



The Y S'cool Kids Club Family Handbook

Ridley Branch

v.8.25

Community YMCA of Eastern Delaware County
610.557-9622

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About Us

Our Mission

The Community YMCA of Eastern Delaware County is a charitable association founded on Christian principles, dedicated to building a healthy spirit, mind and body. We are committed to being a positive part of family life by promoting the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Our Vision

We will be the community leader, the center of activities, a catalyst for change, and an organization that positively affects and improves our community.

YMCA Early Childhood Philosophy

All kids have great potential. At the Y, a leading nonprofit strengthening community through youth development, we work every day to help students set and achieve their personal and educational goals. We believe the values and skills learned early on are vital building blocks for quality of life and future success. That is why our School Age program is staffed with people who understand the cognitive, physical, and social development of kids, the need children have to feel connected and supported in trying new things, and the caring and reinforcement parents and families need to help each other. At the Y, school age children experience literacy and learn about their world, make friends, learn new skills, and receive homework assistance. Most importantly, children learn how to be their best selves. This makes for confident kids today and contributing and engaged adults tomorrow.

We adhere to the highest standards of excellence. We will remain committed to providing a quality curriculum at all our locations. Our program will deliver activities that allow for the development and growth of each individual child. The program will facilitate an environment that is safe, secure, and creative and offer a variety of exciting opportunities. The safety and well-being of the children will always be our top priority.

Locations

The Y S'cool Kids Club
at the Ridley YMCA
484-479-3408

The Y S'cool Kids Club
at Edgewood Elementary
484-479-3414

The Y S'cool Kids Club
at Amosland Elementary
484-479-3404

Our Commitment To Quality

Keystone STARS

We participate in the Keystone Stars program at all our Out Of School Time (OST) sites. Keystone STARS promotes quality improvement among Early Learning and Head Start programs through quality standards and targeted supports. Programs earn a STAR 1 through STAR 4 rating by meeting research-based standards for staff education and professional development, the early learning environment, family engagement practices and business management. Keystone STARS serves children from birth through school-age in every county.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Early Childhood programs in Pennsylvania are supported and encouraged to engage in a continuous cycle of quality improvement focused on improved outcomes for children and families. Utilizing program and classroom assessments, staff professional development plans, parent surveys, staff meetings, and other sources of evidence, our centers annually identify areas for improvement. Plans are developed, changes are implemented, and an annual review of the plan is evaluated.

Professional Development

All school-age staff are required to engage in 12 hours annually of professional development related to the age groups they serve. The Community YMCA schedules in-service days in January and February and provides trainings based on the needs of the program.

YMCA Staff

Professional, qualified staff, trained in Mandated Child Abuse Reporting, Pediatric First Aid and CPR/AED will care for your child each day. • All staff are required to continue their education in the field or acquire training hours in various areas of child development annually. • All staff have updated clearances, health physicals and required training.



Out of School Time Curriculum

Children's Goals

Since our program services children ranging in ages 5 years old to 12 years old, we make sure we have the tools and resources for each developmental level. Our programs accommodate individual needs through a variety of materials, organized activities, physical education, and free play. Our staff learn the strengths and weaknesses of each child through observations and activities. Utilizing observations and documentations, the out-of-school time staff can address the needs of each individual.

Enrollment

In most programs, children are grouped in one main room for much of the time, and separated by grade. Activities planned are designed to target three levels of development. Level one (Kindergarten & 1st), level two (2nd & 3rd), and level three (4th through 6). The Community YMCA is an equal opportunity school age provider and will make every effort to accommodate the developmental needs of all participants.

Content

Children are guided through the learning process through hands-on activities that include creative play, music activities, science, indoor & outdoor play, homework assistance and community service projects. The subjects include but are not limited to student interests, literacy, math, science, social studies, art, technology, and process skills. Learning centers are utilized when possible to provide exploration and creativity, while group time enhances the learning process.

