

Firehouse Youth Center

# **After School Club**

# Parent Handbook

2016 – 2017

City of Highland Park

Youth and Senior Services

August 23, 2016

Dear Firehouse Families,

Welcome to the Firehouse After School Club program. The Firehouse has been a staple of this community, serving area youth since 1973, while the After School Club (previously entitled After 3) has been in operation for more than 10 years.

This parent handbook is designed to provide detailed information about After School Club activities, procedures, and guidelines. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it as a reference throughout the school year. Extra copies of the parent handbook are available on our website ([www.cityhpil.com/youthcenter](http://www.cityhpil.com/youthcenter)).

We are excited to meet the needs of your family and are confident that After School Club will be a positive and enriching experience for your family.

The 2016 – 2017 After School Club program will begin on the first full-day of school for District 112 students; Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Laura Frey*, CPRP

Manager of Youth and Senior Services

847.432.4110

## **Firehouse Contact Information**

Youth and Senior Services Administrative Offices

54 Laurel Avenue – Highland Park

847.432.4110

Open: Monday – Friday, 8 am – 3 pm

Firehouse Youth Center

1830 Green Bay Road – Highland Park

847.433.3090

Open: Monday – Friday, 3 – 6 pm on full days of school, and earlier on selected early release days.

## **Program Description**

The After School Club (ASC) is an after school program for middle school families seeking a safe and supportive option for their middle school students, offering a wide variety of educational and recreational opportunities for its participants. Students engage in both structured and unstructured after school activities including snack, homework time, group games, outdoor play, arts and crafts, cooking, and open play with our variety of table games (including pool, ping pong and air hockey), video games, board games, and old fashioned arcade games.

## **Administration**

The ASC program is administered and directed by staff of the City of Highland Park Youth and Senior Services. All staff receive job specific training and must complete orientation prior to employment. Each *Youth Worker* is degreed in education, social work, counseling, or a related field, and comes to the Firehouse with years of experience.

## **Bus Service**

The Firehouse operates two vehicles: a red bus, which seats 14 passengers, as well as a red van, which seats 7 passengers. Firehouse staff will pick up registered participants on their scheduled days 5 – 15 minutes after school is dismissed. It is the participant's responsibility to report to the designated pick-up location immediately following school dismissal. Children who are not registered for the After School Club, or who are not registered for that specific day of the week, will not be transported to the Firehouse.

Firehouse pick-up locations are as follows:

- *Edgewood*: Lower parking lot, near the picnic tables.
- *Elm Place*: Just outside the main entrance.
- *Northwood*: Bus pick-up area. Please wait until the school busses have exited the lot, and then the Firehouse vehicle will pull up to the back door.

## **Snack**

The Firehouse has a wide selection of daily snack options for ASC participants to choose from. Each participant is permitted two snacks throughout the afternoon, with additional snacks available for purchase for \$1. Parents may set up a “Doggie Diner” account in which they may deposit money in advance, for students to draw down from, when purchasing additional snacks. Please see a staff member to arrange for a Doggie Diner account. Children with food allergies or restrictions are permitted to bring their own snacks.

## **Homework**

ASC provides an hour of daily homework help, affording students the opportunity to work on school projects and assignments during designated quiet homework time. A variety of general supplies are available including paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, rulers, and more. If a child has no homework, he/she will be permitted to read, color, or engage in school related web activities during this time. Staff is available to provide homework assistance, and students are encouraged to seek help when needed.

## **Choice Time**

Each day, after homework time is finished, ASC participants have an opportunity to choose from a wide variety of recreation activities including Art Club, Cooking Club, outside play, video gaming, movies, and much, much more.

## **Outdoor Activities**

The Firehouse is located adjacent to Sunset Park, and staff will provide an opportunity for supervised outdoor play on a daily basis, with the exception of extreme inclement weather. Please send your child with appropriate clothing and gear.

## **Active Engagement**

In order to encourage all Firehouse participants to engage with one another, participants are prohibited from using personal electronic devices until after 5 pm.

## **Program Procedures**

### **Sign-In Procedures**

ASC participants must sign in at the Firehouse front desk upon arrival.

### **Sign-Out Procedures**

Participants may be picked up at any time after arrival until 6:00 pm. ASC participants will only be released to individuals authorized on the pick-up permission portion of the registration form. A photo ID is required upon pick-up. Children who are authorized to sign themselves out may do so, however they should report to staff first, and then sign him/her self out prior to departing.

### **Late Pick-Up**

If a guardian does not arrive for pick-up by 6:00 pm, and if the child is not authorized to sign him/her self out, late charges may apply at the rate of \$1 per minute, beginning at 6:01 pm. Please notify ASC staff if you are unable to pick up a participant by 6:00 pm. Re-occurring late-pick up may result in suspension. Late

fees shall be paid at the Youth and Senior Services Administrative offices at 847.432.4110. If a child has not been picked up by 6:20 pm, emergency procedures will be put into place.

### **Extracurricular After School Activities**

ASC participants are welcome and encouraged to participate in middle school extracurricular activities. The District 112 middle school late bus will provide Firehouse drop-off on Green Bay road, upon request. Please contact the Manager of Youth and Senior Services, if your child wishes to utilize this service.

### **Emergency School Closings**

In the event that District 112 schools are closed due to extreme weather emergencies, the Firehouse will also be closed. On days when schools are closed mid-day, the ASC will be cancelled, and children will be dismissed directly from school.

