



**PRINCETON FAMILY YMCA
MY AFTER SCHOOL HOME PROGRAM
LAWRENCE AND PRINCETON SCHOOLS
PARENT HANDBOOK**

PRINCETON FAMILY YMCA

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS- PRINCETON AND LAWRENCE SCHOOLS

OFFICE STAFF AND SITE CONTACT INFORMATION

YMCA Youth and Family Director:

Paul Zeger
(609)497-9622 ext 212
pzeger@princetonymca.org

YMCA Associate Youth & Family Director:

Roseann Conway
(609)497-9622 ext 222
rconway@princetonymca.org

Littlebrook Elementary

Site Director: Carissa Bowen - Site Cell Phone: (609)468-1284*

Johnson Park Elementary

Site Director: Peter Stahlbrand - Site Cell Phone: (609)731-1373*

Ben Franklin School

Site Director: Betty Daniels - Site Cell Phone: (609) 423-9973*

Eldridge Park School

Site Director: Nicole Bates - Site Cell Phone: (609) 423-9952*

Lawrenceville School

Site Director: Charles Sumners - Site Cell Phone: (609) 240-7225*

Lawrence Intermediate

Site Director: Matthew Boyd - Site Cell (609) 423-9655*

Slackwood School

Site Director: Jayne Dibella – Site Cell (609) 423-9017*

Site cell phones are on from during after school hours

Please use these numbers in case of emergencies, changes in your child's daily schedule or if you are running late for pick-up.

Introduction

The Princeton Family YMCA is pleased to welcome you to our After School Program. We are so happy that you would entrust your most precious possessions, your children with us. This booklet will hopefully answer many of your questions that you might have regarding the center. If you should have any questions that are not addressed in this manual, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our door is always open.

YMCA After School Mission

To promote the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility in a safe, friendly & nurturing environment that allows children the opportunity to develop to their greatest potential academically, socially and spiritually.

The Princeton Family YMCA is devoted to children. We are licensed by the New Jersey Division of Youth & Family Service (NJDFYS). Our goal is to help children develop to their fullest potential in a safe and positive environment, as well as support and strengthen the family unit.

The YMCA is a value-based association. Therefore, everything we do encourages and develops your child's confidence, self esteem, sense of community, and leadership skills. As part of our character development program, we strive to teach caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

YMCA After School Objectives

- Provide a safe environment for school-aged children from school dismissal until parent pick-up on a daily basis.
- Provide the children with opportunities to have experiences that stimulate physical, social, intellectual and emotional development.
- Create and maintain a partnership with parents, family members and the hosting school site.

ENRICHMENT CLASSES

Your child will have the chance to join enrichment activities that promote basic skills and higher-level thinking above and beyond the After School Program (cooking, dance, computers, etc.) These enrichments will be made available to all children enrolled in MASH. There will be no additional fee for these programs—a schedule will be designed and made available.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special days for children and can be celebrated in a variety of ways. Parents can make arrangements with our staff to bring a special snack to celebrate with the group.

Invitations to parties outside the YMCA and MASH can to be given out at the Site if the **entire group** is to be invited.

FUNDRAISING

During our program year, we will run fundraising events. Monies raised through these events will go towards the Y's Strong Kids Campaign goal. Participation for these events is on a volunteer basis..

PARENT INFORMATION

E-mail BLASTS will be sent out bi-monthly to keep parents informed as to what is happening at MASH. Please take time to read these updates. Please take time to read this board daily and make sure we have your e-mail (for emergency info as well). All program information & updates will also be at sign out at each site as well as on our website at www.princetonymca.org.

PARENT VISITATION

Our YMCA After School programs have an open door policy for families. We welcome your visit at any time. You have unlimited access to the After School Program for the purpose of contacting your child and/or assessing the care provided. Please notify the Site Director or Associate Youth & Family Director of your presence upon arrival.