Teaching Strategies

Staff often use the [National Center for Quality Afterschool](#) website's online [Afterschool Training Toolkit](#) as a guideline for planning; which includes resources and sample lessons to support planning of innovative and academically enriching activities. Social Skills Enhancement and Conflict Resolution are also supported across program activities. School-Age students are encouraged to express themselves, use their imagination, and be creative: to practice reading, writing, speaking, thinking critically, and understanding others. Our goal is to help them begin to see the values of caring, respect, honesty, and responsibility in all aspects of life.

Resources

Out-of-School Time staff have access to curriculum planning resource books and online resources. Tablets are linked to the internet and are also available for program planning.



Environment

Whenever possible, our spaces are set up with interest areas and include as many of the following: Art, fine motor, dramatic play, literacy, science, blocks, music, writing, cozy area or listening centers. A separate area is set up for personal belongings. Handwashing upon entering the area helps ensure the health and well-being of our participants. Outside play areas promote a variety of gross motor development. Equipment and materials are subject to available space provided at each elementary school location and can vary between sites.

Conferences

A conference with your child's out of school time staff can always be arranged in the event you have concerns.

When school age staff and parents meet to discuss a child's development or concerns, the following information will be documented: child's name, parent's name, date, topics discussed, goals for the child, parent strategies, and teacher strategies. A copy of the information will also be provided to the parent and the original placed in the child's file.

IEP

Because of the diverse set of needs of the children in our programs, it is important to gather as much information about the best ways to educate each child. IEPs are created by service providers working with children with differing needs and include information and goals vital to the child's development. If your child currently has an IEP, or receives one after enrollment in our program, it would be beneficial to share a copy of this plan with us so we can work together to ensure that the guidelines are put into practice. Parents are also welcome to schedule IEP meetings at the school age site so that our teachers can be present to give feedback and gain information on program activities that are best suited to the child's strengths and needs.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to attend workshops, special family events and meetings as outlined in the monthly newsletter. Staff will keep parents informed about routines and events through whiteboards and postings in each program area. Conferences are ongoing and parents are able to meet with program staff at any time throughout the school year.

Inclusivity

Each child is considered an individual. Through all methods described in this handbook, children should be able to progress in knowledge and skills throughout the year. Children who may need additional supports are referred for evaluation through a formal conference with parents and staff.

Non-Discrimination -Diversity

The Community YMCA of Eastern Delaware County is an equal opportunity early childhood provider. Discrimination based on race, color, religion, sexual orientation or identity, national origin, disability, age, or genetic information is illegal and will not be tolerated. All YMCA programs will provide reasonable accommodation to applicants and employees who need them for medical or religious reasons as required by law.



General Information

Registration

Children enrolled in the school age program will be billed based on member or non-member pricing. Registration fees and child enrollment forms must be current before a student can attend the Y S'cool Kids Club Program.



Payments/Tuition

Program fees are based on an annual payment. For your convenience, we have broken down this payment into 10 monthly payments (due Sept. 1–June 1). This program includes care during winter/spring break and some scheduled days off (see staff for a full list of dates). This is an all-inclusive program and we do not prorate by school end date.

Monthly tuition is due the first of each month, regardless of days absent from the School Age program. If payment is not received by the 10th of the month, services may be placed on hold until payment is received. A returned check fee, of \$20, will be charged to your account for all returned checks due to insufficient funds.

Payments can be made online at www.cyedc.org or at the Springfield, Ridley or Lansdowne Y Front Desks. For payment questions, contact Rachael Gallo at 610.713.8006 or email rgallo@cyedc.org.

Withdrawing Your Child

To withdraw your child, we ask that you provide us with advance notice. The Y reserves the right to withdraw any child who presents a risk to the safety of other children, staff, or any child whose needs cannot be met in our program. Violations or inability to follow YMCA policies may also result in withdrawal.

Late Fees

A \$15 late fee will be charged to any account that is not paid accordingly. Children enrolled in the School Age program are to be picked up by 6pm. A late fee of \$10 per five minutes will be charged if children are not picked up by 6pm. Kindergarten students enrolled in PM enrichment must be picked up by 3:30 or late fees will be applied as stated above. Your child will be dismissed from the program if late pick-ups become consistent.

