



# SCHOOL AGED CHILDCARE FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025



YMCA OF GREATER NASHUA



Dear Parents,

## **Welcome to the Y Academy & Before the Bell!**

Welcome to the new school year! We're thrilled you've chosen the Y Academy for your child(ren)! Our program provides a safe, fun, and engaging environment for before and after-school care. We aim to create a nurturing and educational space tailored to your needs. While with us, your child(ren) will enjoy a range of activities, including arts and crafts, physical movement, STEM projects, outdoor play, and various enrichment and social opportunities.

Our staff are available to help with homework and encourage children to step outside their comfort zones. We believe every child is unique, and we strive to build positive relationships based on our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

We welcome and value your feedback, as it helps us improve our programs. We encourage you to build a relationship with your child's site director and staff. If any concerns arise, please reach out to your site director first; however, I am also available to assist as needed.

We hope this handbook will address any questions you might have about our procedures and practices. With many new processes in place, please use this handbook as your reference, but remember we are always here to help if needed. Thank you for entrusting your children to our care. We are excited to serve you and look forward to a fun and enjoyable year ahead!

Warm regards,

Carlisa Choate M.Ed.  
Executive Director of Education  
[cchoate@nmymca.org](mailto:cchoate@nmymca.org)  
(603) 689-2430

### **Y ACADEMY PHILOSOPHY**

Y Academy fosters social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth through enriching activities that help children learn new skills, build meaningful relationships and feel a sense of belonging.

## **Y ACADEMY PROGRAM**

### **BEFORE SCHOOL PROGRAM – BEFORE THE BELL**

Our Before School program provides an easy transition into the school day. Staff will provide children with a variety of activities. Children will have the opportunity to play board games, create arts and crafts, read, and participate in quiet activities.

#### **MERRIMACK YMCA BEFORE THE BELL**

**Director:** Angel Demanche – [ademanche@nmymca.org](mailto:ademanche@nmymca.org)

Location: Merrimack YMCA, 6 Henry Clay Drive, Merrimack, NH

Schools: Masticola Elementary School, James Masticola Upper Elementary School (JMUES), Reeds Ferry Elementary School, Thornton’s Ferry School, Gate City Charter School

**Start Time:** 6:30 AM

**Bus Leaves:** 7:45 AM

**It is expected that children arrive no later than 7:15 AM. Breakfast will stop being served ten minutes before the bus departs.**

**Note:** Bus arrival / departure time is subject to change.

#### **AMHERST MIDDLE SCHOOL BEFORE THE BELL**

**Director:** Kris Nevins – [kgoodrich@nmymca.org](mailto:kgoodrich@nmymca.org)

Location: 14 Cross Road, Amherst, NH

Schools: Amherst Middle School

**Start Time:** 7:00 AM

**End Time:** 8:00 AM

### **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM – Y ACADEMY**

The Y Academy offers a variety of activities for children to participate in. Children will have the opportunity to participate in recreations and sports, arts and crafts, enrichment activities, organized games, and more. The Y Academy focuses on activities that promotes social development skills, creativity, and structured thinking. The staff also provides support with homework and/or reading. Before the staff and children start all the fun a healthy and nutritious snack is provided daily.

