

Volunteers

Volunteers are a valuable asset to AYS, Inc. Volunteers at AYS programs sites allow for smaller group activities, exposure to new expertise and interests, and valuable adult mentoring for children and youth. These volunteers are required to have an application and criminal check on file with AYS and to provide proof of a TB test and drug screen. Volunteer opportunities are also available at AYS events throughout the year, such as the Mardi Gras Mambo parade and the Diva Fashion Extravaganza.

Homework

Homework time is set aside daily, and children are encouraged to utilize the time. AYS staff monitor the homework area, offering assistance when appropriate. Children, however, should be responsible for completing their own homework. AYS encourages parents to sign a homework contract with their child(ren) and file it with the program director. Peer tutoring and volunteer adult tutoring are sometimes available.

Vacation Sessions

AYS offers programs during winter, spring, and summer breaks. Advance notice as to site and fees are posted in each program. Policies may differ from those of the regular year. Sign up and advance payment are required. **No refunds can be made.**

Snow Day/AM Delay Policy

Snow day and AM delay policies vary by school system. *Please check with the director at the site where your child is enrolled to determine the snow day and AM delay procedures.*

Returning to Classrooms

Principals request each year that students not return to classrooms or any part of the school building after school for any reason.

AYS adheres to the national standards of the National Afterschool Association, Guidelines of YouthPro Association, and The Program Code of Ethics from NAA.

Welcome

The AYS programs bridge the time between school and family life by providing safe, enriching environments with planned activities to help meet the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social needs of your children.

The administration and staff of AYS have prepared this handbook to help you become familiar with AYS programs, policies and procedures. It will also help clarify your responsibilities related to the programs. We offer programs before-and-after school to families who choose them as learning opportunities for their children.

Thank you for choosing AYS for your child's enrichment needs. We hope all children and their families will derive the greatest possible benefit from participation in our programs.

*Throughout this handbook, AYS uses the term parent to indicate parents or legal guardians.

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History

AYS, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation formed to operate school-age (K-8), early childhood and training programs.

AYS started its first program in 1980 at IPS School 70 with a grant from The Indianapolis Foundation. The first AYS early childhood program began in 1985 at First-Meridian Heights Presbyterian Church. The training program began in 1995. Currently, many programs are in operation in Marion, Hamilton, Hendricks, Montgomery and Johnson counties.

In 2004, AYS was approved as a member of the United Way of Central Indiana. As a member agency, AYS upholds the agency certification standards set forth by the United Way.

Since the introduction of national standards for school-age programs in 1998 by the National AfterSchool Association, AYS has achieved accredited status in several school-age programs. All early childhood programs are accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children or NECPA.

Parent fees, grants and contributions from the community and individuals support the operation of AYS programs. Financial assistance may be available.

Philosophy

An AYS program provides a time for children and youth to socialize and learn together in an informal setting. It is a time for children to develop relationships, make choices about program activities, practice and review what they learn in school, and develop new skills. Staff plan fun, activity-based learning experiences that support the Indiana State Academic Standards. The activities reinforce the knowledge and skills needed for in school success.

Confidentiality

The privacy of the children and parents whom we serve is important to AYS, Inc. All information given to AYS, Inc. is considered private and will be held in confidence unless authorized by the parent for disclosure or a court order is issued requiring the release of stipulated information.

child care facilities. A copy of the criteria is available at each program.

Medication

Only medication prescribed by a doctor may be administered at the program. Parents **are required** to complete a special consent form in order to have **non-prescription** and/or **prescription medications** given to their child by AYS staff.

Emergencies

In the event that parents or designated substitutes cannot be reached in an emergency, staff members will contact the medical facility closest to the program site. Parents are responsible for medical expenses incurred in the treatment of their child.

Family Participation

Parents are welcome to visit the program at any time. We welcome you to observe or to participate in an activity such as reading a story, sharing a skill, playing a game or discussing a vocation or hobby. Arrange any special presentations with the program director.

Parents are also encouraged to participate in the self-evaluation process which each program conducts twice per year.

The **Family Advisory Group** provides a support system for the AYS program. All meetings are open to all parents. Contact your Program Director for meeting dates and times.

