



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Y-PALS 2016-2017 PARENT HANDBOOK

About The YMCA

The Y is for youth development, for healthy living and for social responsibility. The Y is here to make the world a better place. The Y offers a wide range of programs to development self-confidence, good sportsmanship, character development, fine motor skills and many other assets children need to make their world a better place. Our mission at the Y is:

**“To put Christian principles into practice through programs
that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.”**

The Y is open to people of all walks of life regardless of age, race, gender or socio-economic status. We have financial assistance available to those that qualify to ensure that we serve everyone regardless of their ability to pay.

Y-PALS Before and After School Program

Y-PALS is a mission driven program centered on making a difference in the lives of the youth we serve. This program is not just childcare. It is child development. We not only teach our core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility, but we also teach children how to live these values. The goal of the Y-PALS program is to help participants grow spiritually, physically and mentally. The program also strives to provide challenging activities in both small and large group settings under the guidance of caring, well-trained staff members. Y-PALS gives children an experience that lasts a lifetime!

At Y-PALS you can expect:

- Quality care
- Encouragement to develop to their fullest potential
- Assistance with homework
- Fun games and activities daily
- A safe and positive learning environment
- Character development

Daily Activities

Our day is designed with individual and group activities, as well as free and structured play time. Each day the staff observes and interacts with children attempting to maintain an environment that is stimulating and meets the needs of each child. Ultimately, in keeping with the purpose and mission of the Y, we strive to help children develop fully in spirit, mind and body. Some of our daily activities include:

- Physical games
- Playground recreation
- Free choice activities
- Stories and skits
- Peer socialization
- Table games
- Arts and crafts
- Special events
- Study/homework time
- Character development
- Snack time

Y-Pals Locations

- Cedar Ridge Elementary School
- Olympia North Elementary School (PM only)
- Olympia West Elementary School (PM only)
- Towanda Elementary School

Hours of Operation

The Y-Pals program is held in area schools from the end of school to 5:30 PM. Sites with AM hours operate from 6:45AM to the start of school. We will have an extended morning program for Unit 5 late start mornings.

Registration and Payment Procedures

- 1) Parents must complete and return a registration form before the participant may begin the program.
- 2) A non-refundable registration fee is due annually at the time of registration.
- 3) **All payments for Y-PALS attendance will be made through the Electronic Funds Transfer option in our computer system. Payments will be charged to the account on file on the 1st and 15th of every month. No payments will be taken at the Y-PALS sites.**
- 4) It is the parent's responsibility to notify the YMCA should their account information change at any time.
- 5) Children with an overdue balance will not be allowed to attend the program until their account is current. Participating children with outstanding balances will be sent to the school office and parents/guardian will be called to pick them up.
- 6) **All returned payments will be charged a return fee of \$25.**
- 7) The Y reserves the right to make changes in its program and program fees without advance notice. Also, the Y reserves the right to close sites that do not meet the minimum requirements of attendance. The minimum number required to offer before care is five children per site. The minimum number required to offer after care is eight children per site.

	Daily Payment Rates	
YMCA Members	\$5.75/AM \$9/PM	\$13.50 Both
Prospective Members	\$8.00/AM \$12.50/PM	\$20 Both

	Weekly Payment Rates	
Towanda and Cedar Ridge	YMCA Members: \$64	Prospective Members: \$95
Olympia West and Olympia North	YMCA Members: \$42	Prospective Members \$60

Youth memberships to the Y are \$135/6 months

(Membership rates are subject to change)

Financial Assistance

It is our goal to ensure that no one is denied services due to an inability to pay. Therefore, we offer options for financial assistance to those who qualify. One option for financial assistance is provided by the Child Care Resource and Referral Network (800-437-8256). Upon approval, your family will be assigned monthly co-pays by the CCRRN to be paid to the YMCA. Applications for the CCRRN are available at the Bloomington-Normal YMCA member services desk or at www.bnymca.org.

