

The Starke County Youth Club, Inc. (SCYC) After-school Operating Procedures

Purpose:

The Starke County Youth Club exists to provide behavior guidance and to promote the health, educational, social, recreational and character development of boys and girls without regard for race, color, creed, economic background or disability. As such, SCYC is much more than a mere after-school program. We believe all children deserve a safe, organized, enriching environment with positive role models. Our programming is rich with academics and recreation. It is a safe place for children to learn and have fun after the school bell rings.

Membership:

Any boy or girl in grades K-12 may join SCYC. A \$10.00 / year registration fee along with a completed registration packet is required before attendance. Any family not able to meet the fee may be eligible for scholarship. Please contact the Director for details.

Session Hours:

SCYC follows the school corporation calendar very closely. An annual calendar is attached. Programs are provided after-school Monday – Friday immediately following school dismissal. SCYC closes promptly. Please see the attached annual calendar for site-specific times. When the schools have In-service or Half Days, SCYC will be available from the close of school until the time listed on the annual calendar. Arrangements **MUST** be made for those occasions. Sudden, unscheduled cancellations will be announced on WKVI.

Entrance and Exit:

Children may attend as few or as many program days as desired. They may also stay for any amount of time. However, once signed in, a parent or guardian must be present for pick up, unless a note is provided. If a member chooses to leave the building without permission, that member is responsible for his or her decision.

- **Remember to bring photo ID during pick up; staff requires verification before releasing a child.**
- **Persons not having a photo ID will be required to leave and return with the necessary identification, no exceptions.**
- **Please send a note to school informing teachers of your child's planned Club attendance schedule. Keeping the school, teachers, students and club informed helps avoid confusion. If your child does not have a clear note to attend club, teachers will send your child home via their normal mode of transportation.**

Pick Up:

Authorized pick-ups are defined as any person listed on the child's registration form. An Authorized Pick Up Amendment Form is available to add, remove or edit pick-ups. This form must be completed by a parent/guardian and must be witnessed by an SCYC staff member. If you have a custody agreement / issue your Site Coordinator must have documentation on file in order to prevent release. We cannot prohibit release to a biological parent without legal documentation.

Furthermore, all children **MUST** be picked up in a timely manner by an authorized pick up with a photo ID. When pickup is late three times, we issue a warning. The next late pickup results in a short suspension from SCYC (1-2 days). Continued late pickup results in long-term or permanent suspension.

Police Intervention:

In the event that we have not received **proper authorization** to release your child to an **identified individual by 6:40 P.M. (4:00 P.M. on in-service dates)**, we will have no other recourse but to seek police intervention. This is the currently accepted procedure followed in after-school programs. We have not had to request police assistance to date. Please help avoid implementing this emergency measure by making sure you comply with the pick up requirements above.

Daily Schedule:

Although each site functions on their own schedule, the basic format of SCYC programs remains the same. A brief example of our schedule follows. Please note that enrichment activities vary by day and are based on a monthly calendar. Daily choices may include, but are not limited to: math, science, library, art, music, craft, dance, Move!, drama, Culture In Action, cooking, gardening, community service, build and play, game room, and character development. Each student is served a snack upon their arrival at Club.

Time	Description of Activity		
30 minutes	Check In, Snack		
40 minutes	Homework	Homework	Homework
40 minutes	Activity Choice One	Activity Choice Two	Homework Overflow
40 minutes	Activity Choice Three	Activity Choice Four	Activity Choice Five
15 minutes	Open Recreation		Final Sign Outs

Homework:

The structure of SCYC programs includes a homework center immediately following Snack. All students enrolled in the program participate in homework time. Good study habits, academic improvement, and accountability are all goals of this center. Homework time is supervised. This is not however, one – on – one tutoring. Remember, SCYC’s student to staff ratio does not allow each problem to be checked. This is the family’s responsibility. Children, with parent support, are responsible for completing their homework and getting it checked. SCYC will take all steps to encourage students, assist with questions, and inform parents of progress. Children who do not have homework are provided with educational activities. Reading and math enrichment are strongly encouraged, and enrichment materials provided. Children are strongly encouraged to keep a book from the library/home in their backpack for quiet reading time. An overflow area is available for children who have not completed their homework during the first rotation. Children are encouraged to attend overflow if more time/help is needed before attending additional centers. Overflow, however is not required. Families wishing to require overflow should be sure to share this with both the coordinator and the student.

Discipline:

Membership in SCYC is a privilege. All families sign a Membership Agreement before acceptance into SCYC. The goals of the membership agreement and the rules of SCYC are to: keep kids safe, help them learn, promote self-discipline, and encourage cooperation between members and staff.

The program cannot serve children who display repeated or severe disruptive behavior. Repeated disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity which may include, but is not limited to such behavior that:

- Inflicts physical or emotional harm on children or staff
- Requires constant attention from staff
- Is destructive to members, facility or property
- Continually ignores or disobeys Club safety rules

Positive behavior management methods are used. We believe in respect for the child’s self esteem, setting limits and consequences, and encouraging increased self-discipline. If rules are broken, we will ask the child to identify the misbehavior and the appropriate action to be taken. At times the child may be asked to “cool down”, before discussing the situation. If a child receives three disciplinary “strikes,” the child may be suspended for a short, medium, or long term dependent on the severity of the infraction. Further “strikes” may result in dismissal from the program. The Site Coordinator will contact the family of any “at risk” member in order to discuss the situation and an intervention plan. If improvement does not occur, or a solution cannot be determined, Site Coordinators have the ability to suspend or expel a child from the program. The parent/guardian will receive a written statement documenting the process leading up to the child’s suspension. In certain circumstances a child may be released from the program without notice. Safety is always our main priority!