### **Medical and Emergency Procedures**

If your child is injured and requires more than basic first aid, the following procedures will be followed:

1. 911 will be called, and emergency medical services will be requested.
2. The Manager of Youth and Senior Services will be contacted and apprised of the situation.
3. Guardian #1 will be contacted (if not reachable, then guardian #2 will be contacted) and apprised of the situation.
4. If deemed necessary, emergency services will transport the child to the nearest available hospital.
5. If the guardian is not present or available, a staff member will remain with the child for the ambulance ride and at the hospital, until a guardian or emergency contact arrives.
6. The guardian is responsible for all charges incurred for any and all medical services rendered. Your registration for this program authorizes staff to secure

emergency medical services for your child and your agreement to pay for such services is part of the registration agreement.

### **Behavior Guidelines**

Participants, facility guests, and staff are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times. The following guidelines have been developed to help make the Firehouse safe and enjoyable for everyone involved. Additional rules may be developed as deemed necessary by staff.

### **Code of Conduct**

Participants, facility guests and staff shall:

- 1) Show respect to all participants, facility guests and staff. Participants and facility guests are expected to take appropriate direction from staff.
- 2) Refrain from using foul, abusive, and inappropriate language.
- 3) Refrain from causing bodily harm to self, other participants, facility guests or staff.
- 4) Show respect for equipment, supplies and facilities, and will clean up after use.
- 5) Follow all City ordinances, facility rules and park rules. These include, but are not limited to, rules prohibiting cigarettes and smoking, alcohol and consumption of alcohol, and bringing weapons into facilities or onto grounds. Violation of these rules may result in suspension and police involvement when appropriate.
- 6) Not engage in any gang related activities including the display or possession of gang related symbols, the use of hand signals, soliciting membership, intimidating or threatening behavior, wearing or displaying any gang colors or clothing identified with gang activities, etc.

### **Disruptive Behavior Disciplinary Steps**

To ensure a positive and safe environment for all participants, the following disciplinary steps will be implemented for *severe*, disruptive and extreme disciplinary behaviors.

- *First Incident* – The child will be removed from the situation and staff will discuss the incident with guardian when the child is picked up. Staff will notify the guardian via phone, that a meeting will take place upon pick-up.
- *Second Incident* – The child will be removed from the situation and staff will discuss the incident with the guardian when the child is picked up. Staff will notify the guardian via phone, that a meeting will take place upon pick-up. A suspension of 1 – 3 days will be implemented.
- *Third Incident* – The child will be removed from the situation and staff will request via phone, that the guardian will pick-up the child immediately. An immediate suspension of 5 - 7 days will be implemented, and the guardian and child must meet with the Manager of Youth and Senior Services prior to returning.
- *Fourth Incident* – The child will be removed from the situation and staff will request via phone, that the guardian will pick-up the child immediately. The child may be permanently terminated from the program at the discretion of the Manager of Youth and Senior Services.

## **General**

### **Suspected Abuse or Neglect**

It is the policy of the Firehouse to fully comply with the State of Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. The City will make every reasonable effort and precaution to prevent, detect, and report cases of suspected child abuse and neglect for children who come in direct contact with Firehouse programs, and facilities.

### **Custody Orders**

To honor a specific custody order and/or order of protection, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a copy of the custody order and/or order of protection to the Manager of Youth and Senior Services. The document must be signed by the court with the legal seal present, date effective and ending date if applicable.

## **Confidentiality**

The Firehouse will maintain confidentiality and respect family privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information. Disclosure of children's records beyond a participant's guardian, program personnel and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality shall require parental/guardian consent. However, in cases of abuse or neglect, it is permissible to reveal confidential information to agencies and individuals who may be able to act in the child's interest.

## **FEES**

### **Membership**

There is no longer Firehouse membership; instead all eligible individuals may register for each program they are interested in.

### **Attendance Options**

ASC attendance is determined based on the needs of each family. Days of service can vary between one and five days per week. When registering for the ASC, specific days of the week will be indicated. Participants will not be permitted to switch days of the week or receive credit for any missed days.

### **After School Club**

The After School Club semester fee is \$100 per day of the week. Registration and payment will be accepted for the first semester, which runs from August through December, and for second semester, which runs from January – June.

The After School Club includes after school care and transportation from each of the three Highland Park middle schools, on full days of school. After School Club registrants will also receive a discount on other activities including daily fee registration, and early release days.

### **Daily Fee**

This year there will be a daily fee registration option for \$20 per day; including After School Club and transportation. This is a good opportunity for individuals who register later in the session, as well as for parents who desire to occasionally to add a day based on schedule needs. The daily fee option is open based on availability and advanced registration is required. AFC participants will receive a 50% discount off the general price, and will pay only \$10 per additional day.

### **Early Release Days**

Early release days will be offered with a separate registration and fee. There will be a variety of offerings including open houses, gaming tournaments, and mini-trips to local points of interest including the Recreation Center, Centennial Ice Rink, Movie Theaters, eating establishments, etc). Youth Services will prepare a calendar in advance with fees based on the direct costs, which will be distributed the first week in September.

### **Late registration**

To ensure a successful program, advanced planning is imperative in Youth Services. Staffing, transportation, and purchase of supplies are all based on the number of participants enrolled. In order to encourage advanced registration, a \$5 fee shall be added to all registration after the registration deadline.

### **Gift and Rewards**

Firehouse staff appreciates support and kind words of appreciation from participants and family members. However, based on City Policy, gifts and rewards are not permitted, and should not be accepted by City staff; with the exception of food gifts, which can be place in a staff area and shared amongst one another.