

Parent Information Handbook



YWCA of Mankato
500 South Broad St.
Mankato, MN 56001
(507) 345-4629
www.mankatoywca.org

YWCA of Mankato Youth Development Programs
Girls on the Run of Greater Mankato
Girls on Track of Greater Mankato

Parent Handbook
of program policies and philosophies

MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, GOALS, AND PLANS

YWCA Mission

YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

Girls on the Run Mission

We inspire girls to be joyful, healthy and confident using a fun, experienced-based curriculum which creatively integrates running.

Youth Development Philosophy

The youth development philosophy of the YWCA of Mankato is that each child is a unique and valuable individual with a variety of interests, needs, and abilities. Each child learns self-worth, social, emotional, intellectual, and physical skills, as well as respect for others and their community through appropriate interactions and activities.

YWCA Administrative Office

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| Hours: | 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday |
| Site: | 500 S. Broad St. Mankato, MN 56001 |
| Phone: | (507) 345-4629 |
| Fax: | (507) 345-4630 |
| Web site: | www.mankatoywca.org |

Days of Operation

Please see the Girls on the Run/Girls on Track season calendars included in your registration packet. Girls on the Run sessions meet twice a week during a 10-12 week season and vary by day and time depending on host site. **YWCA programs are NOT held on days that District 77 is not in session or closes due to inclement weather.**

The YWCA office and all YWCA programs will NOT be in service on the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Memorial Day
Fourth of July
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.

Meals and Snacks

The YWCA meets children's nutritional needs during the time they spend in our programs. We provide a nutritious snack at each afterschool meeting.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

Registration

Registration information and materials are available online at www.mankatoywca.org and at the YWCA office, 500 S. Broad St., Mankato. The registration fee and appropriate registration materials must be completed and submitted before any child may attend YWCA youth development programs:

Enrollment Options

Girls on the Run (for girls in grades 3-5)

Girls on Track (for girls in grades 6-8)

Programs are held at multiple Greater Mankato Area host sites (including Mankato, North Mankato, Lake Crystal, St. Peter and Eagle Lake).

YWCA Youth Development Program Fees

Sliding Fee Assistance

The YWCA offers families Sliding Fee Assistance for enrollment in the Girls on the Run/Girls on Track program. Anyone enrolling their child in this particular program can apply for assistance. Household income is used to determine eligibility and amount of the family responsibility. Supporting documents may be required. Applications are available online (www.mankatoywca.org) or by request at the YWCA administrative office.

Payment of Fees

YWCA Youth Development programs operate on a prepay system. Girls on the Run fees must be paid in full prior to the start of the season.

Payments may be made as follows:

- ◆ By mail (YWCA, 500 S. Broad St., Mankato Minnesota, 56001)
- ◆ By delivery to the YWCA office, Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm
- ◆ Online via Pay Pal or Active at www.mankatoywca.org

Parents should not leave payments onsite with Girls on the Run coach/volunteers or send payments with program participants. Please choose one of the above options for payment.

Late Pick Up Policy

The YWCA respects the time of our staff/volunteers. **We ask that parents arrive in time to pick up and depart prior to the closing time of their chosen site.** Each session of Girls on the Run/Girls on Track ends promptly at 4:30 p.m. but volunteer coaches will stay onsite until 5:00 p.m. at the close of each session.

If parents are unable to pick-up their child at the designated time, they are asked to call the Girls on the Run site cell phone as soon as possible to inform staff.

If a parent is tardy in picking up his/her daughter, the guardian will be verbally reminded of this policy. If the parent is tardy for a second time, a verbal reminder and written email acknowledgment of this policy will be made. Upon the third instance, the parent will be notified that his/her daughter will no longer be able to attend Girls on the Run/Girls on Track.

Child Withdrawal/Termination from the Program

A parent may withdraw their child from YWCA Youth Development programs at any time. **The parent must notify the Youth Development Director in writing two weeks prior to the last day the child will attend.**

Please see attached Withdrawal from Program Form.

The YWCA reserves the right to terminate enrollment immediately if staff determine they can no longer meet a child's needs.

Arrival/Departure Policies

Program staff/volunteers will sign in each child's time of arrival to the program. Parents must sign out their child's time of departure each day on the sign-in/out sheet and include their signature.

The YWCA is not responsible for children:

- ◆ until they are signed in to the program
- ◆ after they have been signed out from the program

If a parent would like to waive the responsibility of signing their child out of the program each day, they must supply written acknowledgment of this to the Youth Development Director. (Example: Some parents allow their child to walk home after each session).

Absences

Parents are asked to call the YWCA if their child will not attend programming for the day. Parents may call the YWCA office (507) 345-4629 ext.32 or the program site cell phone.

