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# Hot Springs Family YMCA Afterschool Program Handbook





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## **After School Program**

Welcome to the Afterschool Program at the Hot Springs Family YMCA! We are so excited to have you here!

We know that children have already spent a long day at school learning lots of new things, and so we have designed our program to primarily support their social, emotional, and physical growth. Each day, children are given a healthy snack, engage in physical activities, and have opportunities to socialize with kids from different schools and grades.

To make sure you have a great experience in Afterschool, please communicate any needs, questions, or concerns that you have to our staff. If your student has any special needs (ie, food allergies, family situations, physical limitations or behavior issues), let us know at registration so that we can make accommodations in advance.

Since our Afterschool program is designed as a group program, we know that campers will sometimes have disagreements with other campers. Our staff is trained to encourage children to speak up for their needs while being respectful of others. We cannot, however, help in situations we don't know about! Please encourage your student to speak up and ask counselors for help when needed. Our ultimate goal is to have a safe, fun experience for everyone.

We know that you have many options when it comes to after school care--thank you for choosing the YMCA.

Thank you,  
Childcare Director



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**Important Phone Numbers/Contact Information:**

Hot Springs Family YMCA 501-623-8803  
Lisa Autry Childcare Director [lastry@hsymca.com](mailto:lastry@hsymca.com)

**Afterschool Dates and Ages:**

August 16, 2021 through Last Day of School

On school holidays, including days for teacher professional development and parent teacher conferences, the YMCA will offer a Day Camp at the Y. These require signing up in advance so that we can ensure adequate staffing and supplies. We also reserve the right to cancel a Day Camp if fewer than five campers are enrolled.

Our youngest campers are 5 years old and current kindergarten students. Our oldest is 13.

**Staff to Child Ratios:**

As a DHS licensed facility, we follow the guidelines of 1 staff per 18 children ages kindergarten and above.

**Afterschool at the Y is licensed by the Department of Human Services (DHS). We seek to uphold the highest standards of safety, conduct, and programming.**

Central to our mission is to encourage students to live by the Y's four core values: **honesty, caring, respect, and responsibility.** Our staff is dedicated to living by these positive values and mentoring our campers through teachable moments.

**Parent Responsibilities**

All application forms, application fees, and payments **must be returned to the YMCA at least two business days prior to their first day.**

**Changes in information:** Please notify the Camp Director immediately of any phone number, address, medical, or authorized pickup persons **in writing. We cannot accept changes via phone.**

**Involvement:** We encourage parents to discuss any questions or concerns about After School with us. Parents of enrolled children are allowed to visit the program at any time without prior approval. Please stop at the office to sign in so that we know you are onsite.



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**Communication:** Excellent communication is key for a successful program for all of our students, parents and caregivers, and staff. Please share any information about behaviors we can expect from your child at camp so that we can be partners in preparing our staff to work effectively with your child. We will also send out newsletters, messages on the Remind app, and messages via email to keep you updated on happenings at camp. Please have a current email address on file.

**Media/Photography policy:** A permission statement was included on your registration form allowing the Y to use photographs and media for promotional purposes. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact the Camp Director.

**Drop off/Pick up Procedures:** When students arrive at the YMCA, they will be signed in by a staff member. At pick up time, please sign your child out with the staff member at the front desk before 6 pm. If you are late, you will be charged \$1 per minute for late pick up. **All parents/caregivers are required to sign out the child with the time picked up.**

**If a parent is called to pick up a child during the day due to illness, unsafe behaviors, or other emergency, the parent or an authorized contact is asked to pick up the child as soon as possible.**

**Contacts:** If the primary guardians cannot be reached during an emergency, we will contact the authorized pick-up persons you listed on the registration form. Photo ID will be checked if staff do not recognize the individual picking up. Please keep in mind that some staff may be more familiar with a parent or contact than others, so it is always important for the person picking up to have a photo ID available.