**Start Time:** End of School

**Closing Time:** 6:00 PM for all programs

#### **CLARK-WILKINS Y ACADEMY**

**Director:** Kris Nevins – [kgoodrich@nmymca.org](mailto:kgoodrich@nmymca.org)

Location: Wilkins Elementary, 80 Boston Post Road, Amherst, NH

Schools: Wilkins Elementary School, Clark Elementary School

#### **MONT VERNON VILLAGE Y ACADEMY**

**Director:** Kris Nevins – [kgoodrich@nmymca.org](mailto:kgoodrich@nmymca.org)

Location: Mont Vernon Village School, 1 Kittredge Road, Mont Vernon, NH

Schools: Mont Vernon Village School

## **NASHUA Y ACADEMY**

**Director Amy Millard** – [amillard@nmymca.org](mailto:amillard@nmymca.org)

Location: Nashua YMCA, 24 Stadium Drive, Nashua, NH

Schools: Amherst Street Elementary School, Broad Street Elementary School, Fairgrounds (Middle and Elementary) School, New Searles Elementary School, Bicentennial Elementary School, Charlotte Avenue Elementary School, Main Dunstable Elementary School, Sunset Heights Elementary School, Birch Hill Elementary School, Dr. Norman W. Crisp Elementary School, Ledge Street Elementary School, McCarthy Middle School, Pennichuck Middle School, Micro Society Academy Charter School (MACS), Mount Pleasant Elementary School

## **MERRIMACK Y ACADEMY**

**Director: Angel Demanche** – [ademanche@nmymca.org](mailto:ademanche@nmymca.org)

Location: Merrimack YMCA, 6 Henry Clay, Drive, Merrimack, NH

Schools: Mastricola Elementary School, James Mastricola Upper Elementary School (JMUES), Reeds Ferry Elementary School, Thornton’s Ferry School, Gate City Charter School

## **COMMUNICATION**

All sites use Brightwheel for communication between parents and staff. Brightwheel is an application (app) that allows us to send real-time messages, emergency alerts, and newsletters all from one platform.

Staff are encouraged to communicate with parents/guardians during program hours. Please note that staff **are not available on weekends or outside of program hours**. They have family and other commitments, however they will respond as promptly as possible. You can also send messages via Brightwheel or email

For urgent matters, please notify the site direct on Brightwheel. For other communications, you can use Brightwheel or email, which are the most effective ways to reach our directors.

Click here to download Brightwheel: [www.mybrightwheel.com](http://www.mybrightwheel.com).

## **ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Child Care Business Manager: Aline Connors** – [aconnors@nmymca.org](mailto:aconnors@nmymca.org)

Addresses financial issues, registration questions, changes to schedules and withdrawals.

## TUITION & PAYMENT

The Before the Bell and Y Academy programs offer childcare services from August/September to June. Tuition is based on attendance, with options for 5, 3, or 2 days per week.

Payments are automatically drafted from your authorized payment method every Wednesday, prior to the service week. To keep your child enrolled, your payment method must remain up to date. If a payment is missed, the Child Care Business Manager or Finance Department will contact you to arrange payment.

A two-week written notice is required for any account changes or withdrawals. Please note that no credits are given for holidays, inclement weather days, or illness-related absences.

## REGISTRATION & PROGRAM INFORMATION

**New Hampshire Bureau of Child Care Licensing mandates that all children have a completed physical examination and updated immunization records on file.**

Parents or guardians are responsible for keeping registration records up-to-date. If there are changes to phone numbers, contact information, or authorized pick-ups, please inform the staff as soon as possible.

### REGISTRATION

All families are required to register their children every program year. A \$30.00 nonrefundable registration fee is assessed each year. This fee covers:

- **Administrative Costs:** Processing paperwork, setting up accounts, and managing registrations.
- **Program Enrollment:** Securing a spot for the participant in the desired program or class.
- **Initial Supplies:** Covering costs for any necessary materials or equipment needed at the start of the program.
- **Background Checks:** Ensuring staff and volunteers meet safety and compliance standards.
- **Orientation and Training:** Providing initial orientation or training for participants or their families.

All registrations are subject to availability.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### Y Cares Financial Assistance Program

In an effort that every child can participate, the YMCA provides financial aid through our Y Cares Financial Assistance Program. For more details please visit one of our YMCA Welcome Centers, or visit our website at: <https://nymymca.org/membership/financial-assistance/>.

### New Hampshire Child Care Scholarship Program

**Merrimack and Nashua Y Academies Only:** New Hampshire Child Care Scholarship and the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Scholarship is available for income-eligible families.

