



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT<sup>®</sup>**  
**FOR HEALTHY LIVING**  
**FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

# **After-School Program Parent Handbook**

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## **Scottsbluff Family YMCA**



**[ymcaofscottsbluff.org](http://ymcaofscottsbluff.org)**

# **Welcome to the YMCA After-School Program at Gering Public Schools!**

In partnership with the Gering Public Schools we provide a high quality after school program that supports excellence for all participants. We provide services to students pre-school through fifth grade as they work to achieve their greatest potential. The program is located at Lincoln Elementary School.

Participants have the opportunity to engage in educational programming and productive behaviors that promote well-rounded development in academic, career, and life skills. This program promotes the development of the individual and the community as a whole.

This handbook is designed to give a helpful insight into the after school program offered by the Scottsbluff Family YMCA. It includes detailed information about after school program activities, procedures, and policies. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it in a safe place for easy reference during the school year.

The YMCA After School Program at Gering Public Schools strives to provide an atmosphere where children can enjoy, grow, and learn. The staff always welcomes suggestions and ideas that will help us to make your child's time at the after school program beneficial and rewarding. We encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with us anytime.

We invite you to join us on our journey as we strive for excellence and find a new path to a successful future.

If you have any questions about the handbook or if I can assist you and your family in any other way please feel free to contact me anytime.

Sincerely,

Trevor Teichroeb  
Scottsbluff YMCA Associate Director

# YMCA AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM HANDBOOK

The following information should help answer most questions about the program. Please read through this handbook carefully and keep it for future reference. If you have any further questions, please contact the program director.

## **APPLICATION/REGISTRATION:**

Forms are available in the elementary school office or can be picked up at the YMCA front desk. Please pay close attention to the medical information and emergency contacts. We must be able to reach a parent or parent-designated person in case of an emergency.

All paperwork must be completed before a child may attend the after school program.

## **HOURS, DAYS AND MONTHS OF OPERATION**

The YMCA After-School Program operates from school dismissal until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The program begins in August and ends in May. The program will follow the school's calendar and adjust for holidays and early release days based on that calendar.

## **ARRIVAL PROCEDURES:**

Children should proceed directly to the program area following school dismissal or once their bus has arrived to the program location, and check-in with Y staff.

The Y's responsibility for your child begins when:

Your child enters the YMCA after school program space, located in Lincoln Elementary, and they are checked in by Y staff.

## **DEPARTURE AND RELEASE PROCEDURES:**

Parents/guardians must enter the building on the East side of Lincoln Elementary, using the double doors marked with a sign After-School Pick Up and sign their children in and out of our program. Please use the doorbell to get the attention of the staff if needed. This assures child safety and compliance with state child care licensing.

A photo ID may be required for the release of your child. The child will only be released to his/her parent/guardian and/or those adults whom the parent(s)/guardian specifically designate on the enrollment form. Only those designated on the enrollment form will be allowed to modify your information and all changes must be made with the program director.

If parent/guardian is not allowed to pick up a child, the YMCA must have a copy of the court order signed by a judge. Without this documentation, we are obligated to release a child to either parent/guardian, if both are listed on the enrollment paperwork. The Y will only follow what the court order states. In the unfortunate event of a difficult/dangerous custody situation where a court order is in place, please contact the Director to set up guidelines regarding the release of your child. You must have a copy of any court documents regarding the restriction of release of children in our care. Parents are responsible for resolving any issues that may arise from their child's participation in our programs. The YMCA will not get involved in disputes between parents.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY (ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA)**

The Scottsbluff Family YMCA does not require child care staff to receive any additional immunizations in order to work with children. In order to ensure the health and safety of all, employees who work directly with children will follow required procedures to prevent the spread of exposure to disease:

- Wear gloves when handling or cleaning body fluids, such as after wiping noses, mouths, or tending sores;
- Specify that an employee with open wounds and/or any injury that inhibits hand washing, such as casts, bandages, or braces, must not prepare food or have close contact with children in care;
- Remove gloves and wash hands immediately after each task to prevent cross-contamination to other children;
- Exclude the employee from direct care when the employee has signs of illness.

In order to protect the health of all children in our care, please keep your child at home if you notice that he/she begins to show signs of an illness or contagious disease or if he/she feels too ill to participate in a group care setting.

Please let us know as soon as possible if your child has a communicable illness or infection. This will allow us to notify the parents of children attending our program. Children with communicable conditions may not return to care without a note from their physician.

Weather permitting, children go outside every day. We cannot keep one child inside due to illness.

Children with head lice will not be allowed to attend the after school program. In relation to headlice, the Y will follow the same guidelines as your child's school.

If your child becomes ill during the program, we will contact you to pick him/her up. In case of injury, parents will be notified immediately.