If your family does not qualify for the CCRRN, they can apply for scholarship through the Bloomington-Normal YMCA. Scholarships are determined on a sliding fee scale. Applications for financial assistance through the Y are available at www.bnymca.org.

Scholarship dollars are provided by generous donors contributing to our annual Strong Kids campaign. If you would like to help the Y fulfill its mission by supporting our Strong Kids campaign, please contact the YMCA at (309) 827-6233 for more information.

Policy of Inclusion

The Y fully embraces the Americans with Disabilities Act and would like all special needs children to feel welcome in Y programs.

To the extent it is reasonably possible, and within the limitation of not-for-profits provided in the ADA, Y Child Care programs will provide services to children with disabilities, or any special needs child, in the same manner as services are provided for other children of comparable age.

Y Child Care programs are group centered programs; they do not provide one-on-one care, except on an intermittent basis, such as for injuries, immediate disciplinary issues and certain personal care needs customarily provided to all children.

If a Y staff member determines that a special needs child requires individual one-on-one attention, the Y shall immediately discuss this issue with the child's parents. Parents shall be reminded of the above policy. Together, the Y and parents shall attempt to work out a solution or refer the child to a more suitable program.

Drop-off & Pick-up Procedures

Y staff members are responsible for children once they arrive at the program. If a child does not come to the program at the end of the school day, the Y staff will not take responsibility for that child.

Parents are required to personally sign children in and out each day upon arrival and departure. Those persons authorized to pick up your child must do the same. **A valid photo ID must be shown every time a child is picked up from the site.**

A \$1.00/per minute late fee will be assessed per child after 5:30 PM. The time used to assess late fees will be the clock on the cell phone of the staff at the site. This fee is to be paid by the end of the week before the child attends the following week.

Y-Pals staff will attempt to call the emergency number on your file if your child is not picked up by closing time. If no one can be contacted within 30 minutes and no parental/guardian communication has occurred, the Y-Pals staff is required to notify the local police department and place the child in their care. The Y child abuse prevention policies prohibit Y staff from transporting a child in their automobiles.

Personal Belongings

Remember to label **ALL** items brought to the program. Encourage your child to be responsible for personal belongings. The Y cannot be responsible for lost items. We suggest leaving all personal items at home.

The following is a list of items NOT to be brought to the program:

- Toys
- Jewelry
- Money
- Gum
- Video Games and cell phones
- Any type of Weapons

If these items are brought to the program they may be confiscated and returned to the parent at the end of the day and disciplinary action may be taken.

Snacks

Snacks will be provided during the after school program. The Y will serve peanut-free snacks to participants with peanut allergies. If your child has any food restrictions or allergies, please indicate this information on the medical section of your child's registration form. If your child chooses not to eat the snack of the day, no other snack will be offered. A child may bring a store bought snack to share with the entire group, but it must be cleared with site staff one day in advance.

Expectations

- Follow directions.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself.
- Stay in assigned areas with a staff person at all times.
- Walk and talk quietly when inside.
- Respect staff, others and their property.
- Use good manners at all times using appropriate language and actions.
- Violent games, toys and play are not allowed.
- Honesty is always the best policy.

Discipline

In order to provide all children in our program the safe, positive and enjoyable learning environment they deserve, we will be using a discipline plan that utilizes the following steps:

1. The teacher(s) will give specific instructions of what the child is to do.
2. The child will be given a reminder with a redirection consequence if appropriate behavior is not followed. The consequence will not be a time out, but a move from the current situation to another situation (ex: If the child is throwing blocks in block area the redirection will be to go to book area. This is a quiet area where the child can settle down).
3. The teacher will follow through by redirecting child to the alternative activity. If the child continues with inappropriate behavior, he will be removed from the group to cool-off.
4. If the child continues exhibiting inappropriate behavior, the teacher/director will intervene.
5. If the behavior continues over an extended period of time the director will ask the parents to attend parent/teacher/director conference where an action plan will be agreed upon and put into action for the child.

