



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

AMAZING LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Teen REACH

After School Youth Enrichment Program

2026-2027

PARENT & STUDENT MANUAL

GREATER JOLIET AREA YMCA

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for enrolling your student in the YMCA's Teen REACH Program. We look forward to an exciting school year ahead! This parent/student manual is designed to provide you with a comprehensive overview of the YMCA's Teen REACH Program.

There is no cost to you for your student to participate in the Teen REACH program, just a commitment to attend the after-school sessions consistently.

We're excited to share that we've adopted a new communication platform called **ParentSquare** to help us keep you better informed and more connected during your family's After School Care experience. With ParentSquare, you'll receive all messages in one place and translated into your preferred language—whether by email, text, app, or web. You'll also be able to:

- Stay up to date on news and events
- Send and receive messages with staff
- Download forms and permission slips
- View our monthly newsletter
- View calendar items and photos from your child's program site

To get the most out of ParentSquare, we encourage you to download the free mobile app, available for iOS and Android. You can also access ParentSquare from your web browser at www.parentsquare.com.

We'll be sharing more information soon, including how to set up your account and customize your notification preference.

Again, welcome to the YMCA's Teen REACH Program and thank you for your support of the Greater Joliet Area YMCA. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Alana Bailey
Jr. High Childcare Director

OUR MISSION

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

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Teen REACH program is a State (IDHS) funded after school enrichment program for Junior High School students in grades 6-8. Through this program, students are provided a safe and secure environment where they can receive academic support, develop practical social skills and learn positive values. Our goal is to nurture each child's potential, ensuring the development of healthy, trusting relationships that build confidence and character.

Within the Teen REACH program, students are provided opportunities that will enable, empower and encourage them to achieve personal growth and development while making healthy life choices.

The Greater Joliet Area YMCA has a strong commitment to youth development and is thrilled to offer this program to students in partnership with Joliet District 86.

YMCA Teen REACH program will run at all four Joliet District 86 middle schools:

Dirksen Junior High School
203 S. Midland Ave
Joliet, IL 60436

Hufford Junior High School
1125 N. Larkin Ave
Joliet, IL 60435

Gompers Junior High School
1501 Copperfield Ave.
Joliet, IL 60432

Washington Junior High School
402 S. Richards St.
Joliet, IL 60433

The enrollment at each school is limited to 30 students. Once the maximum has been reached, we will create a waiting list for students wishing to participate. There is no cost to families for students to enroll; however, attendance is mandatory. **Students must maintain an attendance record of 80% or better. Students who fail to attend sessions on a consistent basis will be removed from the program.**

The program will run during the summer at a location to be determined. Please note, the Greater Joliet Area YMCA Teen REACH program is not licensed or regulated by DCFS.

PROGRAM GOALS

We know that learning doesn't end when the school bell rings. The way your student's spend time after school can make a big difference in their personal development and your family-life balance. At the YMCA, development happens in a variety of exciting physical and imaginative activities that encourage them to explore who they are and what they can achieve.

Our goal is to REACH every student where they are and provide guidance for success:

R	Responsibility
E	Education
A	Achievement
C	Caring
H	Hope

We use caring adult role models to guide students toward marketable skills and opportunities to serve their community. With this focus, we look to improve academic performance, provide life skills education, create an environment for parent involvement, recreation and artistic activities, mentorship, career exploration and lastly, service learning activities.

ABOUT OUR TEEN REACH STAFF TEAM

In the YMCA's Teen REACH Program, caring and professional role models are committed to helping kids build confidence and character. The dedication and professionalism of our highly trained staff is extraordinary. The majority of our staff are college-age or older and have a passion for working with youth.

All Teen REACH staff are required to be trained or certified in a number of Health, Safety and Child Development courses, including the following:

American Red Cross First Aid, CPR, AED
Bloodborne Pathogens
Prevention/Recognition of Child Abuse Mandated Reporter
Sexual Harassment Prevention

The Greater Joliet Area YMCA engages and complies with the background check and clearance requirements to obtain criminal history checks through the Illinois State Police, FBI and checks the Illinois Sex Offender Registry and Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System for employees and volunteers who work directly with children.

HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

The YMCA's Teen REACH program runs Monday through Friday from dismissal-6p.m, on full days when school is in session. **Attendance is mandatory and will be taken daily.** To remain in the program, students must attend a minimum 80% of the scheduled program.

Days Out of School and Holiday Breaks

For all students enrolled in the Teen REACH Program, the Joliet Community YMCA is offering a **FREE** Day Off School Program.

Teen REACH students may be dropped off at the Messiah Lutheran Church or Salvation Army as early as 7a.m. and picked up as late as 6p.m. All participants should dress for the weather, bring a sack lunch, a drink, and 2 snacks.

Advanced registration is required and space is limited. The registration deadline is 48 hours prior to the day off school.

2026-2027 Days Out of School Dates

October 12	February 15
November 11	March 1
November 23-25	March 12
December 21-23	March 26
December 29-30	March 29-31
January 4	April 1-2
January 18	

PAYMENT INFORMATION

There is no cost to participate in the program, however, space is limited to 30 students per school site. Since this is a State funded program, it has attendance requirements. Students enrolled must attend a minimum of 80% of the time.

HOW TO WITHDRAW FROM TEEN REACH

If you would like to withdraw your student from the Teen REACH Program, please submit the childcare cancellation change form found here:

[Teen REACH Cancellation Request Form](#)

Please Note: If a student wishes to re-enroll in the program after withdrawing, the student will be placed on the waiting list rotation if the site is at capacity.

TEEN REACH SIGN IN & OUT PROCEDURE

Students enrolled in the Teen REACH program are to report to their designated classroom immediately after dismissal where they will be checked in by YMCA Teen REACH staff. The checkout will require a parent, guardian or authorized person over the age of 16 to sign the student out after each session. Individuals picking up the student must be listed on the authorized pick-up form. We will not make exceptions to this procedure as we are committed to the safety and welfare of the students in our care. The person picking up your student will be asked to provide a picture ID, which will be verified against your student's authorized pick up list. This must be presented to the staff person at the time of sign-out. To avoid any confusion or frustration, please have your ID with you.

Should you need to add an authorized person to your list, please log into your account at www.jolietymca.org – Click on "My account" and Select "Authorized Pick Ups"

ABSENTEE PROCEDURES

If for any reason (including illness) your student will NOT be attending the Teen REACH after school program, YOU MUST TEXT the YMCA site phone, before 2 p.m. to notify staff. The YMCA staff members at your student's school will check the site phone daily to document any absences. Remember, attendance is mandatory, 80% attendance is required of any student enrolled in Teen REACH. Excessive absences may result in removal from the program.

Dirksen Junior High
School
Phone: (779) 267-1118

Gompers Junior High
School
Phone: (815) 531-9548

Hufford Junior High School
Phone: (779) 267-1147

Washington Junior High School
Phone: (815) 531-7519

ILLNESS AND INJURY POLICIES

With each student's welfare in mind, we ask parents not to send a child to Teen REACH if he/ she is sick or has a fever. If a student becomes ill or injured while in our care, appropriate measures will be taken. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and asked to come and pick up the student. In the event that we are unable to contact the parent or guardian, we will review the emergency contact information to locate one of your designees who can pick up the student. If your student becomes seriously

injured while attending the Teen REACH Program, staff will call an ambulance or paramedics and have the student taken to a hospital or emergency facility. A staff member will accompany the student when possible. Every effort will be made to contact you and/or an emergency contact to notify you of the situation.

Please Note: If a student becomes sick during school hours and normally attends the Teen REACH after school program, parents will need to report his/her absence by sending a text message to the Teen REACH site phone. The school will not inform Teen REACH staff that a student has been picked up early.

LATE PICK UP

If a student is picked up from Teen REACH after 6 p.m., parents will be charged \$10 for every 15 minutes late per child (ex: from 6 to 6:15 p.m. is \$10, from 6:16 to 6:30 p.m. is an additional \$10, etc.). Late fees need to be paid no later than the end of day the next business day. If an emergency contact cannot be located by 7 p.m., the child will be turned over to local authorities.

