



Parent Handbook

Hours

Youth Development Center (YDC) operates **Monday through Thursday** each week during the school year. We serve **grades 1-2 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.** and **grades 3-6 from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.** YDC follows the Houston ISD school year calendar regarding program closure days.

Program Philosophy and Goal

YDC's mission is to INSPIRE, EQUIP, and GUIDE Urban Youth to LIVE!

Our mission is accomplished by providing an intensive after-school remediation program for elementary students in grades 1 through 6 in Houston's Greater Fifth Ward. Through technology-based instruction under the supervision of certified teachers, our goal is for all YDC students to improve their literacy and math skills to become more successful students.

YDC is using Imagine Math as our mathematics curriculum and Imagine Language and Literature for all of our students this school year. Our 1st and 2nd graders: (1) develop skills to become independent readers, (2) build fundamental math skills, (3) gain proficiency in technology-based learning, and (4) receive homework assistance. Our 3rd – 6th graders: (1) receive technology-based literacy and math instruction and (2) rotate through reading, math, and homework labs. All students participate in library and enrichment activities throughout the school year.

Procedures for Enrolling Students

Parents or guardians who wish to enroll their child in YDC's after-school program must complete an online application accessed via our website (www.ydc.org), which includes a copy of our Parent Handbook available for download. Once the application is completed and submitted, the Program Director will contact the parent or guardian to confirm their child's enrollment status in the program. Parents will be notified of any policy changes by the Program Director via email and/or hard copy at the time the change is made.

Procedures for the Release of Children

A child may be released only to persons authorized in writing by the parent or guardian. Each parent or guardian must include on the child's application the names and phone numbers of individuals that the parent or guardian authorizes to pick up the child. This form of permission must be updated whenever changes are necessary during the school year. Please tell the designated individual that he/she must show proper identification before the child is released. Parents must also notify staff via email (cphillips@ydc.org) or phone call **in advance** when an authorized person will pick up their child to ensure that YDC is aware of the arrangement. Unless it is an emergency, please finish all phone calls before

entering the building during drop-off and pick-up times. We have a no cell phone policy in the building unless it is used for emergencies.

Tuition and Late Payments

All YDC students attend free of charge to parents/guardians.

Clothing guidelines

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is appropriate for the weather. Flip-flops are not permitted.

Family Participation

Family involvement is important to the success of our program and your child(ren). Families are encouraged to attend as many events as their schedule allows. Parents should attend all events labeled mandatory. The following opportunities for parent involvement include:

- Parent Orientation (Mandatory)
- Fall Open House (Mandatory)
- Fall Literacy Carnival
- Annual Christmas Program
- Spring STEM festival
- Spring Parent Meeting (Mandatory)
- Parent/Teacher Conferences on request
- Volunteer Opportunities

Procedures for Parent Involvement

We encourage parents to participate in YDC activities and events. Parents who wish to volunteer on campus must first pass a criminal background and fingerprint check.

Absences

If your child will be absent, please call or email the office and let us know **by noon** so his/her van driver is aware before making the afternoon pick-up from the school. To maximize the effectiveness of our reading and math tutorial programs on student achievement, we expect children to attend our program **at least three days per week**. If a child is not attending YDC at least 80% of the time without a valid reason (e.g., mandatory school tutorials), we will strongly consider asking that child to leave the program. **Children who are absent for one week without notification will be withdrawn from the program.**

Ill Children

If a child becomes ill, a staff member will contact the parent/guardian. Although we know it can be difficult to rearrange schedules due to sudden illness, it is imperative that a parent/caregiver pick up the student within 30 minutes of notification. Staff will notify parents when a child looks or behaves in a way that is different from normal. If one parent cannot be reached, then the next person on the contact list will be called. Examples that deserve a phone call from parents are when a child appears unusually pale, disoriented, irritable, is in severe pain, or has a fever of 100 degrees or more. If the child's discomfort is an emergency, the parent and an ambulance will be called.

Medication Dispensing Procedures

Parents who have students who require medication during program hours will need to complete a medication dispensing authorization form for each student, which will include the student's name, medication name, expiration date, number of doses, and how many times the medication should be administered. All medications must be in their original packaging with the student's name. There will be no exceptions. Expired medications are unacceptable. YDC does not issue any other type of medication beyond first aid items. If your child needs medication not authorized by a doctor, you will need to complete a dispensing authorization form.