When behavior is severe or deemed dangerous to the child or others, parents will be contacted immediately to pick up their child. Failure to pick your child up in a timely manner may result in suspension or expulsion from the program.

At any time, the Bloomington-Normal YMCA may waive the disciplinary procedure and reserves the right to discharge any student without notice for misconduct without refund.

Praise and recognition of good behavior is utilized throughout your child's day. This will help children choose appropriate behavior.

Bathroom Accidents

Children will not be denied use of the bathroom or drinks at any time. Children will not be disciplined for bathroom accidents while in our care. Children prone to accidents should bring a change of clothes.

Movies

Movies will not be shown on a regular basis in our program. They may be used from time to time as a special activity. Only age-appropriate, non-violent movies will be shown.

Staffing

The Y-Pals staff consists of positive role models dedicated to partnering with parents and teachers to further develop the youth in our program. All Y staff members pass background checks. We firmly believe that our staff is the best of the best. All staff are trained and certified in CPR, First Aid and Child Abuse Prevention. Our staff is experienced in working with children to have fun, be safe and develop in spirit, mind and body.

Restricted Parent Information

In the event of a court-ordered legal custody situation whereby either parent of the enrolled child has visitation restrictions; we must have in the child's file a written and dated statement along with a stamped copy of your legal custody papers that have been signed and dated by a judge. We must follow the law when it comes to restricting a parent's rights to information and access to their child. Unless we have court-ordered legal papers on file, parents will not be restricted. In the event of a court-ordered legal custody situation whereby a parent is not allowed to pick up the child without the other parent's consent, we ask that you state in writing that you have legal custody and the person (name and relationship) who does not have a legal right to pick up your child while in our care. The written and dated statement must be on file in the child center office along with a stamped copy of your legal custody papers, which have been signed by a judge.

Child Abuse Reporting

Please be aware that the Child Protection Law mandates the Y Staff report to DCFS any "suspected" case of child abuse or neglect. If a "suspected" case of abuse does occur and the offender is thought to be a parent, a report will be made to DCFS. When there is "suspected" abuse and the offender is thought to be someone other than a parent, staff will also consult with the parents of the child. For the child's sake, we recommend that the child remain enrolled in the program throughout the Protective Service Investigation. This may be their most stable environment during this time.

Accidents & Injuries

If your child is injured at the childcare site, the staff will take necessary steps to obtain emergency medical care. These steps will include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1) Attempts to contact parent/guardian
- 2) Attempts to contact the parent/guardian through persons listed on emergency information record.

If parental/guardian contact is not made, we will do any or all of the following:

- 1) Call 911 if needed.
- 2) Administer CPR and/or First Aid if needed.

Sudden Illness

A sick child is to be kept at home, for his or her own sake and that of others. Many communicable diseases begin with cold-like symptoms. A child is considered ill when he/she has the following:

- An elevated temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- An unidentified rash or a contagious rash
- Diarrhea
- Weepy and red eyes [could be conjunctivitis (pink eye) which is very contagious]
- A communicable disease
- Any evidence of head lice including nits
- Excessive cough and/or nasal discharge
- Mouth sores
- Any other symptoms that prevent your child from participating in the day's activities

The Y-Pals teachers and/or Coordinator should be informed about the nature of any illness. If your child has a communicable disease, please inform the staff when it first appeared. To return to the Y-Pals program, a doctor's release stating that your child is no longer contagious must be shown to the program staff.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, a staff member will contact the parents and request that the child is immediately picked up. Until the sick child is picked up, the child will be isolated as much as possible.

A child can return to the program when:

- The child’s temperature has been normal for 24 hours without Tylenol/aspirin/substitutes
- The child had been diagnosed as having a bacterial infection and has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- It has been 24 hours since the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea without medicine.
- Eyes are no longer discharging, and if pink eye, has been treated with antibiotic for 24 hours.
- The rash has subsided or the doctor has determined the rash is not contagious.
- In the case of lice, children must be completely free of all nits and lice to return. Our center has a nit-free policy. Staff will conduct head checks on all children returning from a bout of head lice before the child may re-enter the program.