Complete the Child Care Assistance Request through the State of New Hampshire. Apply online at: <https://nheasy.nh.gov/#/apply-benefits>

## REPORTING ABSENCES

If your child will be absent from the program, please notify your Site Director via Brightwheel or by email.

## SCHEDULE CHANGES

Enrollment in the Y Academy and Before the Bell programs are limited. If you need to adjust the days your child is registered, please check with your Site Director for availability.

Availability is not guaranteed, and changes require a two-week written notice.

**Extra Days:** If you should need to add an extra day or two for care in a particular week, please check with your Site Director for availability. We cannot guarantee accommodations. Do not send your child on unscheduled days. Any **approved** additional days will incur extra charges of \$37.00/day and will be manually invoiced and charged to your authorized payment method on file.

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

**The YMCA of Greater Nashua requires a two-week written notice for withdrawals. Notify your site Director and the Child Care Business Manager. Refunds will not be granted for withdrawals without written notification.**



## SIGN IN / OUT PROCEDURES / AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS

Each child is signed in and out using Brightwheel and a paper roster. Our program staff will only release children to adults listed on the authorized pick-up list. A sibling must be 16 years or older to be considered an authorized pick-up. During the first few weeks of the program, you must present a photo ID each time you pick up your child to ensure their safety until all staff are comfortable recognizing you.

**To add** someone to the authorized pick-up list, contact the Site Director with the new person's full name and phone number. Please inform your authorized pick-up that a photo ID will be required for them to pick-up your child(ren).

**Before the Bell:** Parents or guardians are **required to walk** your child(ren) into the program and sign them in with a staff member.

**Y Academy:** Children will be signed in by staff upon arrival of the program. They will then be signed in on Brightwheel and paper rosters.

Parents / guardians are required to check in with a staff member before signing their child out. Children will be signed out on the paper roster and on Brightwheel.

## AUTHORIZED PICKUP EXCEPTIONS

### Impaired Persons

If someone attempting to pick up a child appears impaired by alcohol or drugs, our staff will not release the child to them. The Site Director will be informed, and an alternate emergency pick-up will be contacted. If the impaired individual is the parent or guardian and insists on taking the child, the police will be notified.

### Parental Restrictions

All parents have equal access to their child as permitted by law. The YMCA cannot restrict one parent's access based on the other parent's request without a certified court order. If one parent wants to prevent the other from seeing the child, they should keep the child with them until a court order is obtained. For any issues, please notify the Site Director immediately so staff can be informed.

### Guardian / Court Orders

If a child is under guardianship or court-ordered care by someone other than a parent, provide copies of the court orders to our Executive Director of Education before the child starts the program. Similarly, if there are any court orders restricting contact with the child, such as no-contact, domestic violence, or restraining orders, those documents should also be submitted to the Executive Director of Education beforehand.

## LATE PICK-UP FEES

All afternoon programs end at 6:00 PM. A \$5.00 late pick-up fee will be added to your account any time after 6 PM up through the first 5 minutes, with an additional \$5.00 incurred for every minute beyond the first five minutes. Late fees will be enforced and billed directly to your authorized payment method on file. If late pick-ups become frequent, further discussion may be required.

## FULL DAY CARE (SNOW DAYS, & DAYS OFF)

The Y Academy programs offers full-day care for each child, during snow days, and school holidays for no additional costs. Please drop off your child by 9:00 AM; you must inform staff in advance if you need to drop off your child(ren) later than 9:00 AM.

Full-day care runs from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM at all of our locations with the exception of our Merrimack location. Merrimack Y Academy full-day care runs from 6:30 M to 6:00 PM. Children must bring a nut-free snack and lunch.

Children may only attend on days that they are registered for. If a cancellation, or Holiday, is called on a day where **your child is not registered for the program, they cannot attend**. Please contact the program's Site Director to check for availability. An extra charge of \$37.00/day will apply if space is available for your child to attend.

