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# Lake Norman YMCA Parent Handbook 2017 – 2018

## **Our Mission**

The YMCA is an organization that strives “to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.” Our focus in the Afterschool program is to encourage children to accept and demonstrate five key character traits that include:

- Caring
- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Faith

## **Our Purpose**

To provide a quality, oriented experience that is safe, convenient, creative, constructive, and fun. Our program strives to offer opportunities and activities which enhance a child’s physical, social, intellectual, and emotional growth.

The Lake Norman YMCA does not discriminate against any person who wishes to participate in any program for any reason.



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## Goals of the Lake Norman Afterschool Program

- To provide a positive growth experience, recognizing each individual child's needs and abilities.
- To provide activities and experiences that develops and support values, positive self-esteem, and fun.
- To strengthen the family unit.
- To provide a safe environment, where children and teenagers feel comfortable coming after school to be themselves and build positive friendships with other youth as well as adults.
- To grow relationships between members of our surrounding communities by providing a place to meet new families and make new friends.

## **Staffing/Contact Info**

We recruit our staff through high school and area colleges. All staff are required to attend extensive training prior to the beginning of the school year. We take pride in the high expectations we set for our staff each year and evaluate them on a regular basis. Curtis Crews provides direct leadership to the Lake Norman YMCA Afterschool program under the supervision of Erik Walsingham, our Family Services Director. All questions whether phone or email should be directed to our Program Office. You can email us at [lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org) or call at 704-716-4418. If you have any emergency question please contact the program office or, if it can not be reached, the front desk at 704-716-4403. Erik Walsingham can be reached at 704-716-4443 or [erik.walsingham@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:erik.walsingham@ymcacharlotte.org).

Please Note – The Lake Norman YMCA Afterschool program is not licensed by the State Department of Child Development. The YMCA of Greater Charlotte Afterschool Programs adhere to the YMCA Quality Standards.

## **Hours of Operation**

We will operate from school dismissal until 6:30 p.m. On teacher workdays the program will run from 7:00AM to 6:00PM. **All attending must register through the front desk or online at <https://programs.ymcacharlotte.org>.**

## **Before School**

Drop off for before school begins at 6:00am. Only students who registered separately for before school may attend. We will drop the kids off at school at their appropriate time via the YMCA bus.

## **Full Day Programs**

All full day programs begin with supervision at 7:00 a.m. and end at 6:00 p.m. Participants **may not** be dropped off at the YMCA prior to 7:00 a.m. This allows the staff to properly prepare for the day without interruption from participants arriving early. Staff will be ready to greet



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promptly at 7:00 a.m. There is a separate registration for *each* full day. Full days will require registration and payment of \$25 for Members and \$40 for Program Participants. With our per day pricing, these are days that are not included in your monthly tuition.

### **Registration for Full Day Programs**

In order for us to better prepare for these days, and have adequate staff available, you must register online or at the front desk, not through the program office.

**Please take all payments for full days to the Member Service desk in the lobby of the main building or visit <https://programs.ymcacharlotte.org>. NO payments or registration will be accepted by ANY Afterschool Staff.**

### **Things to bring and remember for a full day program!**

- Lunch
- Swimsuit
- Two snacks for before and after lunch. Snacks will not be provided on full days.
- Toys from home are accepted but not encouraged. Any toys, games, cards, or electronics brought from home will be the child's responsibility. There will be designated times during the day for these to be used and staff will not be responsible for keeping up with them. Staff reserve the right to judge anything brought as inappropriate and not allow it to be played with.
- Label everything!

### **Inclement Weather/Early Dismissal/Closing**

The procedure for early dismissal and closing of school is as follows: YMCA Administration will assess the conditions for the safety of our staff and participants. A voicemail message will be left at 704-716-4418 regarding the hours of the Afterschool Program. In the event of school closing, YMCA Administration will assess the conditions and opening time will be left at the numbers above.