AYS Staff

AYS staff members have experience in child and youth development. Many have degrees in elementary or early childhood education, social work, or recreation.

AYS offers numerous opportunities for continuing education of its staff in the areas of child development, group dynamics, literacy, physical activities, and health and safety. Staff participate in local, state and national training and workshops. Several staff members have completed certification in Youth Development or Early Childhood Development.

danger to himself/herself or to the safety of others, and the above behavior management techniques prove ineffective, AYS reserves the right to temporarily or permanently dismiss the child from the before/after-school program. While every attempt will be made to include a child with challenging behaviors, the behavior management policy will be followed for all children, even those with special needs.

AYS recognizes the uniqueness of each family situation and strives to work cooperatively with the family unit to provide the best possible care for each child.

Consequences of Consistent Behavior Problems

The following behavior management policy will be enforced when working through a situation with a child whose behavior has become unsafe to himself/herself or to others or whose behavior has become so disruptive as to detract from the overall quality of the program.

1. The staff will discuss the behavior problem with the parents and complete a report.
2. In the chance that the behavior problem continues, the program director will schedule a meeting with the parents to discuss strategies for improving the behavior.
3. Following the parent meeting, both the AYS staff and the parents will continue to monitor the child's behavior. The AYS staff will communicate as often as needed with the parents.
4. In the chance that the problem continues, the parents will be notified by the AYS director of a one to three day suspension or permanent removal from the program.

AYS reserves the right to dismiss a child immediately from a program should the safety of any person or property be in question.

Parent Conferences

Parents may request to schedule a conference with program staff or administration as needed.

Sick Policy

Parents will be contacted if a child is sick or not feeling well during the program hours. Parents will need to pick up their child within one (1) hour of being contacted. To limit the spread of communicable disease, AYS follows the Indiana Code 470 IAC3-4.7-15 exclusion guidelines for

Registration

The following forms must be completed and returned to the program director prior to a child's enrollment in the program:

- *Registration form with registration fee and first week's deposit
- *Health form
- *Parent Orientation Checklist
- *Special needs intake form, as needed
- *Homework Contract, as needed

Summer is considered a separate program. Registration begins in February.

Eligibility

- Any child enrolled in the school may register in the program, as space permits.
- Preference is given to those registering on a full-time basis.

AYS Website and eNews

AYS eNews is an electronic newsletter created to inform parents and the community of AYS news and upcoming events. Content may include break sites, registration information, recent awards, community involvement, health tips and people making a difference at AYS. The AYS eNews Special Edition is published periodically to inform you of specific special events and announcements. Email addresses provided on program registration forms are added to our eNews mailing list. If you do not wish to receive our eNewsletter, please submit a letter of request to our main office or webmaster@ayskids.org, or follow the instructions in the footer of any AYS eNews.

Our Privacy Policy

AYS respects your privacy. We will never sell, rent or give your information to any company. An opt-out link is always provided at the bottom of our eNewsletter.

Orientation

Families are encouraged to attend the orientation session held by the program staff within the first few weeks of the opening of school or complete the parent orientation checklist with your program director.

Payment Policies and Procedures

- Registration fees are not refundable.
- A week's deposit is required upon registration. The fee is applied to the first week of attendance as noted on the registration form.
- Fees are based upon school year schedule. All fees, except daily fees and some morning-only fees, include non-school days, half days, a.m. delays and snow days. Winter and spring break fees are generally separate fees but may be included in certain payment plans. Summer is completely separate.
- Regular fees are charged during weeks in which the following holidays occur: Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas Eve and Day, New Year's Eve and Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day (for summer program). Sign-up is required of all families for participation on non-school days.
- Priority is given to parents needing full-time usage of the program, which includes:
 - Morning Only - 5 days a week
 - Morning & Afternoon - 5 days a week
 - Afternoon Only - 5 days a week
- Part-time use must be pre-approved, and is only available depending upon enrollment and space. A parent who selects the part-time option is required to stipulate the days of the week and to make payment, *regardless of attendance*, prior to each week of service. If a holiday falls on a stipulated day, the parent may select another day that week for the child to attend.
- A ten-session prepaid pass will be available for occasional or emergency use only. This pass may not be used for regular attendance. A pass may be purchased at the Administrative Office (4755 Kingsway Drive, Suite 300, Indianapolis, IN 46205) in person or by mail. (Visit www.ayskids.org for ten-session prepaid pass form.) It may also be purchased at the AYS program. A limited number of passes will be available per program due to space limitations and staffing requirements.