Medication Policy

Non-prescription medicines will not be given at the School-Age Programs. Only prescription medicine in original bottles will be given at the Y-Pals program. Prescription medicines must include the child’s name, prescription number, doctor’s name, administration quantity and time. Parents must give all medications directly to the Y staff and fill out a medicine consent form. At this time, the medicine will be locked up out of the reach of the children. At no time are children permitted to be in possession of medicines.

Emergency Management

In the event of an emergency, our number one priority will be to ensure the safety and security of all program participants. As time permits, we will make every effort to inform parents and/or guardians of all pertinent information.

Inclement Weather

On inclement weather days (i.e., snow days) Y-Pals program hours will be determined as follows:

- If school does not open in the morning, Y-Pals will not be provided.
- If school closes during the regular school day or after school activities are canceled prior to 12pm, Y-Pals in the afternoon will not be provided.
- If weather becomes bad during the program, staff will call parents to arrange early pick-up, if possible. Staff will stay with children until they are picked up by parent/guardian or authorized individuals.
- Child care sites will follow established emergency procedures for each building. You may request a copy from the school site.

School Break Days

On most days Unit 5 schools are not scheduled to be in session, the YMCA will host a full day of activities from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM for children ages 5 through 12. Activities will include arts and crafts, structured games, swimming, group games, Legos and free play. Children attending should bring a lunch, drink, swimsuit and towel. Participants of School Break Days must pre-register at the YMCA.

There will not be School Break Days on snow days or half days of school; only scheduled full days off.

The 2016–2017 School Break Days fall on the following dates:

August	None
September	6th
October	10th
November	23rd
December	23 rd , 26 th , 27 th , 28 th , 29 th , and 30 th
January	2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 6 th , 9 th and 16 th
February	17 th and 20 th
March	27 th , 28 th , 29 th , 30 th and 31 st

April	14 th and 17 th
May	None

Parental Communication

Regarding conflicts or behavior concerns at home or school, we ask that you communicate anything that may affect your child’s behavior at the Y-Pals site. Please keep us informed of such issues in order to prepare staff to properly respond to your child and be sensitive to your child’s needs. The childcare staff should be informed of resolution strategies arranged between the parents and school for smooth implementation.

Adult Rules of Conduct

Any parent/guardian, authorized person, or site personnel who display any one of the following behaviors will not be allowed at the Y-Pals site:

- Physical abuse, shaking, grabbing, hitting, pushing, etc.
- Verbal abuse
- Alcoholic beverages or drugs
- Smoking at the site

If Y staff suspect a parent/guardian of alcohol/substance abuse or observes child abuse, the police will be called. The Y’s first responsibility is the safety of the child.

Procedures for a Missing Child

The following procedures will be followed by the Y staff in the event a registered child fails to check in at the Y-Pals program after the dismissal of school:

1. Check with the school secretary to see if the child was absent from school due to illness or other reasons.
2. Check with the child’s teacher to see if he/she knows the whereabouts of the child.
3. Ask the child’s teacher or secretary to page the child.
4. Briefly search the school grounds for the child.
5. Call the parents and notify them of their child’s absence.
6. Call the police within 30 minutes of the dismissal of school.
7. Call the Director of Youth Services to inform him/her of the situation.

IEP & 504 Plans

In order to better serve all children, if your child has special needs, an IEP or 504 Plan must be submitted before your child is enrolled in any Y-Pals program to help us assess and staff for any special needs that might be required.

Questions & Concerns

Questions and concerns about the policies and procedures of the Y-PALS program can be directed to the Director of Youth Services, Lisa McCully at (309) 827-6233 or lisam@bnymca.org