

PARENT MANUAL AFTER SCHOOL, & Kids Day Out



ROWAN-CABARRUS YMCA

rocabymca.org

2-1-26



WELCOME TO THE ROWAN-CABARRUS YMCA

We are thrilled that you’ve chosen the YMCA for your child’s after-school care and Kids Day Out (KDO). Our programs are built around growth, and safety, in a caring and encouraging environment.

This **Parent Handbook** contains essential information for successful experience. If you have any questions or concerns, we’re here to help!

Your Child’s Safety is Our Priority

We are proud to have achieved **Praesidium Accreditation**. Praesidium is nationally recognized standard for child abuse prevention. Our accreditation with this independent organization reflects our commitment to best practices in abuse prevention, from how we hire and train staff, how we supervise and monitor activities, and how we encourage ongoing communication and feedback. Our accreditation demonstrates that we meet rigorous standards designed to reduce risk and promote a safe, structures, and supportive experience for all participants.

- Comprehensive safety policies
- Thorough background checks
- Ongoing staff training
- Constant supervision and accountability

What is Praesidium?

Praesidium is an independent organization that verifies our commitment to best-practice abuse prevention standards. From how we hire and train staff to how we monitor activities, and receive feedback, this accreditation ensures a safe, structured environment for your child’s growth and development.

Child Safety & Mandatory Reporting

All staff are mandated reporters:

- If we suspect abuse or neglect, we required to report it to authorities.
- Reports go to Child Protective Services or law enforcement per state and federal guidelines.
- Staff are trained to recognize signs of abuse and respond appropriately and maintain confidentially.

INCLUSION & ADA

The Rowan-Cabarrus YMCA is committed to providing **equal opportunity and access to all children**, and we do not discriminate against any individual. Every child who attends YMCA programs has unique strengths and needs. Because each child is different, we address accommodation requests **individually** to ensure the safest and most successful experience possible.

To help us include all youth, we ask parents/guardians to inform the Program Director **prior to the start of the program** of any special circumstances that may affect a child’s ability to participate. The Director may request a meeting to discuss appropriate accommodations to allow your child the ability to participant.

Please note that YMCA programs are **not designed for 1:1 care**, and staff are **not permitted to assist with toileting, feeding, or changing clothes** for any participant.



PROGRAMMING

After School will begin immediately following school dismissal and operate until 5:45 p.m. with last pick-up at 6:00 p.m.

On **Early Release Days**, programming begins as soon as children are released from school and continues until 6:00 p.m.

Daily schedules may vary due to special events or activities; however, most days will include the following components, not always in this order:

- Arrival | Bathroom | Snacks
- Quiet Activity | Homework
- Group Games | Outside | Crafts | STEM
- Rides-Out | Stations

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

At the YMCA, we believe in reinforcing positive behavior and teaching the importance of our five core character traits: Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Honesty, and Faith. Staff recognize and highlight good character throughout the day by acknowledging participants who demonstrate these values.

Devotions are held daily and provide for children to hear a Bible story, participate in prayer, and reflect on goals, experiences, and positive behaviors.

AGE-APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES

We understand that different ages have different developmental needs. While we strive to group children by age whenever possible, situations may arise where this is not feasible. In these cases, activities may be modified to ensure they are appropriate and engaging.

During **Rides-Out**, children of all ages come together for stations and activities that are intentionally designed.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The YMCA expects all children to participate at some level throughout the day. We recognize there may be times when a child does not feel well or is physically unable to join certain activities. In these cases, reasonable accommodations will be made—especially for children recovering from injury—provided participation is allowed by a physician.

WHAT TO WEAR

After School:

Participants may engage in all program activities in their regular school clothes.

Kids Day Out (KDO):

Participants should dress appropriately for outdoor play and the weather. Closed-toe shoes are required, and **sneakers are strongly recommended**. Clothing should reflect YMCA values; items displaying inappropriate or vulgar language or gestures are not permitted.



WHAT TO BRING

Afterschool:

We understand that students will bring the items they take to school. To help us keep belongings organized and ensure they return home safely:

Backpacks and all other personal items should be labeled with the participant’s name.

Kids Day Out (KDO)

Please send the following items **each day**:

- A **swimsuit and towel**, packed in a separate bag.
- A **lunch and 1–2 snacks**.