The YMCA's contract with your student's school district states that programming will end at 6:00 p.m. Therefore, any student that is picked up late 3 times or more during the school year may be removed from the program. It is imperative that parents/guardians have contingency plans in place when work or weather-related problems cause them to be late in picking up their student from Teen REACH.

FAMILY ISSUES

Our top priority is the safety of the students in our programs. If there are family issues that may affect a student in our care, we ask that you make the Director aware of these concerns. These issues will remain confidential and may include custody, legal care arrangements, and restraining orders, among other things. The Director will only share this information with the necessary people involved with caring for your student.

MEDICAL POLICY

If your student will need to take any prescription medications while attending the Teen REACH Program, you will be required to submit additional medical forms prior to their first day attending the Teen REACH Program. Please make sure to include any necessary information with your student's enrollment paperwork and we will provide you with the required form(s). If your student requires an Epi-pen, you must provide the Y with an additional Epi-pen to be kept at the program site during your student's enrollment. The Epi-pen must be accompanied by a current prescription and a doctor's note. Click here to access the form: [Medication Authorization Form](#)

PURPOSE

The Y is committed to maintaining the health and protecting the safety of students in our programs who have life-threatening food/other allergies or serious medical conditions. This policy is a strategy to help our staff in supporting your student and to ensure that our staff is aware and able to support medical needs as they may arise in our program.

The YMCA Teen REACH staff will administer medication to a program participant provided the following guidelines are adhered to:

1. Medication Authorization Form: Parents/guardians will provide a completed YMCA Medication Authorization Form to the Program Director along with the student's medication in its original container. If a parent/guardian does not permit the Y to provide emergency medical treatment for their child, the child will not be allowed to enroll and participate in the program.
2. Prescription Medication: Only prescription medications in the original container and accompanied with specific written instructions from a licensed physician will be dispensed to program participants by Y staff. Prescription medicine labels must bear the student's name, the physician's name, the name of the drug store or pharmacy, prescription number, date of the prescription, and directions for administering.
3. Medication Log: Y staff will maintain a record of the dates, hours and dosages that are given.
4. Storage & Disposal: All medications will be kept in a locked box. Medication will be returned to the parents when it is no longer required. Additionally, medication provided for a student no longer cared for in our programs, and medication that has reached its expiration date will be destroyed.

Students with asthma should always have their inhalers with them. Students will be requested to carry their own inhaler, unless otherwise requested by the parent.

SNACKS

Students in the Teen REACH Program will receive a snack in the afternoon. If your child has any dietary restrictions, please be sure to indicate them on his/her enrollment form. Parents may send peanut-free snacks with students for the program.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS

If, for any reason, the school must close for the day (either the full day or early closure), the YMCA WILL NOT operate the Teen REACH Program.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The Greater Joliet Area YMCA has a zero-tolerance policy for any sort of violent or disruptive behavior. We will not tolerate disrespect toward our facility, staff, program materials or other participants in the program. Physical or verbal fighting degrading, making fun of others, demeaning or threatening other participants or staff will not be allowed. Any participants involved in these types of activities will be subject to discipline, and may be sent home for the day, suspended or removed from the program. Throughout the day, minor incidents will follow progressive discipline. A warning will be issued to all for correcting the behavior followed by a call home to parents.

The YMCA expects a Teen REACH participant's behavior to reflect standards of good citizenship. Three principals govern the disciplinary rules at YMCA Teen REACH:

1. Conduct that is disruptive to the learning process is prohibited.
2. Conduct that infringes upon the rights of others is prohibited.
3. Conduct that endangers the safety of the participant or others is prohibited.

Participants are requested and expected to:

- Show respect and consideration to all YMCA staff and fellow participants.
- Cooperate with all staff and abide by YMCA rules and safety guideline requests.
- Practice the YMCA Character Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility at all times.