HALF DAYS

The YMCA After School Program will operate on half days from dismissal until 6pm. Staff will be on site read to receive kids when they are dismissed from their classrooms much like a normal day. Pick up will still be by 6pm!

Y ZONE

Y ZONE will take place on days when schools have scheduled days off (in service, etc.). This is when we provide a **full day program** for your child.

Hours: 8:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.

Full Facility: \$40/day

Program: \$50/day

Sign up sheets will be posted at your child's site prior to the scheduled day off. You must sign up by the posted deadline in order for your child to attend. No child will be accepted if not signed up and paid in advance. It is the parent's responsibility to sign-up for these days, even if it is your child's regular day.

These sign-up sheets are taken down by the deadline date so that we may do our staffing. Please pay attention and adhere to these deadlines.

Y ZONE days are open to the public. Sign up early in order to reserve your space for your child.

If your child is signed up and not going to attend, you must call the YMCA by 8:30 am at (609)497-9622 ext 204 or 207, to let us know they will be absent.

Parents must **sign their child(ren) in and out** during full day programs. No child is to be dropped off in front of the YMCA.

When programs are at the Y, children are to bring with them:

- Bathing suits and towels
- Lunch and Drink (no glass please)
- Sneakers (we play in the gym and outside)
- Play clothes (we may do messy art projects)
- Jackets, in winter

OTHER INFORMATION

Our After School Programs are New Jersey state licensed. It is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS). A copy of our current license is posted at each site.

Parents are responsible for any damage imposed by their child to the program area, YMCA property, activity grounds, buses or other YMCA activity areas.

The YMCA reserves the right to dismiss any child from the program who is harmful or a threat to the wellbeing of other children and/or staff. All children must comply with program rules, regulations and policies.

AFTERSCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admission Policy

Our YMCA After School Program welcomes all children regardless of race, religion or creed. Before you enroll, we strongly recommend that you and your child visit the After School Site. The Site Director or member of our staff will give you and your child a tour of the areas our program will utilize. To ensure a space in the program, we require that your child have a completed application on file, which includes all forms completed in their entirety and a YMCA membership and yearly security deposit are paid.

We offer Full Time (4-5 days), Part Time (2-3 days) & drop in enrollment options to our programs.

Parents must read the Discipline Policy recognizing that it is an important part of the educational process and in creating a good educational environment. Disruption of the program hinders the child and the other students from learning and will be dealt with in a prompt, fair and respectful manner. Parents and children must read and sign the Behavior Policy.

The After School programs service children grades kindergarten through sixth grade. **Pre-registration begins in May for the following school year.** Each child must be registered. Registration information is confidential.

Registration is on a first come, first serve basis. Registration is open all school year. However, please note that there will be a 2 weeks turn around period for your child to start the program. Returning children must re-register each year. There will be no exceptions to this policy. When a program fills to capacity, a waiting list will be established.

The deposit will be used for your June tuition or your child's last month with us if one-month written notice is given. **No credits or refunds can be issued without one-month written notice.** All parents must sign enrollment/payment fee agreement. Security deposits are not required for monthly bank drafts and credit card payments.

Parents must inform us of any changes (new address, phone numbers, work place, change in days attending, etc.). This information must be put **in writing** and emailed or given to the Associate Youth & Family Director.

Proper forms must be completed and handed into the Membership Office before your child's start date or care will not be provided. These include: Child's health history, child's personal history, authorized pick-up form and the parent/guardian behavior policy.

After School Programs start the first day of school. All programs end on the last day of school.

CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMMING

The M.A.S.H. program follows seasonal themes. Most of our group activities, projects and games are planned around the time of year theme. Themes include: the seasons, holidays and other fun and interesting topics. We include special days, parties, and family events throughout the school year. For parties and special days we usually ask parents to volunteer to bring in items for the children. There will be sign ups in advance for these days.

All M.A.S.H. sites have a Site Director and group teachers. The State of NJ licensing ratio is 15:1 and our ratio is well below that. Child safety and supervision is our number 1 priority! After School Site hallways and bathrooms are monitored by staff member at all times. Homework time is available daily, except Fridays.