Lost & Found

Parents are encouraged to check the Lost and Found at your branch **weekly** to ensure items have not been left behind. Staff display and announce lost items regularly, but belongings can accumulate quickly. Items that remain unclaimed for an extended period may be donated to local charities.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

The YMCA may dismiss anyone from the program if warranted. In cases involving drugs or weapons, law enforcement may be contacted.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Toys | Stuffed Animals | Games | Gaming Devices | Phones | Headphones |
| Trading Cards | Money (unless asked to bring for trip or snacks) | Tobacco Products | E-cigarettes or Vapes | Drugs (illegal or over-the-counter) | Weapons of any kind |

PARENT INFORMATION

COMMUNICATION

The YMCA strives to communicate effectively about our programs through a variety of methods. Branches may use any of the following tools to share updates: **newsletters, posted signs, email, text messages, and staff communication during rides-in/out**

YOUR ACCOUNT

Please ensure your online account includes an **accurate and up-to-date cell phone number, email address, and authorized pick-ups**.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The YMCA believes that parent participation is an essential part of a high-quality program. We encourage you to talk with your child about their day and how they spend their time at the Y. If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas—including situations at home that may affect your child’s experience—please discuss them with the Program Director.

Effective communication between families and staff helps us better support your child and meet the needs of your family.



CUSTODY AGREEMENTS

Please alert the YMCA Program Director of child custody arrangements. It is imperative that official, current court documents are maintained in your child’s file if custody or visitation is a concern. Without court orders, the YMCA cannot legally prevent a parent from picking up their child. The parent who registers the child for the program is responsible for payments and providing a complete list of individuals authorized to pick up the child. The YMCA cannot divide fees or billing responsibilities between multiple parties.

SURVEYS

The YMCA periodically sends out surveys to gather parent feedback and continuously improve our programs. Surveys may be accessed through a **QR code** or **email link**. If you are unable to access the survey, please notify the Program Director and we will be happy to assist you. We appreciate and value your input.

PHOTOS/VIDEOS

The YMCA occasionally takes photos, videos, and audio recordings for marketing and promotional purposes. Some program activities may also involve photos or recordings used by participants in presentations, skits, or crafts.

By registering for a YMCA program and/or membership, you completed the Agreements section, which includes the media release waiver. This waiver grants permission for the YMCA to use these images and recordings as described.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If air quality reaches the **Red Zone** or **heat index is 100°F or higher**, activities will move inside unless outdoor activities include water play or are in heavily shaded areas.

On **Red Zone** days-which are typically hot, hazy, and humid, with little breeze, the YMCA limits time in the direct sunlight and avoids strenuous outdoor activities.

School Closure Before the School Day

If school is **cancelled before school hours** due to weather, the YMCA will **attempt to offer a Kids Day Out (KDO)** program if it is **deemed safe** to do so. Families should check YMCA social media for the most current updates.

Early Dismissal

If schools **dismiss early due to inclement weather**, the YMCA will **not operate After School or KDO** programming. Parents must pick up their children **directly from the school**.



HEALTH & SAFETY

MEDICINE PROCEDURES

Parents should **not** place medication in a child’s backpack or personal belongings. All necessary medications must be brought **directly to the program office by a parent or guardian**. Medications must arrive in their **original containers** and include written instructions for dispensing.

A **Medication Form**—available online or from the Program Director—must be completed for staff to administer any prescription or over-the-counter medication. This includes items such as topical ointments, insect repellents, lotions, sprays, creams, and powders.

Children are **not permitted** to carry medication with them. Exceptions may be made only when:

- The medication is dispensed through a device worn on the body (e.g., an insulin pump), or
- A physician provides written authorization stating the child may self-administer and all safety requirements for handling and storage are met.

If a doctor provides such authorization, a copy **must be given to the YMCA**, and a parent or guardian must still hand the medication directly to program staff.

For safety, **all medications are stored securely** in a locked area within the program or front office.

WHEN TO STAY HOME

Please do not send your child to YMCA programs with any of the following symptoms:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---|
| Sore Throat | Excessive Coughing | Diarrhea/Vomiting | Head Lice | Undiagnosed rash, sores, or skin conditions |
| Flu/Covid | Respiratory Infections | Fever 100.4 & above | Pink Eye | Chickenpox/Measles |
| Fifth’s Disease | Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease | Impetigo/Ringworm/Scabies | Strep Throat | Any other contagion or undiagnosed disease or symptom |

The YMCA requires that any participant be **fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication** and show **clearly improved symptoms** before returning to the program.