Procedures for the Management of Medical Emergencies and Emergency Information

YDC staff will immediately contact the parent(s) or guardian, while the Program Director contacts emergency medical service. An ambulance will transport your child with the Director to the nearest emergency facility, LBJ Hospital, where he or she will meet the student's parent(s) or guardian. If the parent cannot be reached, then the person on the emergency contact list in the child's file will be called. The Director accompanying the child will bring the application already signed by the parent giving medical clearance to treat the ill child in case of emergency.

Please ensure that all primary and emergency contact information is up to date. You can update contact information at any time by logging into your application and making changes. YDC will receive notification when you have submitted any changes and update your student's files accordingly.

Discipline Practices/Challenging Behaviors

Students who act inappropriately will be advised and redirected. If the behavior does not change, a discipline incident report will be given to the parents. If challenging behavior persists, conversations to try to meet the needs of the student will be made throughout this process and parents will be encouraged to share strategies that may improve the child's behavior. If the behavior is consistently inconsistent with YDC standards, students will be suspended or expelled from the program. Please reference our Discipline and Guidance Policy at the back of the Parent Handbook for more information.

Accommodations

YDC's policy is to support families and children who may need additional accommodation that includes home language and cultural backgrounds. Parents have the right to be informed of all procedural safeguards and rights of appeal in a language easily understood by the public and in the parent's primary language.

Below are ways that our program will partner with families:

- We will provide space to accommodate sessions if specific therapies are needed while the child is in our care.
- Complete supporting documentation from an authorized medical professional for any accommodations related to the child's physical or developmental needs.
- Provide materials and resources in the parent's/child's primary language.
- Provide opportunities for cultural inclusiveness by providing cultural enrichment activities throughout the year.

Nutrition/Meals

YDC students will receive a nutritious snack each day. Our program partners with Discovering Healthy Foods to provide healthy meals and snacks for our students. Our center is a peanut-free zone. Children are not allowed to bring outside food into our facility.

Our office must have a copy of the doctor's report if your child is on a special diet or has a food allergy. An authorized medical official must complete an emergency food allergy plan. This is a requirement of the state.

Immunization Requirements

All students enrolled in YDC are enrolled in a school. Therefore, they have already received all the necessary vaccinations.

TB and Hearing/Vision Testing Requirements

All students enrolled in YDC are enrolled in a school. Therefore, they have already received all the necessary vaccinations and hearing/vision tests.

Procedures For Conducting Health Checks

YDC does not conduct health checks since students have immunization records and other health screenings on file at their respective schools.

Transport

Transportation from school to YDC and to the student's home will be provided for each student residing within five miles of our facility as needed. Schools participating in our program must have five or more students enrolled in our program for YDC to provide transportation.

Water Activities

YDC does not engage in water activities.

Procedures for Providing and Applying Insect Repellant and Sunscreen

YDC does not provide or apply insect repellant or sunscreen on our students.

Animals

YDC does not allow animals on the property.

Excursions

YDC will notify parents or guardians of all scheduled excursions in writing. We will provide transportation to and from any tours/field trips. YDC staff and administrators will always accompany students during field trips. Any student who does not have authorization on file to participate in excursions will not be able to participate in the field trip or stay at YDC during the excursion.

Physical Activity

Our schedule provides opportunities for children to engage in indoor and outdoor physical activities. Children can play outside freely by utilizing various outside toys including hula hoops, jump ropes, footballs, and more. Additional indoor activities to promote physical development will be provided during inclement weather.

Screen Time Policies

Electronic media is only used for educational purposes. YDC will provide students who need technology to complete their homework with access to computers to complete it. Students who bring cell phones to YDC are required to leave their phones at the front desk when they are checked in and their phones are returned to them as they leave YDC.

Parent Communication

Parents will receive a quarterly communication that will highlight student experiences and YDC program updates in a newsletter sent via email and/or hard copy. Parents will also receive three progress reports throughout the school year that will be sent home with all students.

We value feedback regarding our program. Each parent will receive an annual survey after our spring parent meeting to offer any suggestions for our program. The information collected from the survey will be used to improve our program if applicable. The Program Director is also open to receiving parent feedback informally throughout the school year.