## **GENERAL HEALTH PRACTICES**

- Staff perform daily health checks to ensure children are healthy and to note any illness or injury.
- Participants with colds or illness will not be admitted. Please do not put us in the position of refusing your child.
- Participants with head lice will not be allowed to attend the program. Our program follows the same guidelines as the public school system.
- All participants are required by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to have current immunization record information on file. Please let us know immediately if your child has a communicable illness or infection. This will allow us to notify the parents of children attending our program. Participants with communicable conditions may not return to the program without a note from their physician.
- Staff will not be permitted to transport any participants.
- Anyone working with children is required by law to report any suspected child abuse. This includes physical, sexual, emotional, mental abuse and neglect.
- Staff are not permitted to babysit or participate in non-Y organized activities with participants in the program.

## **ILL PARTICIPANTS**

If a participant develops symptoms of a fever of 100.1 while in the program, the following will take place:

- Participants will be separated immediately from the group.
- Parent will be called to pick up participant immediately.
- Cleaning guidelines will be followed immediately in the area the participants was.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

Regular and ongoing medication will not be administered on-site. Arrangements should be made with the school nurse for the child to receive medicine.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

In the case of a medical emergency, we will call 911 and contact the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). Responding emergency medical personnel will make any determinations as to if the child should be transported to a hospital. We will provide them with the information from your child's records as to your choice of hospital and physician. In the event that this information is not specified, the child will be transported to the nearest available hospital.

In the event of a head injury, parent/guardian will be notified immediately. The student will be monitored for symptoms consistent with a concussion following the injury until parent/guardian arrives.

## **PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS**

Parent/guardian notifications may be made in writing via letters, emails, fliers and/or signage at the parent table at check out. Notifications may also be made by phone calls or directly in person by site staff. Open communication is very important to the success of your child's Y experience. Conferences may be requested at any time. Activity schedules and other pertinent information will be available for you to view at the parent table.

Stay up to date with what's going on by adding us on the Remind App!

[remind.com/join/ymcaasp](https://remind.com/join/ymcaasp)

## **DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE PROCEDURES**

Self-management skills and positive social interactions among children and adults are encouraged and maximize everyone's enjoyment of the program. Y programs use positive guidance methods including reminders, distraction, logical consequences and redirection. Self-management skills are taught according to the following guidelines:

- Consistent rules are clearly stated. Children are expected to work and play within known limits.
- Behavior expected of children is age appropriate and based on development level.
- An atmosphere of trust is established in order for children to know that they will not be hurt nor allowed to hurt others.
- Staff members strive to help children become acquainted with themselves and their feelings.
- This will help them learn to cope with their feelings and control them responsibly.
- Child safety is the most important concern of the program; therefore, children whose behavior is dangerous or repeatedly disruptive must be immediately picked up from the program by someone designated through the departure and release procedures. Repeatedly disruptive or dangerous behavior will be discussed with the child's parent/guardian and will result in loss of privileges or activities, suspension or termination from the program.

## **SCHOOL-AGE DISCIPLINARY ACTION PLAN**

All children are entitled to a pleasant and safe environment while participating in this program. The five Y core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, and caring will be used in the after school program.

We expect children to behave as follows:

- Be responsible for personal belongings
- Participate in all activities
- Possess positive and caring attitudes

Follow proper safety procedures at all times, including:

1. Never opening outside doors
  2. Not fighting or using foul language
  3. Not running in school
  4. Not playing in the restrooms
  5. Not playing on or under the tables
- Respect for fellow students and staff
  - Stay with your group and listen to your counselor at all times

The Y cannot serve children who display unacceptable behavior. Children who exhibit any type of behavior which is thought to be unacceptable or unsafe by a staff member and the site lead will be warned to correct their behavior and a telephone call will be made to the child's parent or guardian.

There are no refunds for suspension or termination due to unacceptable behavior.

Unacceptable Behavior (includes but is not limited to):

- Using foul language
- Disrespecting another child or staff member
- Fighting
- Refusing to take part in activities
- Ignoring or disobeying rules of safety
- Running away from group or designated areas
- Public or inappropriate displays of affection
- Defacing property or vandalism
- Stealing

### **Disciplinary Procedure**

1st Incident: Parent will be notified verbally and/or in writing.

2nd Incident: Child will receive a written warning and one day suspension.

3rd Incident/Gross Violation: The action taken is at the discretion of the Program Director, after appropriate consultation with the parent. This may result in suspension or termination of care.

The YMCA considers behaviors such as hitting staff or other students, damaging school property or supplies and running away from the program to be gross violation.