Payment Plans (Not all plans are available in all school corporations. Please check with your program director.) Payment is expected for all plans regardless of attendance.

*Semester and Monthly Plans

Option A: Semester (two equal payments including winter and spring breaks)

parents:

1. Provide a suitable hat and light weight long sleeved shirt for your child's use while outdoor at the program.
2. On water play days, provide an extra shirt for your child to wear over swimsuit.
3. Encourage your child to wear sunglasses that block 100% UVA and UVB rays whenever they are outside.
4. Provide broad spectrum SPF 15 or higher sunscreen with your child's name on it to AYS staff for use 30 minutes before going outside.

Children with Special Needs

To assure each child's needs are addressed, AYS may require a parent to meet with the AYS Director and other Administrative staff before enrolling a child with special needs in an AYS program. It may require that the parent observe the AYS program to determine appropriateness for the child. AYS may limit use of the program (i.e. early dismissal days, whole days, and vacation days) should the program not be able to reasonably accommodate the child's needs. It is required that the Plan of Care form pertaining to special needs be completed at registration in order for your child to attend the program.

Behavior Management Policy

AYS encourages a cooperative relationship among children, staff and families. Should circumstances dictate, we encourage parents to listen to concerns about their child's behavior and work through an agreeable solution with the AYS staff.

Each child shall be treated with respect. The AYS staff will listen to children's concerns and take their feelings seriously. The staff will encourage children to listen to each other and work out their differences among themselves. We model respect and positive behavior. It is the cooperative responsibility of the AYS staff, parents and teachers to help the children learn to respect the rights of each individual in the program, at home and in school.

Inappropriate behavior shall be handled by letting the natural consequences of the misbehavior occur, redirecting the child to another activity, guiding the children through conflict resolution or giving the child time by himself/herself. To preserve the child's integrity and positive self esteem, behavior management shall be accomplished in a non-judgmental and positive manner. However, if a child presents a

the program; notify the director of the change in authorized person for pick up; write a note of verification, if possible; notify the **newly-appointed pick-up person** that he/she will be asked to show photo ID and sign a release form at the time of pick up.

Children's Responsibilities

- Respect the staff and each other.
- Respect the rights and property of others.
- Learning to accept the consequences for their own actions.
- Sharing with children in the program.
- Using appropriate language.
- Respect the rules and guidelines of AYS and the school.
- Report promptly to the AYS program after school.
- Remain with AYS at all times unless prior arrangements have been made with AYS.
- Return materials and equipment to the appropriate place.
- Sign in at AYS prior to attending other activities if they will return to AYS after the activity ends.

AYS is not responsible for loss or destruction of personal items.

Parents' Responsibilities

- Respect and adhere to policies and procedures established by AYS and the school.
- Follow all sign-in/sign-out procedures to assure the safety of each child.
- Keep changes in personal information about the family and child current & communicate often with program staff.
- Make all payments according to your parent agreement.
- Inform staff of absences or schedule changes concerning your child. Please write a note to the AYS director if your child will attend another activity on some days.
- Custodial situations can cause confusion for the staff and the child(ren). AYS asks that the custodial parent communicate in detail with the staff about circumstances that relate directly to the care of the child in our program.
- Relate any special information about your child that may affect his/her well being in the program. This will be held in confidence.
- Our Sun-Smart policy has been developed to ensure that all children are protected from skin damage caused by harmful UVB and UVA rays of the sun. This policy will be implemented throughout the year, but with particular emphasis March through October.
- Sun Smart recommendations (policy available upon request) for

Option B: Regular monthly schedule (9 equal payments without winter and spring breaks) August and June are paid weekly

*Weekly Plans

Option C: Regular weekly fee without winter and spring breaks (includes whole days, half days, snow days and delays)

Option D: Part-time plan: Attending 3 days or less per week.

Option E: Ten-session prepaid pass (for occasional or emergency use only).

