

Armed Services YMCA Fort Bragg Parent Handbook



ARMED SERVICES YMCA

"STRENGTHENING OUR MILITARY FAMILY"

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**Armed Services YMCA
2-2411 Rodney Trail
Fort Bragg, NC
(910) 436-0500**

This handbook was developed for families to provide information about the policies and procedures governing the operation of the Armed Services YMCA Before and After School Care Program. New families are asked to read the handbook in its entirety and submit an acknowledgement of receipt at the time of enrollment. We hope your experience with the center will be rich and rewarding to both your child and your family. Welcome!

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1. Introduction

ASYMCA Before and After Care serves the charitable, educational, recreational, social and inspirational needs and interests of the children of military personnel and other low-to-moderate income families. Simply stated, ASYMCA programs provide quality child care, youth outside school options, and school support services that help service members and their families, and Department of Defense (DoD), civilians focus on their profession. Knowing that their children are well cared for by professionally trained and educated staff.

This manual serves as a tool for ASYMCA staff members to provide consistent and predictable delivery of child and youth programs. It outlines a systemic approach to implementing an effective ASYMCA program by prescribing “how to” information on routine operations and procedures. Each ASYMCA site is unique, not every section of this manual will apply to each branch. Branches are encouraged to use this information as a baseline of services provided and utilize more stringent policies and procedures as required by state or accreditation standards.

Goals

The ASYMCA youth programs provides quality, accessible, affordable childcare and is dedicated to providing a safe and healthy environment, positive and enriching learning experiences and loving care for children. When a child is enrolled in the ASYMCA, parents and family join the child in new experiences and relationships. The families, the Site Director, and the ASYMCA staff have the responsibility to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of the child.

The ASYMCA staff fosters the aforementioned needs by utilizing a program based on the benefits of play and the relationships formed through interactions with each child. This program utilizes a partnership with each family to build an accurate picture of strengths, abilities and overall development. The environment is carefully planned and organized to maximize opportunities to explore and learn.

Quality

ASYMCA are frequently inspected to ensure the safety, health and well-being of children and youth enrolled in the programs provided. In addition, each ASYMCA is required to be licensed by the state that they reside in to validate that quality standards are maintained through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Accessibility

Through partnership with the military installation, the ASYMCA ensures that a sufficient number of spaces and support services are available to meet the needs of the installation's service members and families. This means that while every effort to provide the right number of spaces in the right settings and in the right age groups is made, the ASYMCA is not required to, and may be unable to, meet the total demand.

Affordability

ASYMCA ensure fees are affordable for the family. Fees are based on the programs the child is registered for with the ASYMCA. The fee schedule for B&A at the ASYMCA is listed below.

Before Care only.....\$28.00
After Care only.....\$55.00
Full-care.....\$75.00

Overtime Charges after ASYMCA Closure

ASYMCA parents who do not pick up their child prior to center closing hours may be charged an additional fee for their tardiness. The fee amount will be determined at each branch. \$1 per minute after 6:30pm.

ASYMCA Operations

Armed Services YMCA maintains programs and hours of operation that serve the needs of today's military families.

Hours of Operation

ASYMCA hours of operation vary by location and service provided. Hours of operation are determined by the Executive Director and based the needs of the families served as well as the branch of service supporting the center.

Hours of Operation 6:00-8:00 am (Morning care)

2:50-6:30 pm (Afterschool)

School Age Care Program

School Age Care, provided by trained staff, is for students aged 5-13 years. It provides before and after school programs for elementary and middle school age students and before and after care for who attend school. The School Age Program includes, but is not limited to, academic and homework assistance, character development and other activities that encourage responsible behavior and help students to deal with the challenges associated with living in a military family.

Drop in Care

Program provides short-term childcare for parents through a drop in care program. Staff provide developmental and age appropriate activities using the same teacher to student ratio requirements followed in other programs.

Temporary/Emergency Care.....	20.00 per day
Weekly Morning only.....	28.00
Weekly Aftercare only.....	55.00
Weekly Full care.....	75.00

Transportation Program

ASYMCA provides transportation to Johnsonville Elementary School in the mornings and pickup from Johnsonville in the afternoons.

