

the



2026/2027 Y PALS PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



ABOUT PAIGE

Paige Thompson is the Director of Youth Development at the Bloomington-Normal YMCA, where she has led and developed numerous successful school-age programs for the past four years. With a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a minor in Child Advocacy from the Florida Institute of Technology, Paige brings a strong foundation in understanding child development and advocacy. Her passion for youth development is reflected in her commitment to creating programs that foster growth, learning, and wellbeing for children in the community. Paige continues to be a driving force in shaping the YMCA's youth programs to support the needs and potential of every child served.

Dear Y Pals Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to Y Pals for the 2026-2027 School Year! Thank you for choosing the YMCA for your child's after school program enrichment. We have been hard at work to establish a safe, engaging, welcoming, and inclusive environment for youth to learn, grow, and thrive.

At Y Pals, your child will be able to explore their interests, interact with other youth, form new friendships, and develop new skills in a developmentally appropriate social environment. Our Y Pals Counselors are committed to providing your child with a safe space to spend their time after school. Trained in CPR/AED and First Aid, Mandated Reporter certified, and DCFS Background checked, our staff strive to ensure the safety of your child(ren).

Throughout the school year, please know that you are able to reach out to me directly at any time via email at paiget@bnymca.org, or phone at 309-827-6233 ext. 113.

I'm looking forward to Y Pals for the 2026-2027 school year!

Sincerely,

Paige Thompson
Director of Youth Development
Bloomington-Normal YMCA

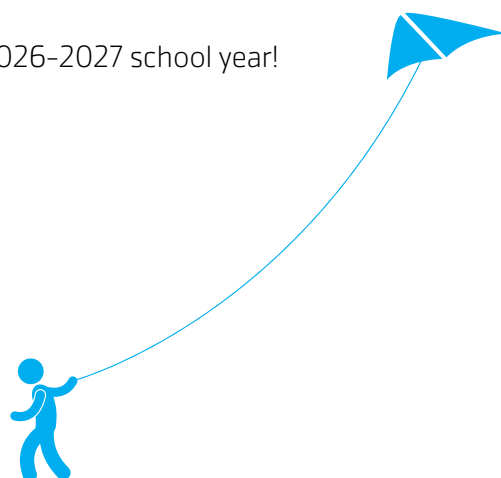


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ABOUT THE BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL YMCA

The YMCA is a DCFS license exempt facility for youth development, for healthy living, for social responsibility and is here to make the world a better place. We offer a wide range of programs that develop self-confidence, good sportsmanship, character development, fine motor skills and many other assets children need to become successful individuals.

OUR MISSION

To put Christian principles into practice through programs, services, and relationships that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

OUR VISION

A healthy community where everyone is thriving.



OUR CORE VALUES



CARING



HONESTY



RESPECT



RESPONSIBILITY

It is our commitment to these values and our mission that helps better each child that attends the programs the YMCA has to offer. Y Pals strives to provide challenging activities in both small and large group settings under the guidance of well-trained Y Pals supervisors and counselors. The YMCA has been responsible for developing strong leaders in children's after school care experiences for more than 150 years. Our purpose is to continue this hallowed tradition by providing the best possible after school care experience for all children in the Bloomington-Normal community and surrounding areas. At Y Pals every child has a name, a voice and an amazing opportunity to be strong and free. YMCA Y Pals sites are not licensed or regulated by DCFS.

ABOUT Y PALS

Welcoming grades Kindergarten through 5th, Y Pals is an after school care program that is centered around making a difference in the lives of the youth we serve.



Y PALS LOCATIONS

UNIT 5 LOCATIONS:



Northpoint Elementary School

2602 E. College Ave. Bloomington, IL
Site Phone Number: 309-445-0863
YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233



Towanda Elementary School

304 East St. Towanda, IL
Site Phone Number: 309-445-0838
YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233



Carlock Elementary School

301 W Washington St. Carlock, IL
Site Phone Number: 309-212-4926
YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233



Cedar Ridge Elementary School

2808 Breezewood Blvd. Bloomington, IL
Site Phone Number: 309-212-0538
YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233



Fox Creek Elementary School

3910 Timberwolf Trail Bloomington, IL
Site Phone Number: 309-212-2461
YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233

UNIT 5 Y PALS DATES:

August 20st, 2026 – May 25th, 2027
Mondays – Fridays | 2:30-5:30pm

OLYMPIA LOCATIONS:



Olympia North Elementary School

205 N. State St. Danvers, IL
Site Phone Number: 309-434-0407
YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233



Olympia South Elementary School

103 NE 5th St., Atlanta, IL
Site Phone Number: TBD
YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233



Olympia West Elementary School

302 N. School Ave. Minier, IL
Site Phone Number: 309-212-0227
YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233

OLYMPIA Y PALS DATES:

August 13th, 2026 – May 20th, 2027
Mondays – Fridays | 2:20-5:30pm

****Y Pals facilities and programming is not licensed or regulated by DCFS.****

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Early Registration – YMCA Members Only Beginning July 6th
Nonrefundable Registration Fee: \$35 through July 31st

Registration For All – Beginning August 1st
Nonrefundable Registration Fee: \$60



BILLING INFORMATION

UNIT 5 SCHOOL DISTRICT	OLYMPIA SCHOOL DISTRICT
5 Day: \$78/members, \$128/non-members	5 Day: \$93/members, \$133/non-members
4 Day: \$63/members, \$103/non-members	4 Day: \$75/members, \$107/non-members
3 Day: \$48/members, \$78/non-members	3 Day: \$57/members, \$78/non-members
2 Day: \$33/members, \$53/non-members	2 Day: \$39/members, \$51/non-members
1 Day: \$23/members, \$33/non-members	1 Day: \$24/members, \$34/non-members

- Billing occurs every Wednesday prior to the Y Pals week.
- Pre registration for each week is required.
- A method of payment must be on file as payments will be scheduled out to automatically run each week.
- Late payments will have an added fee of \$10 and must be paid prior to the start of the Y Pals week.
- Returned payments will have an added fee of \$25 and must be paid prior to the start of the Y Pals week.
- Families that fall behind 2 or more weeks on payments will be unable to attend Y Pals until the balance has been paid.

CANCELLATION POLICY

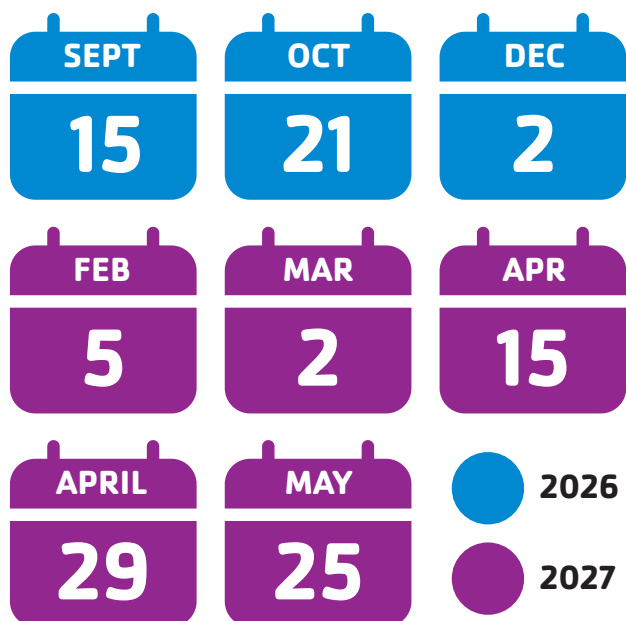
If a family needs to change from 5 days to a different rate plan or vice versa, or needs to cancel a week of Y Pals altogether, then a written request must be submitted to youthdevelopment@bnymca.org by the Monday prior to the Y Pals week to avoid any charges. If a cancellation request is received after Monday but before the start of the Y Pals week, a system credit will be issued for a future week. If a cancellation request is received after the start of the Y Pals week, no refund will be given.

For example, if a family needs to cancel their Y Pals week of September 7, a written request must be submitted no later than August 31 in order to avoid charges. If a cancellation for the week of September 7 is submitted between September 1 – 6, then a system credit will be issued.

EARLY OUT CARE

Early out care for Y Pals participants only will be offered at each site that meets capacity requirements. However, Early Out Care is not automatically included in your Y Pals registration, a separate registration for each early out day is required and can be done online, over the phone, or in person.

UNIT 5 EARLY OUT DAYS



HOURS: 10:30am - 5:30pm

COST: \$30/member | \$45/nonmember

OLYMPIA EARLY OUT DAYS



If No Emergency Days Used

HOURS: 12:00pm - 5:30pm

COST: \$30/member | \$45/nonmember



REMINDER:

Bring a lunch! The Y does not provide lunches on early dismissal days.