**Note:** Each location has specific procedures for snow days. Please consult your Site Director for details.

## VACATION WEEKS

Parent/Guardians will now register separately for school vacations weeks. A program link will be provided. You will have the option to register for December, February and April vacations. The rate for those program weeks will be included with the link.

## MEDICATION REQUIREMENTS

When registering your child, you should have indicated if they will need medication while in our care. Please provide the following items listed below before your child's first day in the program. **A completed Medical Authorization Form must be completed. A form will be provided by the Site Director at your request.** Without these items, staff will be unable to administer or store your child's medication.

**Note:** Medication cannot be kept in a child's backpack or personal possession. All medication must be given to a staff member and must be stored securely in a locked area. If your child requires medication to be kept nearby, a designated staff member (s) will be assigned to manage the request. Programs located in schools do not have access to medications stored in the school



nurse's office. Please coordinate with both the school and the Site Director for further arrangements.

### **Non-prescription Medications:**

1. The medication must be in its original container
2. A "Medication Authorization" form must be completed, signed and provided to staff. This form grants permission for our staff to dispense the required medication during program hours. This form must be signed by the parent/guardian.

### **Prescription Medications:**

1. The medication must be provided in its original container, with the attached prescription label.
  - a. The label must include the child's name, medication name, strength, prescribed dosage and method of administration.
2. If you do not have the prescription label, a Medication Order must be provided and signed by your child's licensed health care provider.
  - a. The Medication Order must include the child's name, medication name, strength, prescribed dosage and method of administration. It must also include the frequency of administration, indications for usage, maximum dosage allowed in a 24 hour period and any special precautions or limitations regarding administration of the medication.
3. A "Medication Authorization" form must be completed, signed and provided to staff. This form grants permission for our staff to dispense the required medication during program hours. This form must be signed by the parent/guardian.

### **Allergy Medication:**

1. The medication must be provided in its original container, with the attached prescription label.
  - a. The label must include the child's name, medication name, strength, prescribed dosage and method of administration.
2. If you do not have the prescription label, a Medication Order must be provided and signed by your child's licensed health care provider.
  - a. The Medication Order must include the child's name, medication name, strength, prescribed dosage and method of administration. It must also include the frequency of administration, indications for usage, maximum dosage allowed in a 24 hour period and any special precautions or limitations regarding administration of the medication.
3. A "Medication Authorization" form must be completed, signed and provided to staff. This form grants permission for our staff to dispense the required medication during program hours. This form must be signed by the parent / guardian.
4. An "Allergy Action Plan" completed by your child's licensed health care provider and signed by the parent / guardian.

**Note:** If your child's medical records show that they are required to take medication during program hours and you do not wish to provide the medication for our staff you must fill out the Medication Release Form.

## ILLNESS

If a child becomes ill in our care, staff will contact the parent/guardian for pickup. The child will be monitored by staff until pickup. Staff cannot administer medication without a Medical Authorization Form.

Children who are sent home during their school day, cannot attend the program that day. No refunds will be given for absences.

If a child shows symptoms of a communicable disease or fever, they will be isolated, given a mask, and must be picked up immediately. They must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning. Failure to do so may lead to dismissal from the program. Notify the Site Director immediately if your child has a communicable disease (e.g., COVID-19, chickenpox, lice).

## ACCIDENTS / EMERGENCIES

All staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid. Additionally, staff at the Nashua and Merrimack YMCA locations are trained in Water Safety.

If a child is injured or ill, a trained staff member will provide care. An accident report, detailing the incident and treatment, will be completed. Parents/guardians will review and sign this report.

In a medical emergency, staff will call 911 and inform the parent/guardian immediately. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any costs associated with the emergency; the YMCA is not liable for medical expenses.

Each of our programs has an emergency contact system. Contact information will be provided before your child's first day. In an emergency, utilize this information to contact your specific Site Director.

For non-urgent matters, please contact staff via Brightwheel or email.

