



# PRINCETON FAMILY YMCA SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE FAQs

The YMCA is the nation's largest provider of child care programs, providing family-centered, values-based programs to nurture children's healthy development. The Princeton Family YMCA has been serving children for over 25 years. Each child receives individual attention under the care of experienced professionals. We emphasize the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility in everything we do. Our year-round program offers a range of educational programs that meet each child's individual developmental needs.

The Princeton Family YMCA's Before and After School Program provides children in Kindergarten through 6th grade a safe, secure environment in which to grow and learn. Our Program features a variety of age appropriate activities that are imaginative, enriching and fun, such as learning new languages, practicing conflict resolution among peers, and participating in community service projects.

## 1. Where is the YMCA Program located?

We offer School-Age Child Care programming at the following locations:

Princeton Schools	Montgomery Schools
Johnson Park Elementary (after school only)	Orchard Hill Elementary (before + after school)
Littlebrook Elementary (after school only)	Village Elementary (before + after school)
	Lower Middle School (after school only)

## 2. Are the above locations licensed by the state of New Jersey?

Yes. All our Before and After School locations are required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing, Child Care and Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our sites. Please refer to our Parent Handbook for further details.

## 3. How do I enroll my child?

Registration will be done through our online registration system. Visit <https://princetonymca.org/programs/before-after-school-program/registration> for more details.

#### **4. Where can I obtain the Parent Handbook?**

We always have copies of the enrollment forms and parent handbook here at the YMCA! But, for your convenience, the handbook can be found on our website [www.princetonymca.org/programs/afterschool](http://www.princetonymca.org/programs/afterschool).

#### **5. How far in advance do I need to enroll my child for the start of the school year?**

**To have your child begin the program on the first day of school, you must register by August 15, 2019.**

This is to ensure we have had the opportunity to review your paperwork and get it to your child's school site. Please make sure to inform the main office of your child's school that they will be joining the Before and/or After School Program.

We encourage families to register as soon as possible, as registration is on a first-come, first-served basis based on capacity. In the event capacity is reached, a waitlist will be put in place.

#### **6. What are the hours of Before and After School?**

Before School (Orchard Hill and Village Elementary): 7:15-9:20am

Afterschool (Johnson Park, Littlebrook, Montgomery Lower Middle): 3:00-6:00pm

Afterschool (Orchard Hill and Village Elementary): 3:40-6:00pm

#### **7. What is the cost of Before and After School?**

The cost varies depending on your selection of days per week and which school your child attends (price is adjusted for programs beginning at different times). Please refer to the registration system or the rate chart on our website for specific costs of care.

#### **8. Does the YMCA offer financial assistance for Before and After School?**

Yes! The YMCA offers financial assistance to help families who may not be able to afford the full cost Before or After School Program. In order to help as many people in need as possible, each request for financial assistance is evaluated individually. Assistance is based primarily on family circumstances, hardship, household income and size. Because assistance is available on a first-come, first-served basis, it is strongly advised that you submit your application well in advance for review. Financial aid packets can be found at <http://princetonymca.org/finassist.html>

#### **9. What activities do the children engage in while in the Program?**

Through support, guidance and additional classroom instruction, the YMCA's School Age Childcare Program provides enrichment through arts, music, physical education, sports and nutrition. The Program also promotes a love of learning, social and emotional development, and character and creativity.

There is a broad range of programs and activities in the Before and After School Program including:

- Homework help
- Organized sports and games
- Enrichment programs
- Arts and crafts
- Supervised free play
- CATCH program and Healthy U

## **10. What is the CATCH program and Healthy U?**

CATCH (Coordinate Approach to Child Health) is the nation's leading health promotion and childhood obesity prevention curriculum, guiding kids on how to be healthy for a lifetime. Healthy U is a coordinated school health and after school curriculum, proven to reduce the rate of child obesity and improve children's health-related behaviors.

## **11. Does the staff help the children with homework?**

Our After School Program offers children time to do homework so that they can receive help from our staff and homework is complete upon going home. While our staff can assist your child, specific one-on-one tutoring is not available. If you would not like your child to do their homework during the After School Program, please talk to the Site Director so that other arrangements can be made. We spend roughly 45 minutes on homework daily, except Friday.