Parent Participation

Parent involvement is an important part of Youth programs. Parents are encouraged to read the material provided and ensure understanding of the parent and staff requirements and responsibilities before the child is enrolled in the

Programs. Once families have a child enrolled, staff emphasize the importance of reading notices, special requests, notes, and other materials the staff and administration provide.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer with the youth programs. Whether this is during the school year or camp season. The process of volunteering during this time is to fill out a background check through our Ft. Bragg office. You may reach out to the Site Director or the Program Director for more information.

Standards of Conduct & Accountability

The Standards of Conduct and Accountability include staff roles and responsibilities, procedures for guidance and discipline, touch policy and the accountability of children. The contents of the Standards of Conduct and Accountability are incorporated in the New Employee Orientation Training and Identification and Reporting Training. Employee trainings are recorded on the employees/provider's Individual Developmental Plan (IDP) and additional annual training is required.

Touch Policy

The ASYMCA recognizes the important role of physical contact in nurturing and guiding children. As a result, appropriate and inappropriate touching is specifically defined and staff are trained on what constitutes these behaviors.

Inappropriate Touching & Behavior

The ASYMCA does not tolerate inappropriate touch and behaviors. These include, but are not limited to, the following examples: Coercion or any other form of exploitation of the child's lack of knowledge, Satisfaction of adult needs at the expense of the child, Violation of laws against sexual contact between adults and children, and An attempt to change child behavior with adult physical force often applied in anger or frustration. Examples of inappropriate behavior include: Kisses, Corporal punishment, Slapping, Striking or pinching, tickling for prolonged periods, Fondling or molestation, pulling hair, or Lap sitting and full body hugs.

Behavior, Discipline, Suspension & Expulsion

ASYMCA care providers use positive discipline as much as possible, based on an understanding of individual needs and development levels. Simple, understandable rules have been established so that every child knows what is expected of him/her. Discipline includes such methods as diversion for appropriate behavior rewards. Children engaging in persistent displays of inappropriate behavior are referred to the Site Director. At this time, parents are contacted to assist in the establishment of an intervention program. Children are required to follow behavioral expectations for their safety and that of those around them. However, if a child does not follow instructions, other consequences may apply, to include suspension for two days or even expulsion from the program depending on the severity of the offense. Each ASYMCA has a Child Behavioral Expectations form that parents read, sign and date during the enrollment process.

Techniques for Dealing with A Dissatisfied Customer

Listen to the customer/parent and allow him/her time to say everything he/she has to say before you interject. Acknowledge his/her viewpoint or inconvenience. Get right to a solution; do not dwell on the problem. Look for ways to turn things into a win/win solution to prevent win/lose situations. If you are unsure of a solution or a customer/parent is not satisfied, refer him/her to your supervisor. Use the B.E.S.T. (Be Calm, Empathize, Solve and Thank) strategy to successfully resolve challenging customer situations.

2. General Operations

Daily Admittance

Children must be brought to the Program, registered and picked up by the parent or legal guardian or anyone on the pickup list. The first time someone on the list picks up the child they must bring their ID with them and check in with the Site Director.

The Site Director and staff are responsible for ensuring the proper release of children. If ASYMCA personnel does not recognize an individual, they must verify the identity of the individual and ensure the individual has the authority to pick up the child by checking their driver's license and also checking pickup list as well as notifying first the Site Director.

No parent may be denied access to his or her child or the right to pick up his or her child from the ASYMCA program unless a copy of the custody agreement that relinquished such right(s) is on file at the center. All persons picking up a child must show a driver's license.

Sign in & Sign out Policy

Parents sign children in and out of the facility using the sign in/out sheets provided at the entrance of the gym.

Daily Health Screening

ASYMCA personnel screen each child before admission and prior to the parent's departure.

ASYMCA personnel shall inquire as to whether the child has had: Nausea, vomiting or severe diarrhea (three (3) or more episodes within the previous 24 hours). Fever-axillary temperature greater than 101°. Inability to participate in daily activities. If any of the above symptoms are noted or reported, and the care provider determines that the child needs to be temporarily denied service, parents will be advised to: Care for the child at home until symptoms have subsided and the child is able to participate in daily activities. Consult their primary source of medical care for further instructions.