## TOILETING POLICY

All children must be fully potty-trained to register for our program. They should be able to use the bathroom independently, including pulling up pants, wiping, flushing, and washing hands. Staff cannot assist with bathroom needs.

For younger children, please provide an extra set of clothes. If an accident occurs and no change of clothes is available, a parent will be contacted. We reserve the right to withdraw a child if potty-training issues persist.

**Note:** Parents must inform the Site Director of any known medical conditions before registration.

## CHILD CARE INCLUSION STATEMENT

The YMCA welcomes all children. It is the policy of the YMCA to provide a safe environment for all children. The YMCA has the obligation to ensure the physical and emotional safety of each of the children entrusted to its care. To the extent it is reasonably able to do so, the YMCA will provide accommodations to children with varying abilities in the same manner as services are provided for other children of comparable age. Staff will work with parents to determine if our program is the best setting for their child to thrive.

## FOOD POLICY

A snack is provided in our After School Y Academy.

The YMCA does not provide lunches and only provides a snack on full days. It is the parent / guardians responsibility to pack your child with a lunch and extra snacks if your child has additional needs.

The YMCA Y Academy is a completely nut-free program. Please be sure to pack your child snacks and lunches that do not contain nuts.

**Note:** Discuss all food allergies, intolerances, and dietary restrictions with your child's Site Director. If needed, the Site Director can provide a suitable alternative snack if the provided snack does not meet these needs.

## DRESS CODE

Staff and children in our programs should not wear clothing that advertises or promotes alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, or contains profanity, lewd, or offensive language. If a child arrives wearing such clothing, the parent/guardian will be contacted to either provide a change of clothes or pick up the child from the program.

## HOMEWORK POLICY

All children in our program will receive assistance with homework as time permits. While staff encourage homework completion, it is ultimately the child's responsibility and may not be finished during program hours.

YMCA staff will not search children's bags or belongings for homework. If a child claims they have no homework or that it is already completed, staff will not insist on further work.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to review and assist with their child's homework each night.

## ELECTRONICS POLICY

The YMCA's policy prohibits the use of electronics while children are in our care. This helps encourage participation in program activities and interaction with peers, providing a break from technology. The goal is to prevent exposure to inappropriate material and encourages a socially engaging environment.

- Children are prohibited to use cell phones at our program.
- Children are prohibited to use tablets, laptops, netbooks, eReaders, etc. while in our program unless they are utilizing these devices during our supervised homework time.
- Children cannot have any electronic that gives access to the internet while at our program.
- The program provides many activities that can keep your child busy and gives them the chance to socialize and interact with each other.

## TOYS

The Y Academy does not allow toys from home to be brought to our program. This includes Pokémon trading cards, Legos, stuffed animals, dolls, cars, etc.

These items may get lost, stolen or broken. The YMCA does not assume responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged items brought from home.

## SOCIAL MEDIA / PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

Children in the program are not allowed to access the internet or use social media while in our care. Although they may share social media information among themselves, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to monitor their children's social media interactions.

Staff are prohibited from sharing their cell phone numbers, social media accounts, or any personal information with children or parents.

We request that parents/guardians refrain from taking photos or videos during program hours. Staff will take and upload photos to Brightwheel. Only staff and families have access to these photos and videos on Brightwheel.

**Note:** If requested by a parent/guardian, photos and videos of their child will not be posted on Brightwheel.

## PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents and staff serve as role models for children and must behave accordingly. It is unacceptable for any parent, guardian, or adult to argue with or threaten YMCA staff. Such behavior may result in your child being removed from the program.

When coming to our program, parents/guardians are expected to avoid:

- Physical punishment of children
- Verbal abuse, yelling, or inappropriate language
- Threats towards staff, other parents, members, or children
- Smoking
- Arguing with children, other parents, staff, or members
- Disciplining or questioning other people's children
- Making sexual or flirtatious advances towards staff or other members

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

**New Hampshire State Laws require all YMCA staff to be mandated reporters. If staff suspects any form of abuse or neglect, they are obligated to report it to the appropriate authorities.**

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is a serious issue. Any adult language or actions that are exhibited by a child that cause a feeling of offensive, intimidating or unsafe environment will not be tolerated. Children may be suspended immediately. If it is found to occur a second occasion, the child may be removed from the Y program.