Procedures for Parents to Discuss Concerns

YDC has an open-door policy regarding all program stakeholders. Parents are free to request a conference with the Program Director to discuss any concerns as needed. During conference time, parents will receive information on their child's progress and can set goals with teachers based on the results of teacher observations. If parents are not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, the following protocol is to meet with the YDC Executive Director. If parents are still not satisfied, the final process is to schedule a meeting with the YDC Board of Directors.

Procedures for Parents to Visit YDC

Parents are welcome to visit YDC any time during our after-school program's hours of operation to observe their child, program activities, the building, the premises, and equipment without having to secure prior approval.

Termination Of Services

We reserve the right to terminate a child for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Routinely late picking up child or not being present at the time of drop-off
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Serious illness of a child
- Physical or verbal abuse to any person on the property
- Our inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with regulations
- Failure of the child to adjust to the center after a reasonable amount of time

Once a written warning is given, our program's administration has the right to give written notice of immediate termination where extreme circumstances affect the well-being of the provider or other children in attendance. Parents who would like to withdraw their child from the program must do so in writing.

Procedures for Parents to View our Minimum Licensing Standards

Parents can view license reports at any time. The current and recent report will always be posted on the bulletin board located at the back entrance of the establishment.

Contacting the Local Licensing Office

1330 E. 40th Street
Houston Texas 77022
Phone: 713-287-3238

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Website

Parents can access Minimum Standards for child care centers at any time on the HHSC website:
www.hhs.texas.gov

Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Phone: 1-800-252-5400

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Emergencies can often happen without warning. In case of emergencies at YDC, the following procedures will be followed:

Tornado/Severe Weather: In the event of a tornado or other severe weather event, all children will be immediately evacuated to shelter locations within the building. No children will be allowed to leave the Center while a severe weather watch is in effect without the legal parent or guardian. All staff and students will remain in their designated shelter-in-place locations within the building until the bad weather has passed.

Flooding: In the event of receiving an advanced flood warning, the YDC administrative team will contact all parents to advise of the cancellation of our program. If students are in session at YDC, students will be given a meal, and parents will be contacted to inform them of students' early departure.

Fire, Gas Leak, or any other Emergency Requiring Us to Leave the Facility: If emergency personnel require YDC to leave the premises, students, administrators and YDC staff will evacuate the building and take the children to Trinity Gardens Church of Christ located at 7725 Sandra Street Houston, TX 77016. We will call all parents to let them know that we are transporting all students to the church and to pick up their children from the church.

Guns/Weapons

NO weapons or guns are allowed on the premises unless you are a licensed law enforcement officer.

Policy on Vaccine-Preventable Diseases for Employees

YDC does not specify any vaccines that we have determined an employee must have for vaccine-preventable diseases based on the level of risk the employee presents to children by the employee's routine and direct exposure to children.

Youth Development Center follows the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Operational Discipline and Guidance Policy:

Discipline must be: 1) individualized and consistent for each child; 2) appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and 3) directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction, which include at least the following: 1) using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior; 2) reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements; 3) redirecting behavior using positive statements; and 4) using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited: 1) corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment; 2) punishment associated with food, naps or toilet training; 3) grabbing or pulling a child; 4) putting anything in or on a child's mouth; 5) humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child; 6) subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language; 7) placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom or closet; 8) placing a child in a restrictive device for time out; 9) withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior, unless the child is exhibiting behavior during active play that requires a brief supervised separation or time out that is consistent with 746.2803(4)(D); and 10) requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Additional Discipline and Guidance Measures (Only Applies to Before or After School Program (BAP)/School Age Program (SAP) that Operates under 26 TAC Chapter 744)

A program must take the following steps if it uses disciplinary measures for teaching a skill, talent, ability, expertise or proficiency: • ensure that the measures are considered commonly accepted teaching or training techniques; • describe the training and disciplinary measures in writing to parents and employees and include the following information: (A) the disciplinary measures that may be used, such as physical exercise or sparring used in martial arts programs; (B) what behaviors would warrant the use of these measures; and (C) the maximum amount of time the measures would be imposed; • inform parents that they have the right to ask for additional information; and • ensure that the disciplinary measures used are not considered abuse, neglect, or exploitation as specified in Texas Family Code Section 261.001 and TAC Chapter 745, Subchapter K, Division 5, of this title (relating to Abuse and Neglect).