Financial Assistance

Financial Assistance is available for qualified individuals and families. Interested individuals can visit our website at www.cyedc.org. Financial assistance is made possible by the generous support of individuals and businesses who contribute to the YMCA's Annual Campaign and United Way designations.

Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC)

ELRCs provide a single point-of-contact for families, early childhood service providers, and communities to gain information and access services that support high-quality child care and early learning programs. This department also provides subsidy to qualifying families. To apply, call 888-535-2217. The YMCA requires families seek ELRC funding prior to applying for YMCA Financial Assistance. All ELRC families are required to sign your child in and out daily.

Holidays & Closures

A full list of holiday closures and open days will be sent home during the first week of school. Our calendar is based on the Ridley & Interboro School Districts. We will post sign-up sheets for days when care is available on scheduled days off. In respectful observance of our families' diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, we will celebrate any holiday observed by families in our care. Whenever possible, parents are asked to share their cultures and traditions with your child's school age staff, helping us develop meaningful activities that are both celebratory and educational.



Snow Days & Emergency Closures

We follow individual school district announcements.

*The Ridley YMCA School Age program will offer care for all scheduled half days, and closed days as outlined in school district calendars.

*If the school district your child attends closes the school early for weather or other emergencies, the Y S'cool Kids Club Program will be CLOSED and care will not be provided. You will be required to pick your child up directly from their elementary school by the scheduled closing time.

*If Ridley School District announces a 1-2 hour late opening, the Y S'cool Kids Club will also open 1-2 hours later at individual school locations.

*Interboro students will follow Ridley School District for late openings and school closures. A 1-2 hour delay means the RY morning program will open 1-2 hours late. If Ridley School District is closed, the Y program will also be closed.

*If the school district your child attends decides to close after they have already issued a late opening, the YMCA program will close, and any child dropped off for early morning care will need to be picked up in a timely manner.

Transportation

The YMCA provides transportation to and from Interboro School District only. All buses have a professional YMCA employee that will ride along with the driver. The buses are on a tight schedule in the afternoon, so please send a notice to your child's teacher letting them know that they must be on time for the bus. It is also important that a parent/guardian calls the YMCA and informs them if your child will not be attending the program on a given day, so staff do not need to interrupt the school office. Each school provides the YMCA with their daily schedule, which allows us to schedule the appropriate number of staff. There will be no care on non-scheduled school days (i.e. snow days or if the school needed to call an emergency closing).

If school closes early due to weather or for any other reason, the YMCA will NOT provide care on that given day.

The Y maintains proper ratios of children to staff on all vehicles. On vehicles with seatbelts, staff ensure each child is buckled up before leaving the area. For the safety of our students, boys and girls will be separated on the bus and children grouped according to grade level.

Confidentiality

Requests for release of information to other agencies will be honored only if made in writing and with the permission of the parent. Students who conduct studies at the Center are not provided with personal information about the children's families. Our policy is to share information about the child with both parents unless there is a legal document limiting contact with one individual. A legal document showing the restriction must be provided.

Newsletters

Families receive a monthly newsletter via email, containing various activities and points of interest. This newsletter is accessible to all parents at the start of each month and can also be found online at cyedc.org. Please make note of important dates and reminders each month so you do not miss special events.

Family Resources

Keeping with our mission of being a positive part of family life, and our vision to have a positive impact on our community, we have compiled a list of family resources for your review. Check out the list of public, social and community services on our website.
[Click Here](#)

Communication

A successful program cannot exist without effective communication with parents. When families communicate effectively, this allows early childhood staff to understand what is happening at home or how they would like their children's behavior managed in the school age program. When staff communicate effectively, parents can understand what is happening in their child's day and how they are progressing in the program. When families and staff share information, everyone can be aware of children's strengths and challenges and can work together to support children's social and emotional well-being. YMCA staff will make every effort to use alternative communication methods in a way understandable for families whose first language is not English.

PCA/One-on-One

If a child has a one on one resource that provides services throughout the day, that person is required to be present in the after school program and wear proper photo ID. In the event your child's PCA is not able to attend, a substitute must be provided for your child to attend the program.



