or online surveys during the before and/or after school program. These surveys will allow us to measure our impact and allow us to make improvements to our programs.

Parent Involvement

Parent Communication

We want our families to feel that they can share their concerns, comments and suggestions with us. If you have any questions or problems with the Hamilton Area YMCA BASE program, please talk to the program staff. If you feel that your questions have not been answered or that your problem has not been resolved about before care, please contact the Director of Before School Care, Kristen Indriso. If you feel that your questions have not been answered or that your problem has not been resolved about after care, please contact the Director of After School Care, Alysha Wilson.

Parent Participation and Family Events

Conferences with Hamilton Area YMCA Child Learning and Development staff may be requested at any time to discuss a child's behavior, progress, social and physical needs, or any other pertinent matters. Family Events are scheduled throughout the school year and are designed for families to have fun and meet other families from the Y Community. Parents will be notified in advance of the Special Event.

PRIDE

The BASE Program is a service, which is devoted to caring for your children. The YMCA would like to acknowledge the staff that makes a special effort to help you and your child. If there is a staff member who has been extremely helpful or has gone above and beyond the call of duty for you or your family, please let the YMCA know so that they may receive special acknowledgment.

Program Evaluations

The Hamilton Area YMCA conducts semi-annual program evaluations at each site during the year. Please take a few minutes when these forms are distributed to give your personal feedback of the program. Surveys are also sent out via email through survey monkey.

Parent Visitation

Any custodial parent, custodian or guardian of a child enrolled in the before/after school program shall be permitted unlimited access to the site during its hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the site, or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the custodial parent, custodian or guardian shall notify the site director of his or her presence.

Separated Parent

If parents are separated, but not legally divorced, *the staff has no right to deny access to a child by either parent*. If one parent is concerned about the safety of the child when the child is with the non-custodial parent, action should be taken through the court system. Without documentation the YMCA staff will not prevent access to the child by either parent.

Divorced Parent

In the case of divorce, *either parent may pick up the child unless a court order indicates limited visitation or no visitation*. If parents are in the process of separation or divorce while the child is in care, every attempt should be made to keep staff members updated on issues affecting a child's custody or emotional well being. Custody agreements must be kept on file at the site.

Guardianship

If a legal guardian rather than a parent enrolls a child, a copy of all appropriate legal paperwork must be on file at the site. This is especially critical if natural parents have no custodial or visitation rights.

Emergency Release

If a parent is unable to pick up a child due to unforeseen circumstances, the parent should make arrangements for another adult who is already listed on the Program Registration Form to pick up the child. Parents should put on the registration form, all possible adults to whom the child may be released with their daytime phone numbers, including cell phone numbers.

Discipline Policies and Procedures

Children's Code of Conduct

1. Children must remain in the BASE Program. Leaving without permission will result in termination from the program with no reimbursements of funds.
2. Children must respect the rights and property of others.
3. Children are to act courteously and appropriately, be cooperative and follow the instructions of the BASE staff.
4. Appropriate and acceptable language is expected.
5. Parents have the right to expect that their child will have proper supervision. The child who constantly needs the attention of the staff (for behavior correction) is taking away the rights of the others and not allowing the needs of all the children in the program to be met.
6. Playground rules and policies for each school building will be followed and enforced in the BASE Program.

Discipline Policy

The approach to guidance at the Hamilton Area YMCA's Before and After School Programs is a positive one, which encourages self-control, self-esteem, and cooperation. Smooth, healthy functioning of the group requires rules, which are consistent, clearly defined and developmentally appropriate.

Staff will avoid the use of competitive situations, comparative remarks, threats, physical punishment, and shaming or labeling children. At no time will spanking, shaking, hitting or slapping be allowed, NOR will delegation of discipline from another child be allowed. Children will not be deprived of snacks, or rest or necessary toilet use, as a means of punishment, nor will any child be confined in an enclosed area alone, nor corporal punishment or excessive restraint used. Each child will be cared for and disciplinary techniques will be used which are appropriate to the age level of the child and which foster positive self-esteem and encourage the eventual internalization of self-control. When a child misbehaves, he/she will be redirected to another activity. A discussion between the child and staff will help the child to learn why his/her behavior was inappropriate. Occasionally, a child may be removed from the immediate situation (time away) or play equipment will be taken away until he/she is able to gain control.

Through preventive discipline techniques such as suitable program planning, positive verbal communications, and the setting of an appropriate emotional tone in the program, the need for disciplinary actions will be limited. The best motivations for encouraging positive behavior are modeling appropriate conduct, praising positive behavior, and consistently enforcing program rules.

Possession of a Weapon

A weapon includes guns, pellet guns, knives, pocketknives, needles, pins or club type implements. It may also include a toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon or any object converted from its original use to an object used to threaten or injure another person. If a child brings a weapon to or uses a weapon at the YMCA School Age Care site, the following actions will happen:

The YMCA staff will take the weapon away from the child and conduct an investigation to determine the consequences. If warranted, the school principal will also be notified and the school policy will be followed. The consequences of bringing a weapon to a YMCA site may also lead to immediate suspension from the program.



Phone Numbers for BASE Programs

Parents/Guardians must call the site cell phone to notify the after school staff if their child will not be attending. If the parents/guardians fail to report their child absent from the after school program, and the staff must call to check on the child's attendance, there will be a \$10.00 confirmation fee attached to the child's account for each occurrence.

Alexander	609.902.9733
Kisthardt	609.902.9736
Kuser	609.802.7221
Langtree	609.902.9757
McGalliard	609.802.6336
Mercerville	609.902.9767
Morgan	609.902.9806
Robinson	609.902.9808
Sayen	609.902.9901
Sunnybrae	609.902.9909
University Heights	609.902.9911
Yardville	609.902.9921
Yardville Heights	609.902.9926

Tonya Stackhouse
Assistant Director, School Age Care
Kisthardt, Kuser, Robinson, University Heights,
Yardville, Yardville Heights
609.581.9622 x 114
Email: tstackhouse@hamiltonymca.org

Erik Wiener
Assistant Director, School Age Care
Alexander, Langtree, McGalliard, Mercerville,
Morgan, Sayen, Sunnybrae,
609.581.9622 x 116
Email: ewiener@hamiltonymca.org

Stacy Derrico
Program Office Manager
(609) 581-9622 x115
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