Immediate suspension is necessary in the case of a child or parent who is physically violent with staff or another child or for repeated incidents of a serious nature. A parent/guardian will be contacted and required to immediately pick up the child for the day. Discussion with and approval from the Executive Director or Site Coordinator is necessary before the child or parent can return to program.

A child or parent may be expelled from the program if:

- They frequently or repeatedly risk the physical or emotional safety of any child or staff member.
- They disrupt the flow of the program frequently or repeatedly.
- A student or parent is verbally, physically or mentally harmful to himself/herself or others.
- A child or parent displays defiance or disrespect of program policies

Reasonable efforts will be made to assist members in adjusting to the Club environment. If this adjustment cannot be made, the club will follow the above steps to maintain a safe environment.

Mandatory Reporting:

In accordance with Indiana Public Law all SCYC staff members who know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected shall report this information to the Director. The Director reports to Child Protection Services. Reasonable cause means that it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain such a suspicion, drawing when appropriate on his or her training and experience, to suspect child abuse. Child Protective Services will determine the accuracy of the report. **SCYC is not required to notify families of these reports.**

Confidentiality and Release of Information

It is our intention to respect the privacy of our members and their families. We aim to ensure that all parents/guardians can share their information with SCYC knowing that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children while at club. In order to ensure that all those using SCYC can do so with confidence, we respect confidentiality in the following ways:

- Parents have ready access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. This may include discussion with day school staff/administration.
- Any concerns/evidence relating to a child's development and personal safety are kept in confidential files and are shared with as few people as possible on a "need-to-know" basis. Generally, however, this information is only released with the family's permission and/or a court order.

Accident Insurance:

All members should be insured against accidents through their parent's / guardian's insurance coverage. The SCYC does not provide accident insurance or health insurance for your child. The SCYC staff will fill out an accident report and the parents will be notified should an accident occur. SCYC staff will administer first aid and/or secure emergency medical treatment for members. SCYC is not liable for any costs associated with this medical treatment or accidents that occur when engaged in club activities.

Illness:

In order to ensure the safety and health of all club members, SCYC asks that you refrain from sending ill students to club. If a child is too ill to attend school, club attendance should be cancelled. Furthermore, if your child has a contagious illness, a fever over 100°F, is vomiting or has diarrhea, or is in an accident requiring immediate medical attention while at club, you will be contacted as soon as possible. Ill children should be picked up in a timely manner. Moreover, children experiencing restroom related accidents pose a health risk to themselves and club. If such an event occurs with your child, you will be contacted immediately for pick up. SCYC staff and administration cannot accept responsibility for dispensing medicines to club members during the program. If your child requires a dosage, please make arrangements with the school nurse prior to your child's attendance after-school.

Personal Belongings:

Please only bring essential items to SCYC. If an item is not allowed at school, it will not be allowed at SCYC. This includes, but is not limited to handheld games and accessories. The Site Coordinator will confiscate contraband. Parents should contact the Site Coordinator for the return of such items. Any personal belongings of value should be kept at home. Such items include trading cards, purses/wallets and MP3's. Additionally, cell phones should be turned off during club hours to limit program disruption. In cases of emergency, contact the Site Coordinator. It is always the responsibility of the member to safeguard his/her own belongings. When necessary to bring such items, please ask a staff member to place them in safekeeping. Finally, it is the responsibility of the parent and member to keep track of personal belongings. To this end it is helpful to label coats, backpacks, etc. with first and last name. Lost and found items will be placed in the host school's designated area.

Use of Phone:

The direct line to the Starke County Youth Club office is 772-1600 ext 1750. It should be noted however, that during club hours it is extremely difficult to contact a Site Coordinator or the Executive Director by phone. Feel free to leave a message. Phone messages are received in a timely manner. Moreover, at no time will SCYC allow use of the phone when not a parent / child communication or emergency. If you have any questions or concerns during the week you can contact Irene Szakonyi, Director at the number above. Site Coordinators will provide you with a contact number to reach each individual site. Additionally, student cell phone use is prohibited. This includes texting and calls to/from home.

Clothing and Footwear:

SCYC programming is filled with fun, active centers. Activities often go outdoors and require physical movement. To this end, it is important that all children arrive at club dressed appropriately. Jackets/sweatshirts should be sent with your child during the fall and early spring. Tennis shoes are preferred over flip-flops and dress shoes. Rollerblades and roller skates, including any footwear with wheels are prohibited. Students without proper footwear will be excluded from participating in physically active centers, as safety is a concern. All clothing should be free of adult themes.

Field Trips:

When you sign the registration form you give the Starke County Youth Club permission to take your child on field trips during regular club hours within walking distance. Any field trip that takes place outside normal operating hours or requires transportation will require a separate Permission Slip signed by a parent / guardian.

Food and Drinks:

There is a designated place for food and drinks at SCYC. No food or drink will be allowed outside the Snack or Cooking Areas. Any food or drink found outside those areas shall be confiscated and disciplinary action taken. In addition, due to health code restrictions, SCYC may not distribute any foods that are not in commercially sealed packages. Please refrain from sending home baked items to Club with your child to share with other students.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Weapons:

In order to assure the safest, most rewarding, and educational opportunities for our members, the Starke County Youth Club has instituted a NO smoking policy. This includes parents, visitors and members. It also includes all functions, activities, and field trips.

In addition, SCYC holds a no drugs, alcohol, and weapons policy. This means that any student, visitor, or family member (unless legally authorized) found with such paraphernalia during club activities will be immediately removed. Consequences can include, but are not limited to suspension/expulsion from SCYC.