In accordance with our policy on the release of children, if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the staff/supervisor in charge, the child would be placed at risk of harm, the camp will ensure that the child may not be released. Proper authorities will be called when warranted.



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### **Afterschool Fees and Payment Policies**

Member\*: \$58.00/week  
Non-member: \$68.00/week

\*A member rate applies when the camper is a member. This can be through a family or youth membership.

A \$5.00 discount on the weekly fee will be given to the second/additional child in the same family.

NOTE: You will be charged for program tuition REGARDLESS OF ATTENDANCE. Two “vacation weeks” will be given to each family for the duration of the program. You must notify the program Director of times your child will not be in attendance.

After two weeks of delinquent payments, a student will not be allowed back at camp until payments are caught up.

Registration fees are non-refundable.

As a not-for-profit organization, the Hot Springs Family YMCA is committed to making its programs accessible to all families. There are scholarships available for families who are facing a financial hardship.

If you have further questions, please contact our Billing Specialist, Danielle Kimble, at 623-8803 ext. 121.

### **Transportation Policies and Information**

Our bus drivers are YMCA employees and have completed the same hiring process, including background checks, as our counselors. Our buses are given regular maintenance to ensure efficient and safe transportation to the YMCA and on any field trips.

Students are expected to follow basic bus safety while riding the bus, including speaking in a low to moderate tone, staying seated and facing forward, and being respectful of staff, other students, and the bus itself at all times.

### **Health Care Information**

Staff who are certified in CPR and First Aid are on-site each day and accompany campers on field trips to handle minor injuries and illnesses. **It is important to inform us of all allergies or other medical concerns of your camper.**



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## **Injuries**

If a minor injury occurs while at the Y, your counselor will inform you at pick up time. If a more serious injury occurs, the parent will be notified via phone. If the injury requires medical attention, the parent will be asked to pick up the child immediately. Staff members are not allowed to transport a child to the hospital or doctor in their own vehicles.

In a medical emergency, staff will call 911 and then call parents immediately. If staff is unable to reach a parent, then the next person on the emergency contact list will be called until there is an answer.

## **Illness Policy**

Sick children are not allowed at the afterschool program per DHS policy. Colds and other illnesses are often contagious and can spread easily. If your child develops any of the following symptoms during the camp day, we will contact you, request that you pick your child up immediately and follow the guidelines related to your child's condition.

May return after 24 hours symptom free

- \*Fever of 100.5 or higher
- \*Two occurrences of diarrhea
- \*Vomiting

May return with doctor's note

- \*3 days of persistent cough
- \*Meningitis
- \*Shingles
- \*Tuberculosis
- \*Whooping cough
- \*Influenza
- \*Hepatitis A
- \*Salmonella
- \*Giardia Lamblia
- \*Lice or scabies

May return after 24 hours of treatment/rest and doctor's note

- \*Conjunctivitis (drops)
- \*Fifth disease
- \*Impetigo (cream)
- \*Ringworm (cream)



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\*Too ill to take part in activities inside or outside

\*Green, yellow or brown mucus from nose or mouth for more than 3 days

May return when there are no open sores present and doctor's note:

\*Undiagnosed skin rashes

May return after 2 days with medication and doctor's note:

\*Strep throat

May return after 3 days and doctor's note:

\*RSV

\*Coxsackie

May return after 4 days and doctor's note:

\*Rubella

\*Measles

\*German measles

May return after 6 days and doctor's note:

\*Chicken pox

May return after 9 days and doctor's note:

\*Mumps

Please notify us if your child contracts a communicable disease so we can inform other parents. Sick days are not discounted or credited from the camp tuition.

### **Permission to Administer Medication Form**

#### **NO MEDICATION IS TO BE SENT TO CAMP WITHOUT PROPER**

**NOTIFICATION.** This form MUST be completed and accompany any medication (prescription and over the counter medications) your child may need to take while at Afterschool. Medications are to be given to the Childcare Director in the original container and labeled with the child's full name, medication name and dosage. All medications will remain at our program in a lock box except for emergency medication such as: inhalers, epi-pens or eye drops which are carried in the Senior Counselor's backpacks and returned to the lock box at the end of every day. The Childcare Director (or his/her designee) is authorized ONLY to administer medication in accordance with your signed Permission to Medicate Form.