## **BULLYING POLICY**

Bullying is an ongoing, repeated and deliberate physical or emotional harm towards another person. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that is not allowed at the YMCA.

The Y Academy has a **ZERO TOLERANCE** for bullying. If staff notice that your child's actions classify as bullying, they be removed from the program.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

The YMCA's Y Academy emphasizes the four core values: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We aim for every child to succeed in our program by integrating activities that highlight these values. Our staff will encourage, teach, and model these values, and will address behavior in positive ways. Staff will assist children in resolving conflicts by identifying causes and solutions.

We believe in valuing each child and supporting their growth into respectful community members. Behavior management issues will be handled individually, with staff distinguishing between "disruptive" and "unacceptable" behavior.

“Disruptive” behavior interferes with others’ enjoyment of the program. Children exhibiting disruptive behavior will receive a verbal warning, which involves redirecting them, teaching alternative behaviors, or guiding them to different activities.

“Unacceptable” behavior refers to actions that are not tolerated under any circumstances. This includes using profane language or swearing, name-calling or taunting other children, threatening staff or other children, damaging program property, running away from staff, engaging in sexual behavior, excluding other children, and causing physical or emotional harm to oneself, staff, or other children. In certain cases staff will handle individually, however these behaviors may result in suspension from the program for a duration of time.

We will make every effort to keep children engaged in the program however, a parent/guardian may be called upon to pick up their child from the program early should an unsafe situation occurs or if a child’s disruptive behavior consistently impacts the program or requires excessive individual attention, a behavior plan will be developed and discussed with the child, parent/guardian, Site Director, and Executive Director of Education. Y Academy staff shall document all serious incidents.

Parents/guardians may be charged for repairing or replacing any YMCA property damaged by their child.

**Note:** The Y Academy reserves the right to suspend or remove a child from the program at any time if staff determines that your child is creating an unsafe environment for themselves, staff, or other children. No refunds will be issued for suspensions or removals, but charges for any future weeks will be waived if the child is removed.

Ensuring the safety of everyone in the program is our top priority.

## BUS POLICY

Parents/guardians are responsible for informing their child’s school that they will be attending the Y Academy program. This ensures that your child boards the correct bus. Y Academy staff are not responsible for overseeing bus assignments. As an added layer, Site Directors will be sending a roster of attendance per school confirming participation in our program.

If your child encounters issues on the bus, they may be suspended from bus service. In such cases, parents/guardians must arrange alternative transportation to the YMCA. The duration of the suspension will depend on the specific incident, and after two suspensions, a meeting with the Site Director will be required.

Children must remain seated, use quiet voices, employ kind language, keep hands to themselves, and behave appropriately while on the bus. Any issues will be reported to both the Site Director and the school, and further action will be discussed with the parent/guardian.

Bus service is provided on half days and early releases but is not available on full care days. On full care days, parents/guardians must arrange their own transportation.



## CLASSES/PROGRAMS AT THE YMCA BRANCHES

If your child's Y Academy program is located at the Nashua or Merrimack YMCA, your children will have the opportunity to attend classes/programs that the YMCA offers. Members of the Y Academy are still required to pay for and register for all additional classes at the YMCA.

If you sign your child up for a class, staff will handle drop-off and pick-up for the class. Please inform staff of the class details, including the date, time, and class name.

If the class you registered your child (ren) ends after 6:00 PM, it is your responsibility to sign them out of the Y Academy by 5:55 PM. Staff cannot leave the building until all parents / guardians have signed their children out of the program. Parents / guardians must make staff aware that they are in the building to pick their children up from class. If staff do not see a parent, they will not be able to sign a child out.