Screening for Child Illness

Children who appear ill or show visible signs of fever are not permitted to attend the ASYMCA when they exhibit the following symptoms: Temperature greater than 100° F. NOTE: Temperature requirements may vary by state. Centers reference and adhere to state requirements if the temperature required is lower than ASYMCA requirements. Criteria for children and adults who become ill during the influenza season (1 October – 31 May) include: Having a fever (100° F axillary or oral) and at least one respiratory symptom such as a runny nose, cough, congestion, sore throat, intestinal upset and/or diarrhea, NOTE: Individuals may be infected with the flu and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. Inability to participate comfortably in daily activities. This may include, but is not limited to, acute change in behavior, such as, lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying or difficult breathing. Impetigo - Red, oozing erosion capped with golden yellow crust that appears stuck on skin. Scabies - Crusty, wavy, ridges, and tunnels in the webs of fingers, hands, wrist and trunk. Ringworm - Flat spreading ring-shaped lesions. Chickenpox - Crops of small blisters on a red base

that become cloudy and crusted in 2-4 days. Head lice - Small insects or white egg sheaths (nits) in hair. Culture proven Strep infections that have not been under treatment for at least 24 hours. Conjunctivitis (pink eye) - Red, watery eyes with thick yellow discharge. Symptoms of other contagious diseases such as measles, mumps and hepatitis. Pinworm infestation. Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease – Characterized by sores in or on the mouth, hands, feet and sometimes the buttocks and legs. The virus spreads easily through coughing and sneezing. Diarrhea - Defined by watery stools or decreased formation of stool that is not associated with changes of diet. Exclusion is required for all diapered children whose stool is not contained in the diaper and toilet trained children if the diarrhea is causing soiled pants or clothing. In addition, diapered children with diarrhea should be excluded if the stool frequency exceeds two or more stools above normal for that child, or loose or watery stools associated with fever, or if the child's ability to participate in program activities is affected.

Child Pickup Due to Illness

If a child becomes ill or injured while at the center, the parent/guardian is notified immediately and is asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. The child is placed in the isolation area until the parent arrives.

Notifications to Parents

The Site Director ensures parents receive pertinent and timely information relating to the care of their children. If the Site Director is not there, the staff will notify the Site Director, and then call the parents.

Children with Special Needs

The ASYMCA Before and Aftercare program cares for family members with special needs. Children are screened for special needs at their initial registration and annually. Parents with special needs children complete the Services Screening Tool for special needs at their initial registration and annually thereafter.

Placement of special needs children is considered on an individual basis and in accordance with each state's guidance. Special needs children are initially observed for a minimum of two hours with the parents present. After a successful initial observation, the child may be accepted on a trial basis of 1 week. During this time, the Site Director/Staff determine how the child functions in a large group environment and whether they can provide appropriate care for the child within the center.

Upon identification of a special need, the following documentation may be required:

Food Allergy – requires a Special Diet Statement (SDS) and Allergy Medical Action Plan (MAP) if rescue medications are required. This form must be signed by a credentialed medical provider. These forms outline the specific food allergy and nutrient equivalent foods that may be substituted.

Food Intolerance - requires an SDS signed by a credentialed medical provider.

Please note, “Intolerance” of foods does not include food preferences such as vegan meals or organic food. ASYMCA programs do not have the capability to provide or prepare food based on preference.

Respiratory Diagnosis (Asthma or Reactive Airway Disease) – requires a Respiratory Medical Action Plan signed by a physician.

Seizure Disorder (Epilepsy, Seizures or Febrile Seizure) – requires a Seizure Medical Action Plan signed by a physician.

Diabetes – requires a Diabetes Medical Action Plan signed by a physician. All other conditions requiring accommodations, require relevant medical documentation.

Field Trips

Select ASYMCA provide field trip opportunities to children during the summer. These opportunities provide children with a chance to experience new things, strengthen bonds and learn valuable life skills in real-world environments. Field trip documentation is maintained onsite and includes: Participants (children, staff, bus drivers Date(s) of field trip, Time of field trip (departure from and arrival back to the facility), Destination of field trip, and Signed parental permission slips for any planned on and off-site excursion.