Safety

Emergency Drills

Each site practices the following emergency drills on a regular basis: Fire, Weather, Emergency Lock Down/Intruder. Drills are conducted monthly so staff and students can be prepared to respond quickly and efficiently in any emergency. When explaining drills to children, especially our youngest groups, staff use simple language such as, "Today we are doing our ___ drill. These drills help us be prepared in case of an emergency." Pictures displayed in each classroom are utilized for visual cues. Social stories and age-appropriate videos help children better understand the process. Notifications of these drills will be posted on the white board in our centers. Please see your site director for questions related to emergency drills.

Reporting Child Abuse

All YMCA staff are required by law to report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse or neglect. In some cases, we are directed by the state's child protective agency not to notify the parents of the report. Please understand that we are legally obligated to comply with these guidelines.



Arrival & Departure (sign-in/sign-out)

The School Age program has a sign in/sign out policy to ensure the safety of your child. A parent or guardian must bring the child into the building and **MUST** sign in each morning and out each afternoon. Only **AN ADULT OVER THE AGE OF 18** is permitted to sign in and out for the child. Proper identification based on a child's paperwork will be required for the release of any student. There are **NO** exceptions to this policy.

Any authorized pick-up person who appears under the influence, has the odor of alcohol or marijuana on the breath, or is deemed by the staff as unable to ensure the safety of the child, the staff member will not release the child to their care. The school age staff member, using the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form, will call the next person authorized to pick up the child if needed. If the situation warrants, 911 will be called to ensure the safety of all parties involved.

Pick-Up Identification

Photo identification is required at pick-up and staff will ask to see it prior to releasing a child to someone other than his/her parent/guardian. Prior authorization must be given if someone other than the child's parent or guardian will be picking up the child from the program. The parent/guardian should provide the names of at least two other adults who have permission to pick up the child in case of emergency. If either parent wishes to place restrictions on the other parent's rights to pick up a child, the YMCA requires the enrolling parent to submit a copy of court orders or other legal documentation regarding child custody and/or visitation rights

State Licensing Requirements

We believe that licensing and rigid enforcement of standards are in the best interest of all children. Our programs go above and beyond what is required by DHS regulations and standards, as they relate to facility, staff and safety procedures. Our sites are subject to inspection by the Department of Human Services. [Click here](#) for a copy of the DHS Child Care Regulations.



Emergency Contact Information

Emergency Contact Forms are due the first day of the program. No child can begin care without this information on record. Emergency information is kept on file at each site. In case of illness or injury, those who are authorized will be notified of the child's status. It is extremely important that the information be kept current and updated. If the following details should change, please notify the director or log into the Epect system (online form submission site) to update the information yourself:

- 1-Phone Numbers where you can be reached during the day.
 - 2-Addresses at home & work.
 - 3-Names of authorized persons to be contacted in case of illness or injury.
 - 4-Names of all persons authorized to pick up your child
 - 5-Email addresses (home/work).
- **Note:** this form must be signed and updated every 6 months per DHS regulations.

Cell Phone Policy

For staff to maintain the highest level of safety regarding the use of technology and your students, we will not permit children enrolled in the school age program to use cell phones. Parents can call the program directly to discuss information with or about their child. Cell phones often give children access to the internet, text messaging, and phone conversations with people unknown to the staff. If your child needs to contact you during their time in the program, they will have access to our program phone.

Volunteers

Parents and authorized pick-up persons listed on the child's enrollment paperwork are encouraged to get involved and volunteer. There are many good reasons for parents to volunteer at school. It's a great way to show your kids that you take an interest in their education, and it sends a positive message that you consider school a worthwhile cause.

To volunteer please complete the following process:

1. Complete the volunteer application on our secure website: <https://cyedc.org/support-the-y/volunteer/>
2. Stop at the Courtesy Desk with Government Issued Photo ID (Driver's license, State ID, Passport, Military ID) to be run through our Raptor System (National Sex Offender Database)
3. Turn in processed/cleared Child Abuse Clearance

The process can take several weeks so please apply to volunteer as early as possible. To maintain the highest level of safety for our children, no one will be permitted to volunteer until the process is complete. This includes spending time in the classrooms.