### **At the School/Absentees**

If your child attends a CMS School they will be picked up at his/her schools by CMS busses and dropped at the YMCA. All other schools will be picked up by our YMCA busses each day. **If your child is not attending the YMCA Afterschool Program, we ask that you call 704-716-4418, or email [lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org) prior to 2:00 pm and leave a message.** Attendance will be checked when arriving at the YMCA to be sure that your child is present. If the child does not arrive at the YMCA on one of their scheduled days, we will check with the school personnel to see if your child was in attendance at school that day. If the child was not at school, then no further follow up will be made. If the child was in school, but did not appear at the YMCA, you will be called AFTER ALL THE BUSES HAVE ARRIVED AT THE YMCA. Any message left at another phone line will not be received until after program time so please use the number provided because it is checked on a regular basis. Again, we ask that you email [lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org) or leave a message on 704-716-4418 if your child will not



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be attending afterschool on one of their scheduled days. **This saves us a great deal of time, and we really appreciate your support with this matter.**

### **Releasing Participants Designation of Individuals Authorized to pick up:**

#### **Authorized Pick Up**

We no longer use a code word system. Anyone attempting to pick up a child must be on that child's authorized pick up list. This list is provided by the parent/guardian on the registration form. A child will not be released to an unauthorized individual without consent from the parent/guardian. This consent can be provided by alerting us ahead of time via email at [lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org). You may also let us know prior via face to face communication. Phone calls and notes can not be accepted. Email from our listed contact email, or face to face communication are the only ways to authorize someone to pick up your child. However, phone confirmation is accepted if we call you to confirm.

#### **Rides Out**

We are pleased to provide a drive through service alongside the Afterschool building from 5:00p.m. until 6:30p.m. each day. To ensure the safety of our children, staff and members, please pull as close to the curb as possible so other cars can pass around you while you wait. One of our leadership staff will be on hand during these times to check IDs and radio for your child. On Fridays we ask you to park your car and come in to meet/check in with your child's counselors. The counselors will have authorized pick up lists to be able to dismiss from their rooms/scheduled areas on Fridays.

#### **Early Pick Ups**

For NO reason will a staff person release your child without you following the current policies set for sign out. We ask that you never go to your child's group and take your child without signing out, excluding Friday Rides Out. If you arrive early to pick your child up (prior to 5:00), parents must physically come in to sign out. We have a hand-held radio system that allows us to communicate effectively; however, it may take a few minutes to retrieve the child from that program area. Your patience is appreciated.

#### **Late Pick Up**

**In fairness to staff and because of subsequent program demands, it is very important that your child be picked up on time.** A late fee will be charged for EACH child not picked up by 6:30 pm. The fee will be assessed at a rate of \$5.00 per 5 minutes after 6:30 pm /per child. The late fee will be charged to the credit card on file. Failure to pay all balances due could possibly result in a cease of service. **If a child is left for an hour or longer after the program is over and there is NO evidence of contact being attempted, this is considered abandonment, and we reserve the right to contact the Department of Social Services.**



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## **Custody Issues**

In cases of separated or divorced parents where visitation rights are denied to one parent, we cannot deny releasing the child to such parent unless a court decree or separation document is in our file expressly forbidding such parent from picking up the child from our program, or from picking up at times not allowed by the decree. The court decree must also be specific to the rights of visitation on the YMCA property during Afterschool hours. The court document must specify in writing that visitation is permitted by the non-custodial parent. Otherwise, visitation will NOT BE PERMITTED!

## **Intoxication**

Your child's safety is our first priority. At times we are called to make judgments concerning their safety. If a YMCA staff member believes that a parent is intoxicated when they arrive to pick up their child, we will help arrange an alternate plan for the transportation of the child and his/her parent. We will try first to contact another family member or spouse, and then one of the emergency contacts listed on the child's registration form. If those means are unsuccessful, a cab will be called at the parent's expense. If the parent is suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol and is unruly, uncooperative, or out of control physically, for the safety of the child and staff person, the staff may have no choice but to contact the police.

## **Parent Responsibilities**

- Evaluations – We need your comments, input and ideas on how to make Afterschool program better serve you and your child(ren). Evaluations will be handed out several times throughout the year. You may also be called by an outside company to evaluate the program. Please take the time to fill out or answer the evaluation question so we may improve the program.
- Come Visit – You are always welcome and encouraged to visit our Afterschool Program. We also encourage you to talk to our leaders or the Director about the program and any needs or special successes your child is experiencing.
- Family Involvement – One of our goals is to strengthen families – whether you are a single parent, two parent family or other legal guardian. During the school year we will offer special family activities that will start after normal programming hours. We encourage you to participate. Detailed information regarding these events and other specialty activities will be in your monthly newsletter.
- What's going on at Home – Children's actions in our program often reflect problems that they are experiencing at home (i.e. pet's death, parents divorce, fight with siblings, etc). If any such disruptive or traumatic experience should occur, please inform your child's counselor or the Program Director. This will enable us to better meet the needs of your child.
- Can Afterschool staff Baby-sit for your family – Unfortunately staff members are forbidden from babysitting children that they meet through YMCA programs. If there is a previous



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relationship between a family and a staff member, letters must be provided from both parties to explain the relationship.