When breaches of rules and regulations occur, it is the responsibility of YMCA staff to work with the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to help them correct this behavior. When determining the response for a specific breach of discipline, the Program Director will consider the nature of the act, the participant's age and maturation, any mitigating circumstances, and the effect his or her actions have on the welfare of the YMCA Teen REACH program. The fact that a particular violation of good conduct is not specifically mentioned on the following pages is not a satisfactory defense for any improper conduct. It is simply impossible to list every action which is inconsistent with good character values and citizenship. We expect all participants

form the habit of not only observing the rules contained herein, but also the general rules of good conduct and common sense acknowledged by the community in which we live.

In the event of a major infraction of the rules, the Program Director will contact a parent/guardian to discuss the issue, and if warranted, suspend or remove the student from the Teen REACH Program.

Any student that engages in behavior that causes or creates the potential for harm to other students or staff may be suspended or removed from the program.

TEEN REACH RULES

- A student may not disturb or hurt others verbally or physically. This includes name-calling, teasing, hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, biting, spitting, pinching, or any other behavior that causes or creates the potential for harm.
- Swearing or other inappropriate language or gestures will not be permitted.
- Students must be in view of the staff at all times. If a child must leave the program area, permission must be given by the staff.
- No gum or candy is allowed (except YMCA provided snacks).
- Students need to wear appropriate shoes based on the activity for the day.
- All Teen REACH participants are to be responsible for themselves and their belongings.
- No running is allowed inside the school building except in the gym.
- Students will be expected to put away games, equipment, and program supplies.
- Students may not damage YMCA or school equipment or property.
- Students should not bring electronic devices (iPods, tablets, cell phones, etc. with the exception of school issued devices). The YMCA is not responsible for any items that are brought from home.
- Firearms or weapons of any kind are prohibited at all YMCA programs, including on and off-site Teen REACH programs. "NO FIREARMS" signs are posted at each facility entrance, in accordance with Illinois State law.

SAFE BOUNDARY INFORMATION

For the safety of all YMCA participants and staff, the following rules will apply:

1. The YMCA restricts staff from providing child care services off site for families they meet through their employment at the YMCA. This includes nanny services and babysitting.
2. Your child should not receive personal gifts from individual staff members.
3. Staff and volunteers are not permitted to individually transport program participants in their personal vehicles.
4. One child will not be alone with one staff member outside the hearing or vision of others.

The YMCA limits outside contact between staff and program participants.

RUNAWAY POLICY

For the safety of all participants, children must remain with their group at all times. If a participant leaves the designated YMCA program area without permission from the YMCA staff or refuses to leave when the rest of the group leaves an area, the following procedure will be followed:

- A staff member will alert the rest of the staff members and will either
 - remain with the child to ensure supervision and encourage them to rejoin the group or
 - look for the child and escort them back to the program area.
- Parent will be notified and will need to pick up the child immediately.
- A conversation will need to take place between the Program Director and the parent/guardian before the child may return to the program.

*If the situation is a repeat offense, the child may no longer be permitted to attend the program.

If team members are unable to locate the child after the YMCA's Missing Child Procedure is conducted, the following steps will take place:

- Police will be notified.
- Parent will be notified and asked to aid in the search for the child. When the child is found, the parent will be asked to take the child home.

*The child may no longer be permitted to attend the program.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct sets forth the expectations for parents/guardians to ensure that YMCA programs are always a positive and healthy experience.

If parents/guardians cannot or will not uphold this code of conduct, those parents/guardians could face suspension from programs.

- Parents/Guardians will conduct themselves in a manner that represents the four core values of the YMCA: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.
- Parents/Guardians must refrain from foul language at all times, while at a YMCA program location.
- Parents/Guardians will not show or exhibit derogatory conduct toward any YMCA staff, participants, or other parents/guardians.
- The misuse of drugs or alcohol at a YMCA location will be prohibited. If a person appears to be impaired at pickup, we will ask that an alternate person, 16 or older, can be contacted to pick up the participant(s).
- Parents/Guardians will not be allowed to take pictures/videos of other participants or YMCA programs.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

We are looking forward to an exciting school year filled with fun engaging activities for our Teen REACH participants! If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact the Director at (815) 782-0828.

Please Note: Neither the school nor the school's principal or staff are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the YMCA's Teen REACH Program.