SCHOOL BREAK DAYS

School Break Days are open for all children grades K-5 on most days Unit 5 schools are not scheduled to be in session, except for inclement weather days. A School Break Day is held at the YMCA (202 Saint Joseph Drive) from 7:30am - 5:30pm. School Break Days are not included in your Y Pals registration and require a separate registration for each School Break Day.



Bloomington-Normal YMCA

202 St. Joseph Dr.

Bloomington, IL 61701

Phone Number: 309-827-6233

QUESTIONS?

Contact our Director of Camps, Josh Forbes!

Email: joshf@bnymca.org

Phone: 309.827.6233



For more information regarding School Break Days, please visit the YMCA website at bnymca.org.

EMERGENCY ACTION PROCEDURES



Inclement Weather:

In the event of inclement weather, including but not limited to severe thunderstorms and tornadoes, staff will move all Y Pals participants inside to a secure location near the inner part of the building which will be assigned and told to staff during the staff training, prior to the beginning of the Y Pals program.



Fire:

In the event of a fire, the Y Pals staff will instruct their group to evacuate the building and will meet at a predetermined location, which will be assigned and told to staff during the staff training, prior to the beginning of the Y Pals program. The site supervisors will be responsible for securing the building and ensuring that all staff and children have exited safely.

ALICE

Active Shooter:

In the event of an active shooter, all staff will follow ALICE procedures. (see attached document for more details)

DROP OFF & PICK UP PROCEDURES

Parents/guardians or other authorized adults are required to personally sign all children out each day. A valid photo ID must be shown every time a child is picked up from the site. In order to add an authorized pick up person to your child's record, please let a Y Pals site supervisor know or e-mail the Youth Development department at youthdevelopment@bnymca.org.

LATE PICK UP POLICY

A \$1.00/per minute late fee will be assessed per child after 5:30 PM. The time used to assess late fees will be the clock on the cell phone of the staff at the site. This fee is to be paid by the end of the week before the child attends the following week. Staff will attempt to call both parents/guardians, followed by the emergency contact on your file if your child is not picked up by closing time. If no one can be contacted within 30 minutes and no parental/guardian communication has occurred, the staff is required to notify the local police department and place the child in their care.





SNACKS



The YMCA receives snacks for programming from the Midwest Food Bank! If your child has dietary restrictions or allergens, please list them on your child's registration and/or on your Child Care Profile upon registering. We are usually able to meet the needs of most restrictions. Snacks are offered every day at Y Pals, usually between 2:30pm and 3:30pm.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Remember to label ALL items brought to Y Pals. Encourage your child to be responsible with personal belongings. The YMCA cannot be responsible for lost items. We suggest leaving all personal items at home.



RESTRICTED ITEMS



The items listed below are not allowed to be brought to Y Pals. If these items are brought to Y Pals they may be confiscated and returned to the parent at the end of the day. Disciplinary action may be taken. Firearms are prohibited at any YMCA Y Pals site.

- Gum
- Jewelry
- Make-up
- Video Games

- Cell Phones
- Electronics
- Tablets
- Smart Watches
- Money

- Firearms
- Pocket Knives
- Any Type of Weapon



48 HOUR POLICY – SUDDEN ILLNESS

****Non-Covid Related Illness****

A sick child is to be kept at home for their own sake and that of others. Many communicable diseases begin with cold-like symptoms. A child is considered ill when he/she is experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- An elevated temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- An unidentified or contagious rash
- Ringworm
- Weep & red eyes (sign of conjunctivitis, pink eye, which is very contagious).
- Excessive cough and/or nasal discharge (any green mucus)
- Lice
- Any other symptoms that prevent your child from participating in the day's activities.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, a staff member will contact the parents and request that the child is picked up immediately. Until the sick child is picked up, the child will be removed from all other program participants to ensure their health and well-being. Siblings/those who live in the same house will be sent home as well.

In case of lice, children must be completely free of nits and lice to return. Y Pals has a nit-free policy. Staff will conduct head checks on all children returning from a bout of head lice before the child may re-enter Y Pals.

Please inform the Director of Youth Development and/or the Y Pals Site Supervisor about the nature of any illness. If your child has a communicable disease, please inform staff when it first appeared. To return to Y Pals, a doctor's release stating that your child is no longer contagious must be shown.

A child may return to Y PALS when:

- Their temperature has been normal for 48 - 72 hours without Tylenol, aspirin or substitutes.
- They have been diagnosed as having a bacterial infection and have been on antibiotics for 48 hours.
- It has been 48 -72 hours since the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea without medicine.
- Eyes are no longer discharging. If pink eye is suspected, continued treatment with antibiotics must have occurred for at least 48 HOURS.
- The rash has subsided or the doctor has determined that the rash is not contagious.