Field Trip Expectations for Director/Staff

Provide guidance, enforce policy, and coordinate with the appropriate agencies to ensure children, staff members, contractors, and volunteers participating in field trips are safe and secure. Ensure accidents, deaths, serious injuries and incidents that could result in a claim are documented and reported. Ensure ASYMCA personnel closely supervise all ASYMCA programs, activities and field trips. Ensure all field trips and other activities (indoors and outdoors) are assessed and

monitored before and during the field trip or activity. Complete a safety-risk assessment and coordinate a force-protection risk assessment, approved by the force-protection officer. Ensure there are enough ASYMCA staff members for the activity or trip based on the ages of the children and group sizes. Ensure activities are appropriate to the ages and abilities of the children. Ensure parents are notified and have given written permission for participation for all field trips. Document for all field trips that will include the date and time of the trip, destination, a list of the children attending, and a list of participating staff.

Field Trip Expectations for ASYMCA Direct-Care

Staff Members Help the director complete risk assessments for all field trips and other activities (indoors and outdoors). Be responsible for the safety and security of all children participating in the field trip or activity regardless of their age, program or location.

Supervise the entire location of the field trip by being positioned near activities, restrooms, exits, major pieces of equipment and other places where children are present. Ensure appropriate adult–child ratios are maintained at all times. At least two CDC staff members will be with children at all times. Ensure that stocked first-aid kits, food, water and sunscreen (when appropriate) are available on field trips.

Parental Permission

A signed parental permission slip is required for all excursions when children are taken off the premises. Permission slips include trip location, the need to bring special items or money and other pertinent information.

Field Trip Transportation

Children are transported in ASYMCA buses. Bus drivers must complete the Redwoods Safe Drivers class, use the Safe Driver Checklist, have a valid driver's license and complete an annual physical exam which grants medical approval to drive. ASYMCA staff member inspects vehicles for cleanliness and the presence of trash or hazardous materials before allowing children to board. Inspections include floors, seats, seat pockets, overhead racks, and toilets if present. Staff search each seat on the bus at the end of the trip to ensure all children have departed the bus.

Supervision

All field trips are supervised by a director. A meeting place for regular mandatory accountability checks is established. All children and adult staff members or volunteers must be accounted for at all check-in and meeting times. One adult staff member or volunteer must be present at a designated meeting place for the duration of the field trip in case of an emergency or to help if needed. Lower adult-youth ratios may be necessary and should be determined locally. Required ratios may vary by state. 1-15 ratio are followed.

Field Trip Safety

At least one ASYMCA staff member supervising field trips must be certified in CPR. ASYMCA staff members carry first-aid kits, previously tested communication devices (walkie-talkies, radios, cell phones). Staff members are made aware of, and provided training on, safety rules and regulations specific to the type of activities being conducted. One example may be the rules and regulations posted at the facility. Staff members are trained in their supervisory roles and responsibilities and are positioned in locations to assist and observe all children. A system to quickly account for all participants on the field trip (for example, colored wrist bands or other readily visible identification) is implemented. The buddy system is used to pair children at regularly documented intervals (for example, aquatic activities every 15 minutes). An Emergency Action Plan that includes a meeting point for children who get separated from the group, sustain an injury or have an emergency is established.

Participant Attire

ASYMCA staff ensure that all field-trip participants dress appropriately and use all mandatory safety equipment necessary for the scheduled activity. Participants are required to wear closed toe shoes on all field trips and while at the site.

Inclement Weather during Field Trips

ASYMCA staff create inclement-weather plans for all field trips. When applicable, transportation is coordinated to support the inclement weather plan.