Weapons Policy

The possession or carrying of any deadly or offensive weapon by any person is prohibited in any YMCA building, property, owned, leased or used. Entry on YMCA property in violation of this prohibition is expressly forbidden and will result in the individual being directed to remove the weapon immediately from YMCA property. Failure to comply will result in a revocation of YMCA privileges both immediate and future.

Deadly or offensive weapons are defined as any device whose design and/or implementation may produce death or serious bodily injury. For purposes of this policy, deadly and offensive weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms and offensive weapons as defined below:

Offensive weapons: Offensive weapons include any devices so defined under the Pennsylvania Crimes Code entitled "Prohibitive Offensive Weapons"
18 Pa.C.S.A. 908(c).

Firearm: A firearm is any weapon which is designed to or may readily be converted to expel any projectile by the action of an explosive or the frame or receiver of any such weapon.

Authorized Exceptions

Certified and sworn municipal, state or federal police officers who carry proper identification and are on duty are exempt from this policy.

Health

Emergency Situations

All staff members are trained and certified in CPR and pediatric first aid and are always present in the event of an emergency. In all situations, we will follow instructions from the poison control center or physician in providing first aid procedures and/or administering emergency medications.

Health Records

We adhere to state regulations regarding health and immunization records. A complete physical, conducted by a physician, along with up to date Immunization records must be provided upon enrollment. Failure to provide these records could result in withdrawal from our early childhood programs. If you think your family qualifies for child medical insurance, call CHIP at 1-800-986-5437.

Illness

Children who are ill, with a contagious disease or fever, may not attend the program. If your child becomes ill while in our care you will be contacted. The site director will determine if a child is too ill to remain at the school. Any child experiencing the following symptoms will be sent home:

- A fever and unable to participate in activities (must be fever free for 24 hours prior to return to the program)
- Contagious skin or eye infection
- Diarrhea that is not contained by a toilet
- Vomiting
- Profuse bodily discharge of any kind.

If your child should become infected with a contagious disease, please notify the program director immediately so families of other children can be notified who may have been exposed, as required by state law.

Confidentiality will be maintained.

Prescription Medication

Prescription medication will be administered as directed by a licensed physician/dentist. A medication form must be filled out for each prescription medication and signed by the parent/legal guardian. Written permission is required for prescription medication to be administered. Medication must be presented in its original container with a label attached bearing the child's name, current date and dose to be given, number of days to be administered, and pharmacy name. This constitutes the physician's written permission. We recommend that you ask your child's doctor to prescribe a 12-hour dose of medication when appropriate. This allows you to always control the administration of medication. Any unused or expired portion will be returned to the parent. If your child requires medication for life-threatening conditions such as allergies, the prescription can be kept at the program location and administered when necessary, for as long as the child is enrolled in our program.

An authorization form is required, as referred to above.



Cleanliness

We promote cleanliness and good hygiene in all our programs. Throughout each day, hand washing is required before eating and after toileting. Staff clean tables used by students for meals and table top activities. Understanding that accidents can occur at any age, we recommend your child has a weather appropriate extra set of clothes in their backpacks.

Personal Items

Games, books, and other supplies are provided at the program. The YMCA and the staff are not responsible for loss of or damage to any of these items. Please label all belongings. We ask that children leave hand-held electronic games at home.

Meals & Snacks

Please provide a daily afternoon snack for your student. On days when your child's school is closed, and your child attends the Y S'cool Kids Club for a full day, please pack a morning snack and nutritious lunch and drinks.

Food from home should always be of nutritious value. We advise keeping sweets to a minimum and packing plenty of healthy choices such as: fruits, vegetables, nutritious sandwiches, and yogurt. Having trouble deciding what to pack? [Click here](#) for some nutritious ideas.



Program Fundamentals

AM Care

7:00am - Start of School

Children will be provided with planned activities until the start of the school day.

Activities include board games, reading, center-based activities, and art.