## **12. What is the staff/child ratio for Before and After School?**

The Princeton Family YMCA follows the mandated staff to child ratio set forth by the State of New Jersey, which is 1 to 15. Children will be supervised by YMCA Staff at all times, including during outdoor activities, walking through hallways, in the gymnasium etc. Our staff is carefully selected and receive over 30 hours of training, from child development to the importance of being a positive role model. All staff must pass a comprehensive background and reference check prior to employment. In some cases, we also collaborate with the local schools to employ teachers and para-professionals.

## **13. Do the children receive a snack while at After School?**

The YMCA will provide children with a healthy afternoon snack daily. This snack is not a meal. Our typical snacks include granola bars, fruit, cheese, crackers, yogurt, Sun Chips, popcorn etc. An occasional dessert may be served as a special treat.

## **14. What if my child has food allergies?**

If your child has food allergies, please make sure that you communicate with the Site Director and Site Staff. Please clearly list any allergies your child in your child's registration, and any medication they may have for emergency purposes. If your child requires EpiPens or similar medications, the program must have its own copy in its original, labeled packaging. In case of severe allergies,

certain food items may be restricted from the site. If this should apply to your child's site, you will be notified.

### **15. What if my child is absent from school?**

Before the program begins, the site director will receive a list from the school office of all children absent from school that day. Please call the Site Director and Youth and Family office at the YMCA before 2:30pm if your child will not be attending the after school program for any reason when your child is present at school for that day. The site cell phone voicemail is checked daily so you may call anytime, 24 hours a day.

Please do not send in notes to your child's teacher to notify us of their absence. If your child is sent home from school for illness or any other reason, you are still responsible to call the site cell phone as an absentee. If your child is sent home from school due to illness or any other reason, they are not permitted at the After School Program for that day.

### **16. Is there an option for care on days that children are not in school?**

The YMCA offers a program called Y Zone on most days that the children are not in school (i.e. winter/ spring break, holidays, etc.). Y Zone runs from 7:30am-6:00pm. These days will be determined before the beginning of the school year and posted on our website. The schedule and location for each Y Zone is typically available on our website and emailed to parents roughly a week prior to the date. Registration for many Y Zones are available at no additional cost to children with regular before/after school schedules.

### **17. What are the benefits of my child's membership to the YMCA?**

All participants in the before or after school program receive a Full Facility Youth membership as part of your tuition. When you have a membership at the Princeton Family YMCA, you are joining a community of individuals dedicated to building a healthier, happier community. The Y offers healthy living opportunities for your whole family, including state-of-the-art wellness center, a gymnasium (with popular open gym time for children and teenagers!) and an indoor, heated swimming pool. Additionally, the YMCA offers a range of programs including aquatics classes for all ages and skill levels, youth sports programs including a youth basketball league, as well as an ACA accredited YMCA Summer Camp, and more. As a Full Facility Member, your child has early registration rights and discounted rates for these programs.

### **DISCOUNT FOR FAMILY MEMBERSHIP!**

Additionally, if you would like to upgrade your membership to one which includes the whole family, the Y will happily waive your joiner fee (a \$150 value) and provide a monthly discount for the value of your "included" youth membership (\$19/child). For example, a family membership typically costs \$104/month, but a family with one child enrolled in the program would only pay \$85/month. A child with two children enrolled in the program pays only \$66. The discount increases with each additional child enrolled!

For a tour of our facility, please visit us in person at your convenience! You may always visit our website for more information at [www.princetonymca.org](http://www.princetonymca.org).

### **18. Will I be able to switch my child's enrollment days after registration?**

Yes! We require a 7-day notice in writing. An email or written note to the YMCA director is required. When you submit your written notice, the YMCA Director will let you know when your child's enrollment will be successfully changed. We do not charge additionally for this.

### **19. Will I be able to switch the days on a weekly basis?**

You may switch the days your child attends the Program part-time, but this also requires a written notice (email or note) to the YMCA director no later than 7 days in advance. You may change your weekly enrollment days up to 2 times before incurring a \$25.00 fee.

### **20. If I start in the middle of the month, are my fees prorated?**

YES - when you register in the middle of the month, our program enrollment team will prorate the month for you.

We look forward to having your child become part of our Before and/or After School Program and hope that you will reach out to us with any questions or concerns you may have.

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