CATCH PROGRAM



CATCH is a coordinated school health and after school program proven to reduce the rate of child obesity and improve children's health-related behaviors. It is the only coordinated nutrition education and physical activity program with 15 years of solid research and evidence to support its design and content. Every day CATCH is making a difference to children's lives across North America and beyond. We are proud to make this program an included benefit to all MASH children.

HOMEWORK TIME

MASH offers children time to do homework so that they can receive help from our staff and homework is complete upon going home. If you would not like your child to do their homework at MASH, please talk to the Site Director so that other arrangements can be made. We spend roughly 45 minutes on homework daily.

SNACKS

Each child in the After School program will receive a snack daily. If your child has food allergies please make sure that you let the Site Director know. With the YMCA's new Activate America & CATCH initiative we will be serving a new variety of snacks with a "good for you" approach!

In case of severe allergies certain food items (i.e. peanut products) may be restricted from the Site. If this should apply to your child's Site you will be notified by the Coordinator.

HEALTH

YMCA Health History forms are included in the MASH registration packet. No child will be permitted to participate in MASH without a complete Health History form. A new form must be filled out annually.

If your child is ill, please keep him/her home. Any child who is unable to attend school due to communicable health reasons may **not** attend any After School program.

Any child who has/had the following symptoms within a 24-hour period is **not** allowed to attend the program. Please be considerate of the other children and staff by not allowing your child to attend our program for at least one day after illness:

Temperature over 100	Vomiting
Eye Irritation	Diarrhea
Unknown Rash	Sore Throat
Head lice (nit free)	Any contagious illness

If your child complains of illness while at the MASH or if the Site Director feels that the child is ill, they will notify the parent(s) or emergency contact and ask that the child be taken home. In severe cases, a doctor's note allowing the child to return to the program may be required.

Any medications are to be given to the Site Director with a note stating what the medication is, what it is for, dosage and when it is to be given. All medications will be kept with the Site Director. Medications must be in the original container. A medication form must be filled out and given to the Site Director. These forms are available at the Sites.

DO NOT SEND ANY MEDICATION IN YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH BOX. You **must** hand deliver medication to the Site Director.

BABY-SITTING

It is the policy of the Princeton Family YMCA that staff members are not permitted to baby-sit for families in the After School program, so please do not ask them.

VALUABLES AND TOYS

The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items your child brings to MASH. Because we are not responsible for items, please have your child leave their valuables at home (including money, video paraphernalia and toys). Please label all your child's items (books, bags, jackets, coats, hats, etc...) Game boys, PSP's, other video game systems **not** permitted at MASH unless otherwise noted.

FEES AND PAYMENTS

- By enrolling your child in the MASH program, you accept the responsibility of payment monthly.
- All payments are due by the **25th of each month** for the upcoming month. For example, September tuition will be due August 25th – October tuition will be due September 2th, etc. (a full payment schedule will be located on our website)
- Late payments will result in a disruption of your child's attendance at MASH. In addition, your account will be charged a **\$30.00** late payment fee.
- In the event of illness, vacation or other absences such as other after school activities, please contact the after school site by 2:30pm by leaving a voicemail. No credit or refund will be given for missed days.
- MASH ends each day at 6pm - late pick up will result in a charge to your account. **The fee for late pick up is \$30 per 15 minutes beginning at 6:01pm.** Accounts will be charged for any late pick ups that were not pre-arranged by the YMCA MASH Site Director.
- Monthly tuition is the same for every month that school is in session, regardless of the number of days on the school calendar. There will be no reduced fees for months with fewer school days (December, March, April & June) There is never an extra fee for half days, so at the end of the school year, all evens out.
- Princeton Family YMCA offers a financial assistance program to families who meet our qualification guidelines. For a copy of the financial assistance application and guidelines please call the Membership Office. Parents of a subsidized child must complete all required paperwork on time to continue enrollment at the Princeton Family YMCA. If monthly payments are not made, children may not be accepted into the Program.
- Every Child must have a current Full Facility Youth membership while enrolled in MASH. Membership is \$15 per month, and can be used for other YMCA programs in addition to MASH, as well as use of the physical YMCA facility.