Non-prescription medications such as Tylenol & Advil will be administered ONLY with written authorization. If you give medication to your child before coming to Afterschool or Day Camp, please inform us. This ensures that there will be no overmedication if a standing order exists.



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## **Overall Wellness of our Campers**

Hot Springs Family YMCA takes Child Abuse Prevention very seriously. If emotional, mental, sexual, or physical abuse is suspected, it is the staff member's moral duty to report these concerns to the Camp Director immediately. If child abuse is suspected it is our legal responsibility to file an official report in accord with state child abuse reporting laws and in compliance with the YMCA's policies if abuse is suspected. All information found during this procedure is strictly confidential. At NO TIME will information be discussed with campers, staff, or other persons, except to complete a proper assessment or to arrange intervention.

## **Dress**

Afterschool participants will go outside daily, weather permitting. We will also be active in the gym, Playpalooza, or in our group rooms. Wear comfortable clothing and closed-toe shoes that are good for running and playing.

We will swim every Friday. **Please bring swimsuits every Friday, even if you do not plan on swimming. Oftentimes children change their mind when in the pool area and see friends swimming.** Please label swimsuits and towels.

## **Outside Items**

All outside toys will be confiscated, including electronics. These items will be held in staff care and can be picked up at the end of the day.

## **Screen Free Afterschool**

We encourage our campers to be present, try new things, and build friendships. It is our policy to not allow any devices with screens, including cell phones. Please leave these at home, as students are not allowed to use them. Urgent calls may be placed through the camp office. The only exception to our screen free summer will be special movie activities.

## **Swimming**

Our campers will participate in swimming on a regular basis in the indoor YMCA pool. Our pool is four feet deep across the entire pool. Lifeguards will always be present, and an Afterschool staff member will always be present either in the water or on the pool deck. Staff members will always monitor dressing rooms to ensure the safety and timely dressing of all campers.

Swimmers who are not skilled swimmers will be required to wear a lifejacket or sugar cube belt while in the water. Lifeguards will administer a swim test at the beginning of summer to determine who needs to wear a floatation device.





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## **Outdoor Time**

Our aim is to provide every student with at least half an hour outside every day. We want our children to develop a fondness for the outdoors, have voice and choice in how they play with others, and get plenty of exercise and fresh air. All outdoor time will be supervised and provide a balance between structured group activities and individual, child-led play.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Our Afterschool program will not take field trips, but we may take field trips during our Day Camps, especially the Christmas Break and Spring Break Camps. All field trip permission slips will need to be signed in advance.

Campers are expected to stay within their groups and follow all rules while on field trips. Campers who wander away from their group or otherwise jeopardize their own safety or the safety of the group may not be allowed to go on future field trips.

## **Elopement**

A rare and serious incident occurs when a child chooses to leave the center or his/her field trip group. This is very different from a lost child situation and is known as elopement. Children who run away force others into unsafe situations.

The following steps outline how elopement issues are handled:

- After repeated attempts to call the child back to the group, the adult in charge will follow the child as long as it is safe to do so.
- Staff will notify police immediately of a runaway child and give his/her description and whereabouts.
- While running away, a child places the staff and other children at risk. This is grounds for expulsion from the program.

## **Extreme Weather Days**

On rainy days, we will spend more time indoors, but we will remain active within our gym and group spaces.

On very hot days (when the heat index is 90 degrees or above), we will monitor campers closely for signs of heat stress. We may reduce outside time due to heat.



