

YMCA Parent Handbook 2025-2026



Welcome to our YMCA!

We are so glad you will be a part of our YMCA family! Our programs are built so that your child comes home with new relationships, new-found interests, enhanced values and increased leadership skills that will all help foster a strong foundation for their future! At the YMCA, we embrace a play-based philosophy that guides participants through fun and engaging activities that result in learning and skill building. Our programs are built upon the foundation of our Core Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. As you read through this handbook, please familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures governing our camp and school age care programs. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us! Thank you for choosing the YMCA!

YMCA Mission Statement:

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

YMCA Participant Goals:

To Be Safe, Secure & Confident

To Foster Lifelong Skills & Values

To Build Social Skills & Relationships

- To Become Better Leaders

- To Explore Interests & Have Fun

Program Dates and Times:

Our commitment is to serve our local community.

Our After School Program runs Monday-Friday 2:30 p.m.-6 p.m.

Our Full Day Camps run from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. on their respective days.

- *After School*- follows local school calendars for the after-school programs.
- *School Days Out*- follows local school calendars to offer full day care on school holidays and closures. Programs will not run on holidays observed by the Bob Freesen YMCA.
- *Summer Camp*- follows local school calendars; typically a 10 week program.

Program Activities:

Our camp and school age programs promise indoor and outdoor adventures and a safe space for children to have FUN! All programs make use of the facilities' indoor features and outdoor features, including gymnasiums, playgrounds, classrooms, and much more!

Each program will include the following:

- STEM based projects once per week
- Gross motor activities daily
- YMCA character development activities daily
- Fun swim

YMCA Commitment to Safety:

Our well-trained YMCA staff members are CPR and first aid certified. In addition, they are trained in supervision, group dynamics, child abuse prevention, anti-bullying techniques, group games, leadership and character development.

The YMCA of Springfield is recognized as a mandated reporter and the staff is required to report cases of suspected abuse to the authorities. Our YMCA staff understand kids and know how to put safety first!

Abuse of any kind will not be tolerated and confirmed abuse will result in immediate dismissal from this organization. We will fully cooperate with the authorities if allegations of abuse are

made that require an investigation. Our staff and volunteers will provide a professional work environment free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.

Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions	Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Handshakes • High-fives and hand slapping • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) <p>**Avoid giving hugs or resting your hand anywhere on a youth’s body. ***Physical contact should be shared only in the presence of trustworthy witnesses and never in one-on-one situations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-frontal hugs • Kisses • Playing games that involve inappropriate contact • Tickling • Wrestling • Lap sitting • Laying down beside someone • Piggyback rides • Any type of massage • Any form of affection that is unwanted • Contact with the bottom, chest, or genital areas (bathing suit areas) • Exposing oneself • All forms of corporal punishment • Aggressive, angry or threatening physical contact with another person • Seeking private or one-on-one time with youth not observable by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Age-Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise • Strength-based conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Bullying • Cursing • Angry or vulgar language • Verbally abusive shouting • Secrets • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming, belittling • Derogatory remarks • Oversharing personal history • Sexually explicit conversation • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate others • Compliments relating to physique or body development • Harassment by words, gestures, or body language • Viewing or showing others pornographic materials

Registration and Billing Policies:

Registration is available online at www.jacksonvilleymca.org or available in person at the front desk. Parents can access program details, balances, and tax information via their online account.

- Starting March 2026, online registration is required for all programs.
- A \$30 non-refundable registration fee is due for all school year programs at time of registration.
- A \$25 non-refundable deposit is due for each week of camp at the time of registration.
- **All payments are due seven days prior to attendance in the program.**
- Preferred payment method is automatic bank draft.
- All returned payments are subject to a \$20 insufficient funds fee.
- The YMCA reserves the right to discontinue services at any time due to outstanding balances.
- Payment is due regardless of attendance.
- All date changes or cancellations must be submitted in writing two weeks in advance.
- There are no refunds for the after-school program. If you cannot attend the program due to a medical emergency or relocation, please contact us.

Financial Assistance:

We understand that every family’s situation is different, and we want all children to have the opportunity to participate in YMCA programs. If your family is experiencing financial hardship, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Support may be available through third-party providers like Community Child Care Connection for those who qualify, and **no family is turned away due to inability to pay**. Thanks to generous fundraising efforts and support from the United Way, we

are also able to offer scholarships to help cover program and membership costs. Please contact our staff for more information.

Drop Off and Pick Up:

All children must be signed in and out of the program daily by an authorized adult (18 years or older). The YMCA is legally responsible for your child only during the time your child is in the program. Children will only be dismissed to authorized persons listed as authorized adults. For the child's protection, only persons authorized by the primary caretaker may pick up a child.

Late Pick-Up Procedures:

Y childcare ends at 6 p.m. If you are running late, please call the YMCA. A late pick-up fee will be assessed after the program closes. There will be an additional charge of \$10 per child, every 10 minutes starting at 6:05 p.m. payable to the YMCA.

Parents who have not notified the director they will be late can expect the following sequence of events to occur. These steps are necessary to ensure the safety of the child as well as Y staff members.