In certain cases, depending on the nature or severity of the illness, the YMCA may also require a **doctor’s note** confirming that the child is cleared to return to participation.



STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

The YMCA is committed to hiring staff who embody our Mission and demonstrate a genuine passion for serving as positive role models for children. Each staff member completes comprehensive training in safety and program excellence, which includes:

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| CPR | AED | Oxygen | First Aid |
| Child Abuse Prevention | Mandated Reporter Requirements | Program Curriculum & Content | Games & Activity Safety |

The YMCA strives to maintain a staff-to-child ratio of **1:15** to ensure quality supervision and meaningful engagement. Below are the YMCA’s Child Abuse Prevention guidelines for **appropriate** and **inappropriate** physical and verbal interactions with youth.

| Appropriate Physical Interactions | Inappropriate Physical Interactions |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs, High-fives, Fist-bumps, Handshakes • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Pats on the shoulder or back, Arms around shoulders • Pats on the head when culturally appropriate • Touching hands, shoulders, and arms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-frontal Hugs, Kisses, Lap-sitting, Piggyback Rides, or Tickling • Spanking, Shaking, Slapping, Hitting, or Wrestling • Any type of massage given by or to a participant • Exposing Oneself, Touching the bottom, chest, or genital areas • Viewing or showing others pornographic materials |

| Appropriate Verbal Interactions | Inappropriate Verbal Interactions |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling, Cursing, Shaming, Belittling, Derogatory Remarks, Bullying, Ridicule, Humiliation, or Hazing • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate another • Off-color or sexual jokes • Discussing sexual encounters |

Outside Contact Policy (Aligned with Praesidium Child Abuse Prevention Standards)

To maintain the highest level of safety and accountability, **YMCA staff are prohibited from having contact with program participants outside of YMCA programs.** This includes **in-person visits, babysitting, phone calls, texting, online communication, gaming, or social media interactions.**

Exceptions:

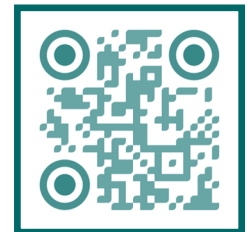
- A prior relationship between the staff member and the family must have existed **before YMCA employment.**
- If such a relationship exists, the staff member **must immediately inform their supervisor** for documentation and approval.

Any unauthorized outside contact is considered a serious violation of the YMCA and Praesidium safety policies and may result in termination of employment. These guidelines help ensure clear boundaries, prevent risk, and uphold our commitment to child protection.



CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

To ensure transparency and easy access to our safety practices, families may review the YMCA's **Child Abuse Prevention Policy** by scanning the QR code provided in this manual or posted at the YMCA.



CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING

If you have a concern related to child safety, staff behavior, or program operations, you may **submit a confidential report** at any time by **scanning the QR code**, which will take you to our secure reporting form. Reports are reviewed by HR, and VP of Risk & Safety and kept confidential to the fullest extent allowed by law.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

At the Rowan-Cabarrus YMCA, our behavior expectations and discipline practices are grounded in our core values—**Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Faith**. We strive to provide a safe, supportive, and fun environment where youth learn to make positive choices and build strong character. We believe children thrive when expectations are clear, and we view mistakes as opportunities to teach, model, and reinforce better behavior..

The YMCA communicates behavior expectations through **six simple rules**:

1. **Listen and follow directions.**
2. **Do what is right.**
3. **Keep your hands and feet to yourself.**
4. **Try everything and do your best.**
5. **Be an Upstander—if you see something, say something.**
6. **Be safe and have fun.**

Bullying & Conflict Resolution

Bullying

Bullying is **unwanted, intentional behavior that involves a power imbalance**. At the Y, our goal is to prevent bullying by fostering a community where participants, parents, and staff act as **Upstanders**—individuals who recognize when something is wrong and take action to help make it right.

When bullying is **disclosed, discovered, or suspected**, staff address each situation **case-by-case** with care and discretion. The safety and well-being of program participants is always our top priority.