PM Care

Dismissal until 6:00pm

Children will be provided with the chance to unwind after their school day. Activities Include: homework support, group games, sports and fitness, outdoor play, and arts & crafts.

Play Time

When the children arrive in the Y S'cool Kids Club, they will have play time for 10-15 minutes, giving them time to unwind from their busy school day.

Activities during this time will include board games, small group activities and other organized activities.

Snack Time

Snack time lasts approximately 10 minutes and children will eat a snack brought from home. We encourage parents to provide healthy and nutritious snacks and avoid sweets or candy.



Homework Time

Homework time takes place following snack time and lasts approximately 30 minutes. Tables and chairs are provided to make this time more comfortable for the children. The staff encourages all children to work on their homework during the allotted time. The staff will aid all students requesting help. Children who do not have homework (and those whose parents would rather do their homework at home), are encouraged to use this time to read a book or participate in other small group activities until homework time is complete. On Fridays, because most children do not have assignments, alternative activities will be planned.

Following homework time, the Staff will provide an assortment of activities including cooperative games, arts and crafts, board games and gross motor activities. These activities will last approximately 1 ½ hours. The last 15 minutes of each day will be dedicated to cleaning up the area.

Discipline

Discipline

We believe children should experience success and we strive for a school age setting that provides children with opportunities to explore their environment within consistent, age-appropriate limits. If behavioral issues occur, our philosophy is to help children learn human values, problem-solving skills and to take responsibility for their choices. Below are the techniques we use for positive guidance:

1. Ignoring - Negative behavior is produced by a child to get attention and the child should stop when no attention is given. This technique will be used unless a safety issue is involved.
2. Redirection/Distraction - Alternatives will be presented to children engaged in undesirable behavior such as: suggesting a new activity, engaging the child in an activity with a teacher or another child, or encouraging independent play.
3. Verbal Intervention - The teacher explains to the child the appropriate way to handle the situation with words.
4. Logical Consequences - The teacher helps the child understand the logical consequences of his/her actions by removing the object or activity the child is engaged in.

If these positive guidance techniques are not working effectively and inappropriate behavior persists, we will use the following progressive procedures:

- Observe child and record behavior modification approach by staff.
- Parent/Teacher Conference
- Suggest outside resources to aide in responding to child's behavior.

We do not permit corporal punishment, withholding food, light, warmth, clothing or medical care. We will not ridicule, embarrass or humiliate a child and we will not physically restrain, unless it is necessary to protect a child or others from harm. All Y S'cool Kids Club Programs will follow school district policies regarding threats, bullying, student discipline and family handbook guidelines.

IMPORTANT - YMCA School Age Directors reserve the right to withdraw any child whose behavior creates a significant risk or harm to the health and safety of other children or staff without following the steps. Violations or inability to follow YMCA policies may also result in withdrawal.

Expulsion & Suspension Guidelines

To reduce or eliminate expulsion and suspension we aim to maintain:

- *Positive climates and focus on prevention of expulsion or suspension.
- *Clear, appropriate and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive child behaviors.
 - *Fairness, equality and continuous improvement.
- *Communicate with family members, document strategies and goals for the child, work with direct early learning staff and family members.
- *Promote positive peer interactions and peer support whenever possible. Students learn from one another.

Enrollment Dismissal Procedure

Failure of parents to abide by Center policies and procedures may result in termination of your child's enrollment. Disregard of Center policies and procedures may include, but is not limited to, the following circumstances:

- Not paying bills on time.
- Failure to use programmable access cards where applicable.
 - Refusing to accompany child into the Center.
- Not supervising your child during drop off/pick up times.
(This includes all authorized pick-up persons).
 - Failure to return requested forms by due date.
- Endangering the well-being and safety of children
(e.g., leaving medicine in child's school bag).
- Continually bringing child in early or picking up late.
- Failure to submit or update medical forms by due date.
- Arriving or departing with a child while under the influence of substances/leaving apparently incapable of safely caring for a child.
- Failure to update Enrollment/ Health History and Emergency Care Plan forms.
- Hostile disrespect to a YMCA employee (which could include sexual harassment).
 - Using inappropriate language around staff and/or children.