Guidance & Discipline

ASYMCA personnel working with children (ASYMCA staff, volunteers, and other personnel working in ASYMCA programs) are trained to use appropriate guidance techniques which include: Helping children/youth learn to develop self-control and express their feelings in acceptable ways (e.g., when appropriate, helping them solve their own problems and soliciting their input in rule making). Modeling appropriate behavior and conflict-resolution skills and using positive language. Demonstrating realistic, age-appropriate expectations of behavior and interacting with children accordingly. For example, a 6-year-old should not be coached in the same manner as a high school player. Disciplining in a consistent way based on an understanding of individual needs and behaviors of children at various developmental levels. Establishing simple, understandable rules so that expectations and limitations are clearly defined. ASYMCA staff discipline in a constructive manner, including such methods as: Separation of the child from the situation for redirection. Praise for appropriate behaviors. Physical restraint is not used unless absolutely necessary to prevent injury to the adult or child. Utilizing “Time Outs” to provide separation of the child from all activities to help the child recover their self-control. “Time out” is not punishment and is not used as punishment, nor does it involve separation from the group. “Time out” requires a staff member to stay close to the child and engage in calm conversation until the child has recovered.

Inappropriate Punishment

Spanking, pinching, shaking, or other corporal punishment, Isolation for long periods, Confinement in closets, boxes or similar places, Binding to restrict the movement of mouth or limbs, Humiliation or verbal abuse, Deprivation of meals, snacks, outdoor play opportunities, or other program components, or Restrictions of use of specific play materials and equipment or participation in a specific activity should be appropriate to the developmental age of the child. Restrictions are permissible to ensure the safety of others or as part of the strategy to help the child learn self-control.

Accountability of Children

ASYMCA Director's and staff are accountable for all enrolled children. In this responsibility these staff members have different roles.

Role of ASYMCA Director

Reassure parents that their children are accounted for while engaged in ASYMCA programs. Ensure a child cannot be isolated by an adult either indoors or outdoors. Require staff to be within the required ratios, and providers to maintain supervision of children appropriate to their age/capability.

Maintain an accurate daily attendance record of all ASYMCA programs. Establish a system to adequately monitor and track the whereabouts of school-age children as they freely move about the facility. NOTE: One example is to have a "What is the Count?" board on which the exact number of children is annotated in each room in real time. Establish and monitor a staff plan for different levels of supervision according to the age of the child and the level of risk involved in an activity or program.

Staff (Counselors)

Staff supervise children by sight and sound at all times. Staff do not need to be directly looking at each child at all times to meet the requirement for sight supervision. All children should be easily seen (if not in the direct line of sight, then by looking up or slightly adjusting one's position) by at least one member of the teaching staff. Each child is under the care of a specific adult and the adult knows where the child is at all times. Establish a system for staff/volunteers to know what children/youth are doing at all times. Ensure all field trips involving walking or vehicular transportation have at least two adults supervising the children at all times. Establish a system to account for children who fail to arrive for their afterschool program as expected. Ensure children are not left unattended in vehicles while signed into the program. "Face-to-Name" accountability checks are conducted during each daily transition point.

3. Child Abuse Protection

Child Abuse & Neglect Identification

B&A staff members receive annual training on recognizing signs of child abuse and neglect. B&A staff are also trained on mandatory reporting policies and are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Odd behavior, dirty clothes, unseemliness or suspicious bruises, abrasions, burns, and other physical marks or evidence of possible abuse or neglect and must be immediately reported to the Site Director.

Role of Directors

Reduce the risk for child abuse by ensuring systems are in place and followed to mitigate risk to all children and youth. Ensure procedures are in place and followed to protect children from unauthorized visitors by implementing a system to identify visitors and limit their movement in the facility. Ensure the Standards of Conduct and Accountability Statement (which includes the Touch Policy) and Caregiver Creed are provided in writing and read by all employees, interns and volunteers. The Standards of Conduct and Creed are signed by all employees, interns and volunteers and the signed copy is maintained in their personnel file. Make the Standards of Conduct and Accountability Statement (which includes the Touch Policy) available to parents (i.e., Parent Handbook, posted on website, etc.). Implement strategies to reduce the potential for child abuse in center settings through physical design, staff placement and child monitoring. Encourage parents to visit their child's program anytime as part of the program's "open door" policy.

Staff & Child Handwashing

Preventing the spread of illnesses requires good personal hygiene. ASYMCA staff follow a handwashing procedure and encourage the use of the same practices with all the children in the center.