Conflict

Conflict is a disagreement between individuals of equal power who openly share their views. When addressed constructively, it's a normal and healthy part of youth development. Staff help youth recognize conflicts early and guide them through respectful problem-solving, building skills that support a positive environment and lifelong communication and cooperation.

Prohibited Behaviors



To maintain the safety, enjoyment, and well-being of all participants, the YMCA does **not** allow the following behaviors, including but not limited to:

- Inappropriate jokes, insults, slurs, threats, name-calling, or intimidation.
- Destructive behaviors.
- Behavior that violates personal boundaries or repeatedly and negatively impacts the program’s safety, structure, or enjoyment.
- **Any behavior of a sexual nature.**
- Habitual disrespectful behavior such as arguing, swearing, refusal to listen, or refusal to follow directions.

Behaviors that are **aggressive, dangerous, or considered bullying** may result in **immediate suspension or dismissal** from the program.

Code of Conduct Violations

The YMCA uses a progressive response system designed to teach, support, and guide positive behavior while maintaining a safe environment for all participants. Each step includes opportunities for learning, communication, and collaboration with families.

First Incident

- Redirection and/or an immediate consequence such as time-out, removal from the activity, or loss of privileges.

Second Incident

- Immediate consequence (time-out, removal from activity, or loss of privileges), followed by a debrief with YMCA staff.
- Incident is documented.
- Parent/guardian is notified—either at rides-out or by phone.

Third Incident

- Immediate consequence (time-out, removal from activity, or loss of privileges), followed by a staff debrief.
- Incident is documented.
- Parent/guardian is notified—either at rides-out or by phone.
- YMCA seeks partnership with the parent/guardian to support positive behavior. The Program Director may follow up for additional support.



Fourth Incident

- Immediate consequence (time-out, removal from activity, or loss of privileges), followed by staff debrief.
- Incident is documented.
- The Program Director calls the parent/guardian to pick up the child. **Suspension may be issued.**

Suspension Guidelines

The YMCA is committed to working with families to help children demonstrate desired behaviors. However, if inappropriate behaviors continue despite redirection, coaching, and collaboration—or if behaviors compromise the safety or well-being of others, the YMCA may suspend a child from the program.

- Suspension acts as a **“safety time-out”** to help reset behavior outside the program environment.
- The **length of suspension** is determined by the nature and severity of the behavior.
- Suspensions may range from **one day** to **removal for the remainder of the program**.

Immediate Suspension or Dismissal

Certain behaviors bypass the step-by-step process due to their seriousness. Behaviors that may result in **immediate suspension or dismissal** include, but are not limited to:

- Aggressive or dangerous behavior to ones self or another participant
- Bullying or harassment
- Physical harm or attempted harm to ones self or another participant
- Behavior that jeopardizes the safety of others
- Any form of sexual behavior or inappropriate touching
- Being in possession of drugs or weapons



REGISTRATION & PAYMENTS

REGISTRATION

- There is a required one time annual, non-refundable administration fee per child of \$30 for each program.
- Go to www.rocabymca.org to locate and complete registrations for After School and KDO.

PAYMENTS

After School

- All accounts will draft on the 1st of each month.
 - A service fee will be charged for each returned draft.
 - Multiple returned drafts may result in a child being removed from the program.
 - A late fee of \$10 will be charged if payment is not received by the 5th of the month.
- Cancellations are required **ten (10) days** prior to draft date. All cancellations must be in writing and emailed to your Program Director. Failure to properly notify the YMCA will result in a full charge for an absentee week, regardless of the reason.

LATE PICK-UP

- The YMCA will charge \$10 for every 15 minutes beginning at 6:01 p.m.
- There is no reduction in fees for families on scholarship for any late fees.
- Children may be removed from the program for repeated late pick-up.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The YMCA's Open Doors Scholarships are provided through contributions to the Rowan-Cabarrus YMCA's Annual Support Campaign. Scholarships are available for programs and membership. Applications for the Open Doors Scholarship are available online or at the Member Service Desk.

ROWAN-CABARRUS YMCA

East Rowan 704.279.1742 | Harrisburg 704.454.7800 | Hurley 704.636.0111
Kannapolis 704.939.9622 | South Rowan 704.857.7011 | West Cabarrus 704.795.9622

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