**A late fee will be charged if you do not pick up or sign out your child by 6:00 PM. Repeated lateness will result in staff no longer handling class drop-offs and pick-ups, making it your responsibility to transport your child to and from their classes.**

## SWIM

If your child's Y Academy program is located at the Nashua or Merrimack YMCA, they may have the opportunity to swim during full days. This opportunity is based on staffing, attendance numbers and pool availability. Swim time is not always guaranteed.

Swimming at the Y Academy is a privilege and can be revoked if necessary. If a staff member, lifeguard, or Site Director observes your child making unsafe choices in or around the pool, they will be barred from participating in swim time.

While swimming is not a mandatory part of our program, we understand that it is a valued activity. However, if your child does not adhere to safety rules, they will not be allowed to swim.

## LOST, STOLEN OR BROKEN ITEMS

The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items while your child is in our care. To avoid any issues, please do not send your child with items you wish to keep safe. Misplaced items will be displayed for two weeks. All items after two weeks will be donated.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Program Responsibilities

- **Provide a Safe and Enriching Environment:** Ensure that the environment is safe, positive, and enriching, meeting the developmental needs of students.
- **Offer Caring Role Model Staff:** Employ staff who embody the YMCA's four core values and serve as positive role models for each child in the program.
- **Keep Parents and Guardians Informed:** Communicate with parents and guardians through various channels, including flyers, emails, the website, Brightwheel messages, and verbal updates.
- **Ensure Every Child Feels Welcome and Safe:** Create an atmosphere where every child feels both welcomed and secure.
- **Establish Clear Rules and Guidelines:** Set clear and precise rules, policies, and guidelines that are easy for parents, guardians, and children to understand.

### Responsibilities of the Children

- **Practice Honesty:** Be truthful in all actions and interactions.
- **Be Caring:** Demonstrate kindness and consideration towards others.
- **Act Responsibly:** Take responsibility for their actions and choices.
- **Be Respectful:** Respect their peers and staff.

### Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

- **Act Responsibly:** Adhere to the policies and procedures in this handbook and keep your child's information current and accurate.
- **Be Caring:** Have fun conversations with your child about what they explored each day and ask engaging questions.
- **Be Respectful:** Have open and respectful conversations with staff about any concerns you both may have.

## 2024-2025 INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Please note that program details, including location, opening and closing times, and availability, are subject to change. In certain situations, parents or guardians may be asked to pick up their children earlier than usual to ensure the safety of both children and staff in inclement weather. We recommend planning ahead for alternate arrangements in these cases.

### CANCELLATIONS

If the School District cancels school due to inclement weather, Site Directors will communicate via Brightwheel/email to inform families of Y Academy care. If the YMCA stays open, we offer full day care at a **YMCA location**. The YMCA will not provide transportation for cancellations so parents/guardians are expected to provide transportation.

Children may only attend on days that they are registered for. If a cancellation is called on a day where **your child is not registered for the program**, contact the program's Site Director for further instructions. You will be charged **\$37.00** for the extra day of care.

It is asked that all children are dropped off by 9:00 AM on days where full day care is provided. If later than 9:00AM we ask you to alert the staff via Brightwheel.

It is required that each child brings their own **non-microwaveable** lunch. All lunches and snacks must be completely nut-free.

If staff find that the weather has become unsafe, children may be asked to be picked up. Staff may also call for children to be picked up if there is too low of attendance.

### DELAYED STARTS

**Merrimack YMCA** is the **only** location that offers delayed start if the School District calls for a delayed opening due to inclement weather. Site directors will communicate using Brightwheel.

### EARLY RELEASE DAYS

If the School District calls for an early release due to weather, Site Directors will use Brightwheel to communicate the plan details for that day.

**We are excited for this school year! This handbook should provide you with our policies and procedures in regards to our Y Academy and Before the Bell programs. If you have any additional questions, please reach out to your child's program director.**