



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

7TH GRADE INITIATIVE PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK CHAMPAIGN FAMILY YMCA

Revised June 2025

Champaign Family YMCA
191 Community Dr.
Urbana, OH 43078

www.champymca.org

937-653-9622

7th Grade Initiative Program Goals

The Champaign Family YMCA's 7th Grade Initiative offers free memberships to all 7th graders in Champaign County, promoting the well-being of mind, body, and spirit during this crucial developmental stage. The program provides a safe space for building friendships, fostering healthy living, offering volunteer opportunities, and guiding youth away from negative influences.

By encouraging physical activity, supportive connections, and mental well-being, participants will improve their fitness, adopt healthier habits, and gain the confidence to pursue lifelong health goals!

MIND – Mental Health and Wellness Support

Youth will have opportunities to engage with Y staff and mentors in group discussions and activities aimed at fostering peer support, encouraging open conversations about mental health, and building a sense of community. These interactions are not required, but may include workshops and activities designed to promote mindfulness, stress management, and emotional resilience, providing participants with valuable tools for mental well-being.

BODY – Fitness and Nutrition

Youth can participate in activities, workshops, and evidence-based health programs focused on understanding healthy habits, alongside fitness challenges designed to motivate them and promote physical activity. They are encouraged to try fitness classes and other group activities the Y offers.

SPIRIT – Community Building and Support

Youth will build a sense of community through service-learning projects and group activities offered, while also engaging in open discussions about personal growth, values, and experiences to foster belonging and personal development.

Our staff is dedicated to fostering a positive environment focused on our four core values: **Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility**. To ensure that everyone benefits from the program, active participation and inclusion from all members are essential.

MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

Each 7th Grader will receive a FREE youth membership, valid through July 31st of the following summer after completing 7th grade.

Steps to Receive a Membership:

1. Activate Membership – Visit the Champaign Family Y with a parent or guardian to activate the membership anytime in the month of August going into your 7th grade year. **Bring a copy of your final 6th grade report card or upcoming 7th grade schedule.**
2. All 7th graders are eligible to take Iron Teens Training for a fee in order to utilize the weight room facilities without a parent. Registration for that program can be scheduled at any time at the Welcome Center and with a personal trainer.

Membership Guidelines:

- All 7th Grade members will receive a membership card, which must be at each visit to verify membership.
- Members have access to all YMCA indoor facilities, including the Fitness Center (following rules), Open Gym, Group Exercise Classes, and Swimming Pool.
- Members can participate in exclusive events and recreational activities, with free or reduced pricing on Y programs.
- Members must follow program rules and the YMCA Member Code of Conduct. Violations may result in suspension or revocation of membership.
- 7th Grade members can bring guests per our Y guest policy and fee schedule.
- For more details, refer to the YMCA Membership Handbook.

Youth Conduct and Corrective Action:

1. Initial Intervention: If a youth member displays unsafe or inappropriate behavior, staff will intervene respectfully to address the issue.
2. Guidance and Correction: Staff will explain what behavior is inappropriate and provide instructions for the safe use of equipment or acceptable behavior for the area.
3. Continued Misconduct: If the behavior persists, staff will reiterate the issue and ask the youth member to leave the facility for a one-week period. Parents will be notified.
4. Documentation and Notification: Staff will document the incident on the youth member's account and notify the parent/guardian via in person/phone/email about the incident and the decision to send their child home for the day.

Wellness Center and Youth:

- Youth must be at least 13 years old to use the Wellness Center. Those ages 13-15 must be with a parent/guardian at all times and both have signed our wellness center agreement, OR have completed Iron Teens coursework with Y fitness staff.
- Ages 16 and up – May use all areas of the Wellness Center.
- All youth must follow wellness center guidelines as detailed in the Member Handbook.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR 7TH GRADE INITIATIVE

As a parent or guardian, your support of the YMCA's 7th Grade Initiative is essential to your participant's success. By signing this acknowledgement form, you confirm that you've reviewed the program guidelines and commit to ensuring both you and your participant follow them. Please read the following statements carefully and sign to indicate your agreement and understanding.

- I have received the 7th Grade Initiative Participant Handbook and understand that it is my responsibility to follow the policies and ensure my participant understands the rules.
- I have read and understand the Facility Guidelines and agree to follow them.
- I understand that participation may be suspended or canceled for behavior that doesn't meet program policies.
- I acknowledge there are no refunds for suspensions or terminations.
- I understand the YMCA is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items.
- I understand the participant must register for Iron Teens program, if interested in using the Wellness Center without a parent present and before age 16.
- I understand the Y, through its staff and volunteers, will encourage participants to be active within the Y when it comes to teen and volunteer offerings.
- I understand the YMCA is a Bully Free Zone and that any form of bullying – such as name calling, intimidation, or derogatory language is not tolerated.

By signing below, you acknowledge and agree to uphold the responsibilities and expectations outlined in this form

School _____

Participant Name: _____ Participant Grade: _____

Participant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

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7TH GRADE INITIATIVE FAQ

What is the free 7th grade membership?

The Champaign Family YMCA's 7th Grade Initiative offers seventh-grade students at all Champaign County Schools a complimentary youth membership during their 7th grade year.

Why 7th grade?

Seventh grade is an important year in a teen's development. As students transition to middle school, they experience new opportunities, age out of most Y sports programs, and gain a greater sense of independence. This period of growth is when many begin to form lasting habits and values. By offering guidance and support during this time, we can help encourage positive behaviors and lay the groundwork for a healthy lifestyle that continues into adulthood.

How long is the membership effective?

Students are eligible for a complimentary 7th grade membership starting in the month of August, until they complete 7th grade. This membership will remain active until Aug 30th of the following summer after completing 7th grade.

What do I need to bring to prove that the student is in 7th grade?

You can provide a final 6th grade report card OR new 7th grade school schedule to verify the student's grade level.

What if the student is homeschooled?

Home schooled, or other private-school students who attend or live in Champaign County completing the required orientations are welcome in the program.

I don't have a YMCA membership. If I sign my 7th grader up for a membership, can I work out with them; will I also get a free membership?

This free membership is only available for current 7th graders. However, we would love family members to join the Y and enjoy the same benefits of membership. Complete a membership application and a member of our membership team will reach back with more information.

I have an existing membership that includes a 7th grader, do I get a discount?

If your 7th grader is the only youth/dependent on the family membership, you can downgrade to an adult only and have the youth do the free membership.

I just found out about this program; can I get reimbursed for the months I have already been paying for my 7th grader?

Any existing memberships will be adjusted at the time of enrollment into the 7th Grade Initiative. Enrollment will not be retroactive and must happen during the month of August each year.

If I have more than one 7th grader in my family (i.e. twins or triplets), is my family still eligible for this membership?

Absolutely.

Can a 7th grader sign up for this membership on their own, or does a parent/guardian need to be present to sign and complete the 7th grade membership application?

A parent or guardian must be present to sign and complete the 7th grade membership application. The parent/guardian will need to provide consent and assist with the registration process.

Is outdoor pool access included in the 7th Grade membership?

No, outdoor pool access is not included with the 7th Grade membership. To use the outdoor pool, a parent or guardian must have an Urbana City Pool membership at this time.

Are there any special activities for 7th graders? What can they do at the Y?

7th graders have access to all of the Champaign Family Y's indoor facilities (within guidelines), offering a wide range of activities. They can enjoy the gym, the swimming pool, designated areas of the fitness center, Group Exercise classes, enrichment activities, and special teen events. Please note that some programs require advanced registration, and fee-based programs offer a member discount.