## **SNACKS (FOOD SERVICE PRACTICES)**

An afternoon snack is provided each day that includes a ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetable and whole grains. Water is the primary beverage for our program. When juice is served, it will be 100% fruit juice and will be limited to one 8 oz. serving per day. When milk is served, the milk will be low fat (1%) or nonfat milk. All snacks comply with the USDA program guidelines.

## **ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES AND NOTIFICATION OF POLICY CHANGES**

All enrollment is done by completing an application form and returning it to the YMCA. Forms can be found online at [ymcaofscottbluff.org](http://ymcaofscottbluff.org), your elementary school office, or the YMCA.

The following items are needed to enroll:

- Completed Application Form
- Geil and Northfield students complete online transportation request
- Parent Information Brochure for Licensed Childcare
- ACH card information, DHHS Authorization, or Scholarship Info Attached

Please note that it may take up to 24 hours for paperwork to be processed. Paperwork must be processed entirely before your child may begin the program.

Any policy changes will be provided to participant's parent or guardian in writing.

## **TRANSPORTATION (IF APPLICABLE)**

First Student provided all transportation for Geil and Northfield students to Lincoln to attend the after school program. All transportation concerns should be directed to them. They can be contacted at (308) 635-6214.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

To help us understand your child's needs or accommodations, a meeting must be conducted prior to the child attending the program. We want to make sure our program fits your child's needs and we are able to provide the appropriate care. Please contact the Program Director to set up a meeting with you and your child.

## **PROCEDURES FOR PARENT INTERACTION – VISITING, COMMUNICATION**

You may direct suggestions, concerns, compliments and complaints to the immediate caregiver or the Program Director.

Parents are welcome visitors to our program. Please check daily for posted notices, fliers or other information about program activities. We appreciate input regarding program expectations, suggestions, ideas and comments on ways to improve our service to you and your family.

## **PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEERING**

Parents are welcome and encouraged to participate with their children in a variety of activities.

Three to four times per year, the YMCA will host activities or events designed for your entire family. These events will include opportunities for you to be physically active and to learn more about healthy food choices and nutrition. Please read our newsletters and watch for tips on helping your family be healthy and active.

In order to volunteer in a Y Before and After School Care Program, volunteers must have a clear criminal background check. Volunteers will also need to complete a volunteer application and take the Y online child abuse and prevention training course.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

Staff members are trained in basic emergency procedures. Necessary responses to issues regarding natural disasters (floods, tornados, etc.), hostile situations and fire escape routes are addressed in staff training. Monthly fire drills and periodic severe weather and lock down drills are conducted at sites. In the event of a gas leak, your child will be relocated to a secured off-site location and you will be notified immediately to come pick them up.

If evacuation is necessary, staff members will first move children to a designated safe area or alternate shelter known to all employees, caregivers and volunteers. Evacuation procedures also address the care of children with limited mobility or who otherwise may need assistance in an emergency, such as children who have mental, visual or hearing impairments. Head counts and roll sheets will be utilized to account for children and be conducted by two or more caregivers. At all times, our emphasis will be on keeping children safe. In cases of inclement weather, the Y program will follow specific school district recommendations. If the school is closed or all after school extracurricular activities are cancelled due to weather, the Y after school program will also be closed. If the weather begins to worsen during the day, we will ask you to pick up your child as soon as possible so our staff members may get home safely.

## **BILLING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Scottsbluff Family YMCA requires that payment is made in full prior to service. To ensure a spot and to avoid late fees it is recommended that you schedule payments with an auto-draft. Your payment will be drafted from your account and fees are based on your individual school district calendar year. All early dismissal days and in-service days are included in the fee.

All payments must be made at the YMCA. No payments will be collected at the school site. In the event of program cancellations due to inclement weather, accounts will be credited for days missed due to school out of session.

When withdrawing from the program or putting your draft for the afterschool program on hold, written notice must be turned in to the Y, and must be provided at least two weeks prior to your draft date.

### **Late Pick-Up**

Please call the after school site lead if an unexpected emergency will cause you to be late picking up your child. There is a \$1 per minute charge for children not picked up by the program's closing time.

In the event that a child has not been picked up within 30 minutes of the stated closing time, Y staff members will call Children's Protective Services. In the event that a child is repeatedly left past the closing hour, the Y reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment in the program.

### **Financial Assistance**

The Y is a community-based organization and believes that its programs and services should be available to everyone regardless of age, background, ability or income. The Y offers financial assistance to participants based on your individual financial situation. Limited financial assistance is available to individuals and families who substantiate a need.

Due to the limited availability of funds for after school, families needing assistance should:

1. Apply to the YMCA for financial assistance.
2. Complete a Gering Communities for Kids Scholarship Application.

Both of these applications are available at the YMCA.