Covid Policy: The YMCA adheres to the current CDC guidelines and expectations regarding COVID 19.

ACCIDENTS & INJURIES

If your child is injured at Y Pals, staff will take necessary steps to obtain emergency medical care. These steps will include but are not limited to the following:

1. Call 911 if the situation requires it.
2. Administer CPR and/or first aid if needed.
3. Attempt to contact parent/guardian.
4. If parental/guardian contact cannot be made, the additional emergency contact person listed will be contacted.

IEP & 504 PLANS

In order to best serve all children, if your child has special needs, an IEP or 504 plan, we request that this information be submitted before your child begins Y Pals to help us assess the needs of your child. Please contact the Director of Youth Development if you have questions about Y Pals and accommodating your child.

Y PALS EXPECTATIONS



CARING



HONESTY



RESPECT



RESPONSIBILITY

Behavioral Management:

Praise and recognition of good behavior will be utilized throughout each Y Pals day. Staff will help children choose appropriate behavior when needed and will use positive reinforcement as a continual behavior management strategy. Y Bucks will be used as a recognition of positive behavior for students and shared with parents at pick-up. If a student is not upholding our Y Core Values or putting themselves, or others in danger, they are at risk of suspension.

Discipline:

When behavior is repetitive without improvement, severe, and/or deemed dangerous to the child or others, parents will be contacted immediately to pick up their child and a suspension may be warranted at the discretion of the Y Pals supervisors. Examples that could lead to suspension include, but are not limited to: physical violence, verbal threats of physical violence, and inappropriate touching. If a child is suspended for a third time, the Director of Youth Development reserves the right to expel the child from Y Pals. At any time, the Bloomington-Normal YMCA may waive the disciplinary procedure and reserves the right to discharge any student without notice for misconduct without refund. Incident reports may be used to document and inform parents of a child's behavior.

Parent/Guardian Expectations:

As a Y Pals parent/guardian, you are expected to show caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility when interacting with Y Pals site supervisors and all other Y Pals staff. You are expected to send your child(ren) prepared for Y Pals. Please communicate with the Y Pals Site Supervisor with any and all important information regarding your child.

Staffing:

Y Pals staff consists of positive role models dedicated to partnering with parents and teachers to further develop the youth in our program. All Y staff members pass background checks and go through extensive training on Youth Development. We firmly believe that our staff is the best of the best. All staff are trained and certified in CPR, First Aid and Child Abuse Prevention. Our staff is experienced in working with children to have fun, be safe and develop in spirit, mind and body.

Medication Distribution:

If your child must take medication while they are at Y Pals, you must sign the medication in with the Y Pals Site Supervisor. All medications must be in the original container labeled with the child's name and specific dosage instructions. Parents must also sign an Authorization to Administer Medication Form. Children are not permitted to carry medications at Y-Pals at any time.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

It is our goal to ensure that no one is denied services due to an inability to pay. Therefore, we offer options for financial support to those who qualify. One option for financial support is provided by the Child Care Resource and Referral Network (309-828-1892). Upon approval, your family will be assigned monthly co-pays by the CCRRN to be paid to the YMCA. Applications for the CCRRN are available in their office at 207 West Jefferson in Bloomington. If your family does not qualify for the CCRRN, they can apply for financial support through the Bloomington Normal YMCA. Financial support is determined on a sliding fee scale. Applications for financial support through the Y are available at www.bnymca.org.

Scholarship dollars are provided by generous donors contributing to our annual Strong Kids campaign. If you would like to help the Y fulfill its mission by supporting our Strong Kids campaign, please contact the YMCA at (309) 827-6233 for more information.

PRAESIDIUM ACCREDITATION

The Bloomington-Normal YMCA aims to provide an environment within the walls of our facility and when we're out in the community where children are safe from abuse and can learn, grow and thrive. All of our staff and volunteers are committed to creating programs and providing resources to help stop child abuse within our community and to keep our kiddos safe. All staff (along with volunteers who work with children) are required to pass training provided by Praesidium, the leading organization within the United States in abuse risk management, before they're allowed to work their first shift. The Bloomington-Normal YMCA is Praesidium accredited as of May 2025.



— ACCREDITED BY —
PRAESIDIUM
— 2025-2028 —



QUESTIONS?

Questions and concerns may be directed to Paige Thompson, Director of Youth Development.
Phone: 309-827-6233 Email: youthdevelopment@bnymca.org OR paiget@bnymca.org