- Child must be registered to purchase pass.
- Prepaid for use in an elementary/middle school program; Valid for school year only
- No refunds
- Non-transferable
- Not valid for use on break periods
- Not valid in kindergarten/early childhood programs
- Usage is defined as: one (1) punch per am or pm use and two (2) punches per half/whole day use
- Limit of two ten-session passes per semester

Change of Plan

After September 1, a \$15 fee will be charged for each attendance plan change at time of request. A two-week notice is required for program withdrawal and reduction in days attending. An increase in days attending can be made immediately, space permitting, as approved by the program director.

Payment Schedule

AYS encourages parents to use the credit card option. Contact the main office or the program director for details.

- **Semester** fees are due on the first day of attendance for each semester.
- **Monthly** fees are due on or before the **first** of the month. If payment is not received by the 5th of the month, the child may not return until fees are paid or a payment plan is signed.
- **Weekly** fees are due on **Friday for the next week**. If payment is not received by the following Monday the child may not return until fees are paid or a payment plan is signed.
- Late pick-up fee: After 6 p.m., a late fee of \$1.00 per minute, according to the AYS clock, is assessed. The fee is paid directly to the staff on site. (Do not include this fee with your regular payment.) If you have an emergency, call the AYS director.

- Withdrawal: Two weeks' written notice in advance is required for withdrawal from the program. Payment is due regardless of your child's attendance.

Delinquent Payments

- If payment is not received by the appropriate due date, the child may not return to the program until fees are paid or a payment plan is signed.
- AYS reserves the right to fill a slot vacated due to non-payment or non-attendance. The school principal and teacher will be notified that the child is no longer a part of the program.
- If your family has an emergency that may affect the prompt payment of fees, please call the AYS finance office.

Financial Assistance

- Financial assistance may be available, based on a sliding fee scale. Contact the AYS office (317) 283-3817 for an appointment.
- Regular fees are due until approval of the financial application.
- Families receiving voucher assistance are required to swipe in and out on a daily basis. AYS reserves the right to refuse service to any family for non-compliance of the voucher requirements.

General

- Families with more than one child registered in an AYS program may be eligible for a family discount. The full fee is charged for the child receiving the most care during the week. A discount will be applied to each additional registered child's fee. A registration fee is required for each child.
- Sharing payments by custodial parents is to be arranged by the parents. A single payment record is maintained by AYS.
- Payment must be by check, money order, or credit card. **Cash is not accepted at programs.** Make checks payable to AYS-(name of the program.) *Example:* "AYS-Greenbriar." A canceled check is your receipt. If you are interested in paying by credit card, please contact the AYS Main office or check our web site at www.ayskids.org.
- Accounts are to be cleared by the end of December and May, and by the end of the summer program to be eligible for services at the beginning of the next session.
- A **\$25.00** fee is charged for each returned check or denied credit card payment. After 2 returned checks, parents will no longer be able to pay by personal check.

- Tax statements are not automatically distributed.

All-Day Sessions

- Programs may be combined on non-school days. Check the parent information center at your program to verify the location. In order to adequately staff all-day sessions, AYS requires that parents sign up in advance. Fees are payable regardless of attendance.

Field Trips & Extra-Curricular Classes

- Field trips or special parties may require an extra fee. *Please pay this fee separately.*
- Extra-curricular classes: An extra fee is required. *Participation is not mandatory. Once a commitment is made, however, the fees are required whether the child is present or not. The fees are payable to the instructor of the class and not to AYS.*

First Day of Attendance

- **Send note to child's teacher** verifying your child's participation and schedule of attendance in the AYS program. This procedure is extremely important for the afternoon children.
- Ten-session prepaid pass or emergency attendance: Send a note to your child's teacher each time the child is to attend AYS. Alert the AYS director of your child's attendance ahead of time.

Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedures

- **Parents must escort their child to the before-school program** and sign the child in. AYS cannot allow children to be "dropped off" on school grounds.
- Only those persons authorized on the registration form may sign children out of the program.
- Children may not sign themselves out of the program.
- **A signature or initials must be used** when a child is signed in and out of the program. *Example: E. Jones or ERJ. Not: "Mom" or "Dad."*
- Identification may be requested at any time when signing children out of the program.
- No phone-in authorizations for pick up are accepted except in an emergency. If that emergency occurs, follow these procedures: Call