- **6 p.m. Program closes.** Staff member in charge begins calling parents to check for problems or miscommunications. If contact is not made, alternative contacts listed on the registration form will be called.
- **6:30 p.m.** Staff member in charge contacts team leader, program director and local authorities to apprise of the situation.
- **6:45 p.m.** If there is no contact from the parent and no other safe option, the child will be turned over to the city or county police department.
- **You risk dismissal from the program if:**
 - You fail to pay the late fee.
 - You are late picking up your child(ren) three times within a 30-day period.

Management of Communicable Disease:

We are required to inform parents, as well as the Department of Public Health, when children have been exposed to communicable diseases. Please inform the Child Care Director if your child has a confirmed case of any communicable disease. To minimize exposure to others, please keep your child home if they have:

- Fever of 100°
- Severe Cold and/or Coughing
- Rash/Lesions
- Pink Eye
- Strep Throat
- Lice
- Scabies/Parasites/Ringworm
- Chicken Pox, Measles, etc.

If your child is displaying signs of any of these or other illnesses, you will be called and asked to pick your student up immediately. Children will be re-admitted to the program only upon receipt of a physician's statement indicating the child is no longer contagious. In the case of head lice, the child must be free of nits to return.

Medication:

Our Child Care Director or Head Counselors will administer medications. All medications must include a signed "**Authorization to Administer Medication**" form. Medicine must be in the original container and include a label. All prescriptions must be current, and staff must follow the instructions as listed on the label. Medication and records will be kept, locked, on program site with medication schedule.

- No over-the-counter medication, including aspirin, cough medicine etc. will be given without a doctor's written consent.

- Staff cannot administer amounts other than specified on the bottle or split pills.

Injuries:

If your child is injured, our staff will take the necessary steps to obtain medical care. These steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Attempts to contact a parent or guardian.
- Attempts to contact parents through any persons listed on the emergency information form.
- If we cannot contact you or the emergency contacts, we will do any or all of the following:
- Administer emergency first aid.
- Call an ambulance or fire rescue. The fee of this service is the responsibility of the parent.
- Have the child taken to an emergency hospital accompanied by a staff member.
- If your child is exempt from medical care based on religious beliefs, the parent or guardian must submit a written plan stating the care approved for your child.

Discipline and Guidance Policy:

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

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.

When a child does not follow the behavior guidelines, we will take the following steps:

1. Staff will redirect the child to more appropriate behavior.
2. The child will be reminded of the behavior guidelines and YMCA rules, and a discussion will take place.
3. If the behavior persists, a parent or caregiver will be notified of the problem.
4. The staff will document the situation. This written documentation will include what the behavior problem is, what provoked the problem, and the corrective action taken.
5. Staff will schedule a conference with the parent or caregiver so all parties can determine the appropriate action to take.
6. Staff will schedule a progress check or a follow-up conference.
7. If the problem persists, staff will schedule a conference that includes the parent or caregiver, child, staff, and program director. The program director will have all documentation and the notes from the previous conferences for review.
8. If a child's behavior at any time threatens the immediate safety of that child, other children, or staff, the parent or caregiver may be notified and expected to pick up the child immediately.
9. If a problem persists and a child continues to disrupt the program, the Y reserves the right to suspend and/or expel the child from the program.

The following behaviors are not acceptable and may result in the immediate suspension of a child, and/or termination from the program:

- Intentional physical violence, such as hitting, kicking or tackling
- Stealing or damaging Y or personal property

- Leaving the program without permission
- Continually disrupting the program
- Refusing to follow the behavior guidelines or YMCA rules
- Using profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity frequently

Immediate expulsion may occur if a child is in possession of or using tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, firecrackers, firearms, or explosives.

Licensing Compliance

The YMCA School Age Care Program is exempt from licensure according to the Child Care Act; Title 89, Part 377, Section 377.3, "Day Programs." However, the YMCA program is required to provide written, notarized notification to the Department of Child & Family Services regarding our operation. Our programs and facilities are not licensed or regulated by DCFS. Our programs are also required to comply with the standards of the Illinois Department of Public Health (77 Ill. Adm. Code 750) and the fire safety standards of the Illinois State Fire Marshall (41 Ill. Adm. Code 100). The YMCA engages and complies with the background check and clearance procedure through Illinois Department of Human Services CCAP currently available for license exempt CCAP providers.

Firearms

Illinois prohibits the knowing possession or carrying of any firearm, stun gun, or taser on or about the person in any public or private elementary or secondary school, on the person or in a vehicle on the real property of any school, in any conveyance owned, leased or contracted by a school to transport students to or from school or a school-related activity, or on the person or in a vehicle on any public way within 1,000 feet of the real property comprising a school. The YMCA complies with this law and follows this as policy within its YMCA facilities and program spaces.

Confidentiality

It is policy of the YMCA program staff to work in a confidential manner regarding the admission, progress, health and discharge of any child participating in our programs. Authorization to release any such information must specifically be stated in writing by the parent/guardian and will be kept on file at the program site. Personal information regarding your child is only available to program staff. At program sites, children's files are kept in locked file chests within cabinets that are locked when staff are not in the immediate area. Files at the YMCA Branches are kept in locked file cabinets in offices that are locked when staff are not immediately present.

Program Communication

We use Class Dojo as a regular communication phone app. As always, please contact us with any questions, reports, comments or concerns!