Payments may be made in cash, check, credit card, or electronic funds draft. **No payments will be accepted at ASP sites! No exceptions!** Payments can be made at the YMCA Membership Office weekdays 6:00 a.m.—10:00 p.m., Saturdays from 7:00 a.m.—8:00 p.m., Sundays 11:00 a.m.—8:00 p.m. Payments may also be mailed to:

The Princeton Family YMCA
Attn: Roseann Conway c/o After School program,
59 Paul Robeson Place
Princeton, NJ 08540

SCHOOLS

Please let your child's classroom teacher know that your child is in our program by sending them a note stating the days that your child attends our program. The YMCA will notify the school office as well.

Children are expected to arrive at the sites immediately after they are dismissed from school.

If your child has a class trip and will be arriving back at school late it is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to notify the After School Staff.

Children are expected to behave in the school at all times. If a child's behavior becomes a hazard to the other children and/or the staff, the Director has the right to suspend the child from the program. Our behavior policy is clearly posted at each site and listed on the MASH registration forms.

CLOSINGS

The following Holidays our After School and Y-Zone programs are CLOSED: Please refer to our Y ZONE materials Program Offering calendar for additional information on programming.

Thanksgiving 11/25 &26 New Year's 12/31 &1/1
Christmas 12/24 & 26 Good Friday 4/22 Memorial Day 5/30

The snow day policy is as follows:

- If a state of emergency is declared there will be no afterschool day program.
- When school has a delayed opening all afternoon programs run as scheduled.
- When school has a weather-related early dismissal all After School Programs are cancelled. Parents/guardians are responsible for picking up children from their school or informing them to take the bus home.

The school district policies take effect in cancellations and/or early dismissal and delayed openings. We will update our voicemail as soon as we receive word of any cancellations. An email will be sent with this information as well, so make sure our office has your updated email address.

As a tenant in the school building, the YMCA must follow district protocol and policy at all times. This could result in a program cancellation that is out of the YMCA's control.

ABSENCES

Please call site phones before **2:30 pm** if your child will not be attending the program for any reason. Voicemail is checked daily so you may call anytime. You can also email the Associate Youth & Family Director at rconway@princetonymca.org

If your child is sent home from school for illness or any other reason, you are still responsible to call MASH as an absentee.

If your child is sent home from school due to illness or any other reason, they are not permitted at MASH for that day.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Children are allowed to be signed out only by individuals authorized by the children's parents on the MASH registration forms. If there are any additions or changes to these names, please inform the Associate Youth & Family Director in writing or via email. By law, we cannot release any child unless we have authorization from a parent/guardian.

No child will be released to any person(s) or parent who appears to be physically or emotionally impaired, to the extent that in the judgment of the Director, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual. This includes individuals who may seem to be intoxicated or under the influence of narcotics. In such a situation, the Director will attempt to contact the child's other parent or authorized pick-up person. It is important to always list two backups other than the parents. **If we are unable to make an alternate arrangement within one hour of the center closing, the Director will call the New Jersey 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-792-8610) to seek assistance in caring for the child.**

In the event a child is left at MASH past 6:00 p.m. with no contact from a parent, the following procedure will be followed:

- The site director (or other site staff) will call parents, emergency contacts and other authorized pick ups provided at registration.
- With no success at the above, the site director will contact the Associate Youth & Family Director.
- The Associate Youth & Family Director will go to the site; at this time, they will call the Princeton Borough or Princeton Township Police to have someone go to the child's home.
- At 7:00pm, if no contact has been made from parents or emergency contacts, the police will take the child to the appropriate police station. The Associate Youth & Family Director shall accompany this transit.