Hand Sanitizers

Waterless hand sanitizers with an alcohol base may be used in EXTREME, short-term situations when there is no water available for handwashing (e.g. outside first aid or field trips).

Hygiene When Handling Blood and Other Bodily Fluids

Staff wear protective gloves when handling blood or blood-contaminated fluids, and when their hands have open lesions or cuts. In addition, all staff are required to take the Redwoods Training on bloodborne pathogens to ensure proper procedures

are followed in the event one is encountered. This training includes, but is not limited to, how to clean up blood spills and return blood-stained clothing to parents.

If a regular ASYMCA employee is not the bus driver, the ASYMCA does not provide additional bus monitors when transporting children to and from schools and ASYMCA programs. In addition, ratios are not taken until the children are at the front door of the ASYMCA. At that time, a complete sweep of the bus is made to ensure no children are left behind. ASYMCA staff ensure that all children transported during the program day are accounted for before, during, and after transportation times.

Parent Notification

When ASYMCA children are not in attendance who normally arrive to the facility by bus, parents are immediately notified if they have not called to report the absence.

Media

All media is previewed by ASYMCA management staff before children view or utilize it, to ensure it is age-appropriate. Children are always given an alternative to using media. Media viewing does not exceed a total of one hour per day in a full day setting.

School Age Care Programming

Guidelines for School Age Care programming include: Offering the opportunity for children to have input into activity choices to ensure the activities meet their needs and interests. Documentation of this input is kept on file. Program choices that are designed and implemented to meet a variety of child interests to cover a wide variety of skill, ability and interest levels. Projects that are selected for younger can be completed within a week.

Daily Lesson Plans

Lesson plans provide stability without being rigid. Allow children to meet their physical needs (e.g., water, food, restrooms) in a relaxed way. Allow children to move smoothly from one activity to another, usually at their own pace, and facilitate transitions when it is necessary for children to move as a group. Are posted so that children and staff can see the times and locations of school age activities. Ensure daily choices are planned to include at least three of the four

Services Areas. Include prominently displayed written monthly activity schedules describing the highlighted programming planned for the month.

Guidance & Discipline

ASYMCA CDC staff provide consistent guidance and discipline in accordance with established policies and procedures. Behavioral expectations are posted in clear, positive, and concise language. Children are involved in the development of the policies, procedures, and expectations for behavior. Positive guidance techniques that minimize problem behavior are used. Staff and children demonstrate caring, trust and respect for each other. Name calling, labeling or stigmatizing should never occur and will NOT be tolerated among staff or toward children. Children/Youth will not be publicly humiliated.

School Age Care Staff & Volunteers

ASYMCA staff and volunteers who work with School Age Care children: Model appropriate behavior and use conflict resolution skills. Identify and use opportunities to praise children for good deeds and positive behavior. Greet each child when he or she enters the facility or shortly thereafter. Address children by name when communicating. Create opportunities for children to build and expand competencies such as opportunities to learn how to play the piano, become socially competent, etc. Provide male and female children with equal and frequent encouragement and praise. Hold children accountable for their actions, ensuring male and female children are held to the same standards. Help children make informed choices and decisions. Share skills and resources to help children gain information, make decisions and solve problems. Assist children and youth without taking control. Continually interact with children to provide motivation, encouragement, and recognition. Understand and use the community assets and protective factors that help children realize their potential. Activities will offer children opportunities to work alone, in pairs, or groups.

Policy Agreement

Please carefully read, sign and return the following form to the Site Director. I have read the Armed Services YMCA Parent Handbook and agree to abide by all the policies and procedures therein.

I understand and agree to follow the information, policies and procedures outlined in the Parent Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for ensuring that any person authorized to act on my behalf for my child understands the policies and procedures stated in this Parent Handbook.

I understand that failure to adhere to the policies of the Parent Handbook may result in my child's enrollment being terminated by The ASYMCA Before and After Care Program.

By signing this agreement, we also consent to pictures being taken of our child(ren) for the center photo album. These pictures will not be shared anywhere. They will only be used for licensure and accreditation purposes.

Proof of receipt receiving the parent handbook

Parent or legal guardian: Print / Signature Date

Parent or legal guardian: Print / Signature Date

Staff member: Print / Signature Date