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In the winter, students should dress in layers and wear an appropriate coat and other outdoor gear. Students who are not dressed appropriately may be asked to stay indoors and miss out on valuable outdoor time. Even though it can be cold outside, we will try to take advantage of events like playing in the snow unless the temperature with the wind chill is below 25 degrees.

### **What to bring to Afterschool**

- **Homework/backpack:** We have a designated time for homework and reading.
- **Change of clothes:** Sometimes our kids in 5-6 have accidents, and we like to make sure we can help them be comfortable and clean.
- **Swimsuit (on Fridays):** Please make sure it is labeled.
- **Towel (on Fridays):** Again, please label.
- **Plastic bag (on Fridays):** For wet swimsuit and towel.

### **What NOT to bring**

- **Cell phones, ipads, game devices, etc.:** If it has a screen, please leave it home. We want campers to be present and connect with each other.
- **Food:** Unless there is an allergy reason documented with a doctor's note, there is no need for campers to bring food. If they must bring food, it needs to be healthy, whole foods.
- **Nuts/Peanuts:** We are a Nut-free facility due to common nut allergies.
- **Weapons:** This includes pocket knives.
- **Animals**
- **Personal Sports Equipment:** The Y will supply everything each camper needs.
- **Toys**

**The Hot Springs Family YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. A lost and found table will be on site. Items not claimed by the end of the summer will be donated to a charitable organization.**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **Special Needs of Students**

You will find our Y to be very flexible with our students' needs. If your camper has special needs that we might be able to accommodate, please contact us in advance of the start of camp. We find that campers are most successful when we work together with our families in honest, open and collaborative partnerships and make mutual decisions to accommodate the special needs of our campers. Although we



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cannot accommodate every request, we will do our best to work with our community members on a case-by-case need. In compliance with ADA guidelines, the Y will make reasonable accommodations for special needs campers. Special accommodations may include: summer school needs, disabilities and behavioral needs. **If your child has an IEP or 504 at school, then caregivers must complete an Individual Care Plan (ICP) before camp begins. Please contact your Childcare Director to arrange for a meeting to discuss these needs before you register for any of our camps to ensure we can accommodate your requests.**

### **STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE and EXPULSION**

At the YMCA, discipline is viewed as a learning experience. Through interaction with caring adults, children acquire interpersonal skills such as the ability to work cooperatively with others and manage conflict situations.

The goal of our Discipline Policy is to correct a situation in a positive manner and separate the action from the child. Our staff encourages positive behavior and seeks to redirect children to other activities before problems occur and use positive reinforcement and redirection to encourage appropriate camp behaviors. If we need to become more firm, we may take the child aside and speak quietly but firmly with them, trying to explain that their actions are not appropriate and suggest another way in which they could make a better choice in this particular situation.

If there is an ongoing problem with a child, the Director may discuss the problem with the parent(s) to ensure positive reinforcement with the problem at home as well as at camp. If a serious situation occurs, such as your child injuring another child purposefully, taking into consideration the circumstances and seriousness of the situation, the child may be suspended for a specific period of time. A conference with the Director may be necessary to create an action plan for improved behavior in our programs.

The YMCA defines the following as unacceptable behavior:

1. Behavior on the part of the child that interferes with the safety and well being of himself/herself, or any other person (including bullying and harassment).
2. Verbal disrespect of YMCA Staff, Counselors or other children.
3. Lack of respect for YMCA property and/or the property of others.
4. Abusive language or gestures.



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Behavior and disciplinary problems will be handled in one of the following manners dependent upon the infraction:

1. Verbal warning from the Counselor.
2. Verbal warning from the Counselor with written notice of the warning sent home for parental review.
3. Communication from the Childcare Director requesting corrective measures at home and/or conference in our office.
4. Suspension or termination from programming without refund.

The YMCA has a zero tolerance policy on violence of any kind. Extreme or violent behaviors by parents or child can and will warrant immediate suspension or expulsion without refund. A child will never be deprived of food, hit, name called, threatened, or ridiculed. No child will be isolated or left unsupervised at any time.