- Lost & Found – We ask that you label everything. **We are not responsible for the items that your child may lose at the YMCA.** We do have a lost & found in the program office, and we do our best to get the items that we locate that have names on them back to the rightful owner. You are more than welcome to go through lost & found at anytime during Afterschool hours. We clean out lost & found items **every TWO weeks.** If things are not claimed by then and do not have a name on them, then they are taken to our local Goodwill.

### **Parent Understandings:**

1. I understand that YMCA staff and volunteers are not allowed to transport children at any time outside of the YMCA program.
2. I understand that I am not to leave my child at the YMCA or program site unless a YMCA Afterschool staff is there to receive and supervise my child.
3. I understand that state law mandates the YMCA, to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities for investigation.
4. I understand that it is my responsibility to stay informed about what is going on in the Afterschool Program. The Lake Norman Afterschool Program will supply at the beginning of every month a newsletter. It is my responsibility as the parent to read it and follow the guidelines in the newsletter as well as in this parent handbook.
5. I understand that it is my responsibility to retrieve all lost and found items for my child. The Afterschool staff will assist in trying to prevent this from happening. If a YMCA staff person locates a child's item, they will do their best to get it returned to the rightful owner, but again if it is NOT labeled, it is not the YMCA's responsibility to find or replace.
6. I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the Afterschool Program in writing of any number or address changes that occur. This is to include your emergency contacts phone numbers.
7. I understand that I am responsible to keep up to date with all fees of the Afterschool program, and that if not, the YMCA reserves the right to cease service until paid.

### **Discipline Policy**

#### **Philosophy**

The philosophy of our program is based on character development principles of respect, responsibility, honesty, faith, and caring. It is expected that our staff is to give respect and courtesy to each participant, as we expect to get in return. The staff will make every effort to relate to participants on an individual basis and not make the whole group responsible for the actions of one camper.

- Staff will not damage the participant's self image or embarrass the child.
- Staff will help participants learn self-control, choose alternatives, identify feelings and develop and understanding and respect for the feelings of others.
- Every effort will be made by staff to enlist the cooperation of the child and parents to solve problems.



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**Please note: There is no financial compensation/refund for time missed due to the behavior problems.**

### **General Afterschool Rules**

- Caring:* Keep your hands and feet to yourself  
No fighting  
No throwing objects
- Honesty:* Tell the Truth  
No Stealing
- Respect:* No profanity  
Respect your counselor and fellow campers  
Take care of equipment, property and environment  
Treat others like you would want to be treated
- Responsibility:* Stay with your group at all times  
Keep up with your belongings  
Cleaning up after yourself
- Faith:* To be respectful of all people's beliefs and backgrounds

### **Immediate Suspension**

**The following behaviors may result in immediate suspension and/or permanent dismissal from the program:**

- Damage or theft of property
- Assault (hitting, biting, kicking or throwing objects at child or staff)
- Possessing weapons
- Tobacco products
- Alcohol
- Narcotics or illegal drugs
- Gang-related activity
- Sexual misconduct

Parents will be responsible for transportation to return the child home. Parents are responsible for damage to property. When called, parents must pick their child up promptly. No refunds will be issued.

