

YMCA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

PARENT HANDBOOK



Preschool Program Information

Mission: *The mission is to provide quality child care for all children to develop intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically in a safe environment. Family and community involvement is strongly encouraged to support program goals. Reasonable fees are provided to accommodate the entire community.*

For more information, please contact Administration at our site or visit our website:

Early Childhood Development Academy
55 Hiram Drive
Hiram, Georgia 30141
678-626-0500

Welcome to the YMCA Academy

Welcome to the YMCA preschool program. We have planned to offer your child a fun-filled experience that he/she will remember for many years to come. Our trained staff is here to ensure that your child(ren) build self-esteem, learn new skills, and experience worlds outside of their everyday environment. The following information should answer any questions you may have about the program.

The YMCA is committed to providing quality preschool programs. Our pre-school program is in Self Study phase of National Association for the Education of Young Children. Our goals are as follows:

- ⇒ To help children develop to their fullest potential
- ⇒ To support and strengthen the family unit
- ⇒ To deliver programs in a caring, safe and positive environment

OPERATION HOURS

Days: Monday-Friday

Hours:

6:30am - 6:30pm Traditional Child Care Unit

8:00am-2:30pm Georgia Pre-K

7:30am-2:00pm Tallatoona Head Start

6:30 am – 8:00 am Pre-K Extended Day (morning)

2:30pm – 6:30 pm Pre-K Extended Day (afternoon)

6:30 am - 6:30 pm Holiday Camps

***Hours may vary for services depending on program child is enrolled in.**

Holiday Closings: (See program school calendar)



Administrative Staff

Lydia Thacker Executive Director
Saralee Persails Program Director
Kay Pollard Lead Instructional Teacher Pre-K
Dana Lewis Administrative Director

History of YOUR YMCA

The YMCA Metro Atlanta began their work in Paulding County in June, 2008. Since the center opened under their management we have partnered with Tallatoona Head Start to service the three year olds in the program. Georgia Funded Pre-K has given us an additional Pre-K room bringing our roll to 80 children for the now braided program with Head Start. We have started our quest for National Accreditation with National Association for the Education of Young Children. Our self study will be complete in 2010 and we will apply for validation. The standards of the Y for your child/ren is high, all teachers must have or be close to completing a CDA and be at least 21 years of age. We look forward to partnering with you in the early education of your child.

Inclusion Policy

All students must be able to function within State-licensing ratios. Parents are required to inform the staff of any special needs during the enrollment process to properly identify specific needs. The YMCA will make admission decisions based on the assessment that include the needs of the student and the effects admission would have on the budget, staff and other children in the program. It is the policy of the YMCA to serve all individuals without regard to race, sex, nationality, religion, disability or other classification protected by law.

Morning Drop-off /Afternoon Pick-up

As a State Licensed Program parents must escort their child/ren into their classroom when dropping them off. All children must be signed in and out daily by an authorized adult. Children will not be allowed to wait for their parents in the parking lot or lobby entrance.

Children will only be released to a parent/guardian or to an adult that you have designated in writing. Anyone that picks up your child must present a picture identification that corresponds with the name that you have designated.



Please park in a designated parking space. The county will ticket cars parked illegally. (This is for the safety of our kids.)

Payments

All payments are due on Monday before services are rendered. This is strictly a fee for service program, so it is vital that all accounts are kept current on a weekly basis. As per your Financial Agreement we will not be able to provide services for more than two days without payment. If your child is out we must receive ½ week's tuition payment to reserve their space.

Attendance

Traditional Child Care Unit:

The traditional child care program provides early learning opportunities for children ages 6 weeks – 4 years old year round, Monday – Friday from 6:30 am – 6:30 pm. The center must be contacted if your child will be out for any reason. This is to ensure that your space is reserved. Daily attendance is preferred but is not required. **If your child is out one (1) full week, you must pay one-half (1/2) week tuition in advance to reserve their space.** Two weeks per year will be granted at this discounted rate. If your child attends 2 or more days a full week's tuition is due.

Georgia Pre-K Program/Head Start Program:

The Georgia Pre-K Program operates for 180 days per year. The calendar is determined by the provider. The core instructional program is 6.5 hours per day. The hours are 8:00am-2:30pm, Monday-Friday. Families enrolling children in the program must agree to send the child a full 6.5 hours of instructional time, five days per week for the entire 180 days. **It is a Bright From the Start decision to remove a child from our roster if they have more than 10 unexcused absences/tardies.**

Summer Day Camp: During the summer learning, fun, and character-building experienced during the school year continues. The Summer Day Camp Program operates during the school year continues into the summer months for children ages 4-7 years old. The center must be contacted if your child will be out for any reason. This is to ensure that your space is reserved. Daily attendance is preferred but is not required. **If your child is out one (1) full week, you must pay one-half (1/2) week tuition in advance to reserve their space.** Two



weeks per year will be granted at this discounted rate. If your child attends 2 or more days a full week's tuition is due.

Supervision

The YMCA's Keeping Kids Safe policy requires that children are supervised at all times. The YMCA, as a premier child and family serving agency, recognizes its responsibility to always provide children and youth with the safest possible environment

Medications

Except for first aid, personnel will not dispense prescription or non-prescription medications to a child **without** specific written authorization from the child's physician or parent. Such authorization will include when applicable, date; full name of the child; name of the medication; prescription number; if any; dosage; the dates to be given; the time of day to be dispensed; and signature of parents. Written authorization to dispense medications shall be limited to two (2) weeks unless otherwise prescribed by a physician. Medication shall only be dispensed out of its original container which must be labeled with the child's name.