## **Y STAFF**

The Y believes that staff training is essential to providing quality programs. Y staff members maintain current First Aid and CPR certifications. Each staff member also completes eight hours of pre-service orientation training and an additional 20-30 hours of training per year. All potential employees are required to pass a drug test, criminal background screening and FBI background check which includes fingerprinting. Y staff members are not permitted to have outside contact with children enrolled in our before and after school care programs. Please do not ask staff to babysit, drop off or pick up your child.

## **STAFF/CHILDREN RATIOS**

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services requires a minimum of one staff member per 15 children. The Y strives for a ratio of one staff member per 10 children. Lincoln Elementary will have at least two staff members present at all times.

## **CHILD'S BELONGINGS**

Children should be dressed for active indoor and outdoor play. A change of clothes is recommended. Parents will supply their children with insect repellent and or sunscreen if necessary. The YMCA After School program will not purchase, provide, or apply insect repellent and sunscreen on participants. Items brought to the program by your child must be labeled and we expect children to be responsible for their personal belongings. Please leave toys, money, video games and players, iPods or other MP3 players, cell phones and anything not allowed by your child's school district at home. The Y cannot credit or compensate for lost, damaged or stolen items.

## **HOMEWORK**

The YMCA recognizes that academic success is important for children who are enrolled in our after school program. YMCA staff members support the parents of program participants by encouraging students to take responsibility for completing their homework. Our schedule will include thirty minutes of designated homework time. During homework time staff members will monitor and work with the students at request, but will not provide one-on-one tutoring. Students will be allowed to spend additional time doing homework during ACTIVITY CENTERS, at parent request. Electronic devices are allowed for educational purposes only during homework help. Parents must sign YMCA's electronic usage permission form, prior to students being allowed to use technology devices within the program.

Homework guidance from the Y staff will include:

- An explanation of the directions
- Reading instructions and giving examples (this does not include grading or corrections to work as to defer to the school's teaching methods)

Please note that Y staff are not responsible for checking the children's belongings for homework or assignments. We also encourage students and parents to review and complete homework together.

## **NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

By choosing licensed child care, you and your family join your child in new experiences and relationships. You, the Program director and the site staff have a responsibility to protect the health, safety and well-being of your child. The Nebraska Health and Human Services (DHHS) is also a part of this partnership.

A copy of minimum standards required for licensing school age and after school programs is available for your review at the school site. You may also request a copy of these standards from your local child care office. A list of these offices may be found on the DHHS website: [www.dhhs.ne.gov](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov) or by calling the Child Care Information Line at 1-800-600-1289. The operation's most recent licensing inspection report is also available for your review at the school site.

DHHS Licensure Unit

Children's Services Licensing

PO Box 94986

Lincoln NE 68509-4986

Lincoln: Nebraska State Office Building

301 Centennial Mall South

14th & M Streets, 3rd Floor

Lincoln NE 68508

Email Address

[DHHS.ChildCareLicensing@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.ChildCareLicensing@nebraska.gov)

## **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION**

The Scottsbluff Family YMCA is committed to keeping all children safe and we make every effort to prevent child abuse. The Y recognizes that child abuse exists in a number of forms, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, as well as child neglect. As mandated reporters, it is our responsibility to recognize and report all suspected child abuse to the appropriate authorities.

To help prevent child abuse the Scottsbluff Family YMCA has implemented the following procedures:

1. For the safety of children entrusted in our care, the YMCA conducts and requires a background check and references for all staff, as well as every person employed in or by our centers and programs.
2. Allegations or suspicions of child abuse are taken seriously and are reported to the police and state agencies for investigation.
3. YMCA programs are structured and observed so that staff and volunteers are never the only adult present with children with the possible exception of emergency situations.
4. Evaluations are conducted with parents regarding day to day experiences, encouraging reports of any event out of the ordinary.
5. Staff are required to report all incidents and/or the disclosure of abuse.

A key to keeping children safe is a child's ability to seek help. They need to know that there are adults at the Y, and at home, who will listen and respond in a supportive way. It is important to be aware that child abusers can be parents, caretakers, friends, neighbors, or even other youth.

1. Talk to your child – Share with your child that he or she can say "NO" to an adult friend, family member, or an older child, if they act inappropriately.
2. Be Proactive – Create an environment that encourages children to share their views and concerns. Then really listen to them. Establish safety rule online and offline.

If faced with your child disclosing abuse, or if there is a situation where you suspect abuse, but are not sure or don't have proof, call the child abuse helpline and get support. Trust your gut and your instincts and take action immediately. If you would like to report a suspicion that a child has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed by abuse or neglect, call the Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-652-1999. The website is <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Child-Abuse.aspx>. IF YOU BELIEVE A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER OF HARM, CALL 911 FIRST. Thank you for helping us keep our children safe.