Pick-up Authorization

For each child's protection, the only persons authorized to pick up a child are those designated by the parent or guardian on the child's emergency card. If a child is to be released to anyone other than those listed on the emergency card, a note or phone call to the YWCA authorizing pick up must be received prior to the time of pick up.

Snow Day Policy

In the event of severe weather (blizzards, dangerous storms, etc.) the children's safety and well-being are the prime concern.

YWCA Afterschool and Evening Programs will be closed if, due to weather, Mankato Area Public Schools (District #77) are dismissed early or closed for the day. The YWCA *may* cancel afterschool programming or dismiss early even if District 77 does not. Announcement for changes will be made by radio and a phone call to parents.

Emergency Procedures

Severe Weather

In the event of severe weather (blizzards, dangerous storms, etc.) while the children are at a YWCA youth development program, the children's safety and well being will be the prime concern for staff. Parents are responsible for picking up children within a half an hour of cancellation due to severe weather.

Missing Child

It is the YWCA's strict policy that no child is ever left alone. The children are instructed to ask permission to leave the group for any reason, and the staff is responsible for insuring their safe return within a reasonable time.

If a child cannot be located after an exhaustive search, the Youth Development Director will first call the parents to see if they had picked up the child without signing out. If parents have not, they will then notify the local police department for their assistance and inform the child's parent/guardian.

Accidents

All incidents, emergencies, accidents, and injuries that occur to children, staff, or visitors must be reported on an accident report form. If an accident report form is used for a child in the program, it is important that the parents sign the form and return it so it can be placed in the child's file. A copy of the form will then be made and returned to the parent the following session for their records.

Pets, Toys, and Personal Belongings

Pets are not allowed at any YWCA program site without written prearranged authorization from the Youth development Director.

The YWCA is not responsible for loss of or damage to personal items. **Children are discouraged from bringing toys, personal items and CELL PHONES.** Staff may be asked to hold items for safekeeping until the child goes home for the day. Cell phones should be kept in a backpack or bag during activities. Girls should be advised not to bring cell phones on runs or during outdoor activities.

Visitors

Parents are welcome to visit YWCA Youth Development sites at any time. For the safety of children in our care, we ask that all other visitors inform the Youth Development Director prior to visiting our sites and sign in on a sheet at the site.

Staff Employment

The YWCA will not be liable if program participants choose to hire YWCA staff outside of the YWCA program.

Parent/Staff Interaction

Parents are encouraged to maintain regular communication with site volunteer/mentors. Regular communication facilitates positive experiences for children by offering program volunteers opportunities to share children's positive experiences and by allowing for discussion of inappropriate behaviors or concerns before they become a problem.

The Youth Development Director is available for individual meetings as requested. Please contact the Youth Development Director by calling (507) 345-4629 ext. 32 or by email at sheri@ywcamankato.org. The YWCA strives to provide positive experiences for youth in part by open staff and parent communication.

If a child is experiencing repeated difficulties in the program, YWCA staff will prepare behavior incident reports to document specific behavior incidences. Staff will discuss these incidents with the Youth Development Director and parents as they occur. If concerns develop, a meeting will be scheduled for parents and the Youth Development Director to discuss alternative options.

Mandatory Reporting

Reporting Policy for Programs Providing Services to Children

Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to Report

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 340-3444 or local law enforcement at 911.

What to Report

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556) and should be attached to this policy.
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known, and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays

Retaliation Prohibited

- An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

Failure to Report

- A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Behavior Guidance Policy

The YWCA behavior guidance policy is to assist each child to develop safe and appropriate ways of interacting with others and her environment. We strive to help each child acquire a positive self-concept and self-control as she establishes, applies and practices acceptable behaviors.

Guidance begins with respect for each child and adult and the establishment of a healthy relationship between individuals. Individual guidance is based on consideration of each child's development level, interests, needs, abilities and physical status.

Our preferred methods of guidance and discipline are of a positive nature and include: prevention, positive redirection, modeling, limit setting, problem solving, and managing behavior. Children are never subjected to corporal punishment, verbal or emotional abuse, solitary isolation or the withholding of basic needs.

Desired Behavior

- ◆ Respect the rights and property of others
- ◆ Follow YWCA policies and procedures carried out by YWCA staff
- ◆ Use appropriate language
- ◆ Respect YWCA staff/volunteers as they work to promote positive interactions and a positive learning environment

Child Evaluation/Dismissal

Children will be evaluated regularly as to the YWCA's ability to meet their needs and deliver programming effectively. Children with special needs are accepted only if staff is able to provide for the child in a "group care" setting. Though some YWCA mentoring programs have a lower desired ratio of 1/5 at times, the care and attention provided is considered group-care. The YWCA cannot and will not provide one-on-one care.