**- Once a child is removed from the program that child may not return to the PROGRAM up to one year to the day that he/she was removed.**

#### **Format of Consequences**

**Step # 1** - Verbal communication by staff to child

**Step # 2** - Documentation of Behavior by staff – copy given to parent/guardian



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- Step # 3** - Second Documentation by staff – copy given to parent/guardian during discussion with parent/guardian about behavior
- Step # 4** - Third Documentation – 1 day suspension from program – meeting with the parent to discuss behavior and intervention
- Step # 5** - Fourth Documentation – 3 day suspension from program – meeting with the parent to discuss behavior – director may place child on probation
- Step # 6** - Fifth Documentation – 5 day suspension and discussion about future participation in program

1. The child will be spoken to in hopes that discussion and redirection of the child to another activity is all that is required to correct the problem. A warning will also be given.
2. If the discussion and redirection does not seem to help, the child may have loss of some activity time or other reward not given.
3. Should problem behavior continue, the parent/guardian will be notified and documentation of the behavior, past and present, will begin.
4. If these steps do not correct the problem, the parent/guardian, child, staff and director will meet to discuss corrective procedures.
5. Should this process prove unsuccessful and behavior problems are not corrected, the child may be dismissed from the program.

We believe in giving participants every opportunity to succeed. With this in mind the discipline policy consumes a 30-day period and each documentation stays with the child over that 30 days. However, once a child is removed from the program following multiple suspensions, they are not allowed back in Afterschool for up to one full year.

### **Medication Policy**

If a child needs to have medication administered to them while in Afterschool, you should:

1. Bring medications directly to the Program Director.
2. Complete the medication release form that we will provide for you.
3. Medication must be in its original bottle for us to be able to administer. If the medication for any reason needs to be altered (i.e.: being cut in half), please make sure that is done before we receive the medication.

### **Emergencies**

In the case of emergency, every effort will be made to reach you or the contacts listed on your information sheet. If no one can be reached we will take the necessary actions for the health of your child. If anything other than basic first aid is needed our first course of action will be to call 911. Should there be any changes in the emergency contact numbers, please notify us immediately.

If it is absolutely necessary, a personal vehicle is available to transport any injured person to the emergency room of the closest hospital. In the event of an emergency, if you would like to



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request that your child be taken to another hospital in the area, please put it in writing and send it to the School Age Program Director.

In the case of outdoor hazards such as storms, various actions and procedures will be taken:

- In electrical storms, all outside activities will be curtailed.
- All children will be directed inside and a rainy day program activity will take place

In the event of a tornado or dangerous electrical thunderstorm, all participants will be moved into the main building. Our participants and staff practice these emergency drills on a regular basis.

### **Program Content**

- Recreational Swim Time
- Games & Sports
- Clinics
- Arts and Crafts
- Homework Time \*
- Snacks
- Creative Themes
- Field Trips
- Tutoring \*

#### **\*Homework Time:**

There will be a mandatory homework time of 30 min during the day where all participants must either work on their homework, read, or work on provided worksheets. We encourage everyone to work on their homework during this time but it is not required unless specified by the parent on a homework form. You can request that homework be done only during this time period, or until finished. We have a homework room where children may work on their homework after the designated time and until finished. You can email [lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:lakenormanyouth@ymcacharlotte.org) to request a homework form.

#### **\*Tutoring:**

Our homework room is staffed by two teachers that can assist with the majority of your child's homework needs. The YMCA does not provide tutoring as a paid service.

#### **Recreational Swimming**

Participants will have the opportunity to utilize our pool during the school year. Notification will be communicated prior to these Friday events.

#### **Snack: We provide a daily snack and water for all Afterschool participants.**

If your child was not in school, snack will not be provided, and will need to be packed in the child's lunch box.



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## **Registration for YMCA Add On Programs**

Add on programs offered by the Lake Norman YMCA are available to the Afterschool Program participants. Please register your child during the regular registration periods for each session. During the program hours a counselor will be responsible for taking your child to the particular program and returning your child to the Afterschool if it ends within program hours. Please be aware of your child's arrival time from school when choosing a class. We cannot be responsible for a child missing a class or making up that class if we were not properly notified or if your child's bus does not arrive as scheduled.

### **From the YMCA**

We have planned a program for the children with their growth and development in mind. Please remember that we are not a school and are here to provide a nurturing atmosphere that will foster a healthy spirit, mind, and body. We have a flexible plan and can make necessary changes when needed. If we do not finish something on the day we planned it, that's okay, there is always tomorrow. We hope the children have fun and learn at the same time. Thank you for letting us serve your child and family.

### **As always...Our mission:**

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

**We build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities.**



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## Afterschool Parent Acknowledgement

**I have been given a copy of the 2016-2017 Afterschool Parent Handbook.  
I have read and fully understand the content. I understand that I, and my  
child(ren) are responsible for following these policies and guidelines.**

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_