Illness

A child shall not be accepted nor allowed to remain at the center if the child has the equivalent of a one hundred one (101) degrees Fahrenheit or higher oral temperature and another contagious symptom, such as but not limited to, a rash, diarrhea or a sore throat. The DHR office's current communicable disease chart of recommendations for exclusion of sick children from the center and their readmission shall be followed. Parents of all children enrolled shall be notified in writing of the occurrence of any of the illnesses on the communicable disease chart. as provided by the DHR office, within twenty-four (24) hours after the center becomes aware of the illness.

Immunization Certificate

The center must have a current Immunization Certificate on file *prior* to the first day of school. The only form accepted is form 3231 for all ages.

Georgia Pre-K Program: Students enrolled in this program must provide the certificate within 30 days of enrollment. The Ear, Eye and Dental must be provided within 90 days of enrollment.



Emergencies

Minor accidents such as minor cuts and scratches; receive prompt first aid attention from our staff. In the event of such accidents the center will document the incident and contact the parents.

Parents MUST inform the center of any change in telephone numbers during the year. The center must be able to reach you in the event of an emergency.

***Inclement Weather**

In case of inclement weather, the YMCA Academy will follow the schedule of the Paulding County School System for operations. Tune into WSB-TV for complete weather information during inclement weather. If bad weather develops during the day that may present a hazard, please make arrangements to leave work early. We do not want children and staff stranded at the center.

Communicating Change

In the event that significant change is going to occur in your home, the program needs to be informed immediately. All information will be regarded as confidential. Common causes of excitement or distress in children can include: either or both parents being away from home for any reason for an extended time; a new person living in the home; pending divorce or separation; serious illness of a parent or close relative; moving; and accident or death of a family member or pet.

Curriculum

Our curriculum of choice at the YMCA Academy is the Creative Curriculum. The curriculum exposes learning opportunities in the areas of Art/Writing, Language Development, Reading, Math, Music n' Movement, Science and Discovery, Physical, Cooking. We also include YMCA specific content to the curriculum which encourages healthy habits, social, moral, and spiritual development.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a voluntary accreditation program dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the *quality* of educational and developmental services for all children.

Since 1985, NAEYC has offered a national, voluntary accreditation system to set professional standards for early childhood education programs, and to help families identify high-quality programs. Today, NAEYC Accreditation represents the mark of quality in early childhood education. For more information visit

www.naeyc.org



Discipline Policy

Disciplinary actions used to correct a child's behavior, guidance techniques and any activities in which the children participate or observe at the center shall not be detrimental to the physical or mental health of any child. Staff must use redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement. Staff will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and the environment to minimize conflict. If a major discipline problem occurs, you will be contacted by the Program Director or other designated Administrator.

Partner With Youth (PWY) Annual Giving Campaign

The YMCA Academies accept financial contributions throughout the year. Annually, we pool our efforts in a giving campaign called "Partner With Youth". The YMCA wants to "put kids first", and we need your support. The overall goal of \$75,000 provide new opportunities for children. All annual campaign funds remain in our local community, giving children and families an opportunity to get involved in Y programs. Please let us know how you would like to help.

Meals

As a participant under the Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP), we will provide Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack. All children enrolled **must** have an eligibility form on file to participate and receive meals. No additional fees will be assessed regardless of the information received from the eligibility form.

All of our meals meet the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program. We are an all white meat facility, which means we do not serve Pork or Red Meat. Menus are posted weekly on the parent board and a copy is available at the front desk. Only pre-packaged foods can be brought into the center for special events.

Because we are a State Licensed Facility food and menu exceptions cannot be made for individual children, unless for documented medical reasons that must be supported by a doctor's statement.

Birthday

A birthday is a special time for our children. In order to assist in making this time special for our students, we allow parents to bring in pre-packaged nutritious snacks and a cake to be served during our program. Latex balloons are not allowed into the classrooms for safety reasons.



Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is critical in the positive development of all children. That is why YMCA has several ways that our families can be involved in the school activities of their child. Whether you are a parent who can come to read to the class or if your schedule does not permit you to be on site we have a list of things you can do from work or home to show your support. Your Director will be happy to provide you with details. Also, below is a host of ways that you can play an active role in our YMCA family:

➤ **Partner With Youth Campaigner**

Whether your child is in Child Care or Pre-K raising contributions for the Partner With Youth campaign supports each of our programs. Visit with one of your directors for details on this simple way you can give back to YOUR YMCA.

➤ **Classroom Volunteers/Room Parents**

We are seeking parents to volunteer for classroom activities for a minimum of one hour per week. We also need families to be room parents and active participants in our Parent Advisory Council (PAC.) For additional information please feel free to contact your location's Program Director.

➤ **S.W.A.Y Volunteers**

We are constantly looking for Seniors to participate in our centers volunteer program "Seniors Working for the Advancement of Youth". For additional information please feel free to contact your Program Director

➤ **Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Purpose Statement**

The Parent Advisory Council will provide support to the YMCA children, families and staff in order to enrich the academy program. See your center director for more details on becoming a part of the Parent Advisory Council at your child's center.