If a child is experiencing repeated difficulties in the program, YWCA staff will prepare behavior incident reports to document specific behavior incidences. Staff will discuss these incidents with the Youth Development Director and parents as they occur. If concerns develop, a meeting will be scheduled for parents and the Youth Development Director to discuss alternative options.

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

First Aid and Emergency Care Treatment

An important factor in providing quality care to children is to insure them health and safety. By promoting an environment structured to prevent emergencies and a staff that is adequately informed of the emergency procedures necessary to promote health and safety, the YWCA provides quality experiences for children in all aspects of YWCA programs.

Accident Report

YWCA programs are operated in a manner which minimizes accidents and injuries to children, staff and volunteers. Should an accident or injury occur, staff will act immediately to administer emergency procedures and rectify deficiencies in the program.

If it appears that an accident may lead to future complications, or if it becomes serious, the child needs to be medically examined.

Parents must report all accidents outside of the YWCA program to staff. All YWCA staff and mentors are mandated reporters and are obligated by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

If a child is injured while in care, a YWCA staff member completes an accident report. This form is given to the Youth Development Director and a copy is also given to the parent. The form informs the parent of what happened, what action was taken and any follow-up information or comments needed.

BY ENROLLING MY CHILD, I AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

Policy Agreement

I recognize my responsibility to respect the rules of the YWCA youth development programs. I also recognize my responsibility to help my child respect the rules in order to better provide a positive experience for all program participants. I agree to be responsible for knowing the contents of the parent handbook, to pay agreed upon fee on time and to share responsibility for any damages my child might cause while participating in YWCA youth development programs.

Liability Insurance Statement

In consideration of my child being permitted to participate in YWCA youth development programs, I agree to release, hold harmless, and immediately indemnify District 77, the YWCA, and all other organizations of whatever connection and all claims, demands, costs, losses, and expenses which I, my heirs, and personal representatives may have arising out of his/her participation in YWCA youth development programs or through the use of any and all facilities connected herewith. I understand that every possible precaution will be exercised to assure the safety and welfare of my child. I also understand that the YWCA, the school, and its authorized agents shall not be responsible, financially or otherwise, should an accident occur.

GRIEVANCES

If you have a concern about YWCA staff or volunteers please contact that person directly as soon as possible to explain your concern.

If you are not satisfied with your discussion with the staff person/volunteer and/or have a concern about YWCA policy or procedure, please contact the Youth Development Director at (507) 345-4629 ext. 32 to discuss your concern or to schedule a meeting.

If you are not satisfied with your discussion with the Youth Development Director, or your concern involves the Youth Development Director, please contact the Executive Director at (507) 345-4629 ext. 29 to discuss your concern or to schedule a meeting.

If you are not satisfied with your discussion with the Executive Director and the issue involves YWCA policy or procedure, please contact the YWCA Board of Directors by calling the YWCA at (507) 345-4629.

APPENDIX

Additional Policies

A. Equal Opportunity Policy

The YWCA does not allow discrimination in employment, enrollment, volunteerism, or any other aspect of association based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, or ancestry. Discrimination is also prohibited based on marital status, public assistance, political affiliation, sexual orientation, disability, gender, age, or other protected classifications as provided by law. This policy is consistent with and fundamental to the YWCA's mission. All employees, members, associates, volunteers, program participants, and the Board of Directors follow this policy.

The policy applies personnel administration, including but not limited to: recruitment, selection, placement, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, recall, termination, pay, other forms of compensation, and selection for training. The policy extends to the use of YWCA facilities and participation in its programs.

B. Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy

Discrimination, including sexual harassment, is prohibited under local, state, and federal laws and is not acceptable under the YWCA Equal Opportunity Policy. This policy is in place to uphold the YWCA Mission Statement and to meet the requirements of law.

C. Confidentiality and Mandated Reporting

The YWCA follows a confidentiality policy in relation to staff, clients, and associates. YWCA staff and personnel are mandated reporters of neglect, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. To protect the children, staff will report suspected abuse to the proper authorities.

Phone Directory

YWCA Office 345-4629

YWCA Office Fax.....345-4630

.....Revised 8/10/2011

Withdrawal from YWCA Youth Development Programs

Please remember you must give a **2 week written notice** of any change to your original contract. Parents/Guardians are responsible for the contracted rate for these two weeks, whether the program is utilized or not.

This form will act as an amendment to your contract.

Child's Last Day of Attendance: _____ / _____ / _____
Month Day Year

Child's Name: _____

Program Name: _____

Parent's Name (please print): _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Today's Date: _____ / _____ / _____
Month Day Year

If you would like, please share your reasons for withdrawing from the program:

Please return this form to the Youth Development Director. The 2-week notice is recognized on the day it is received.