

Afterschool \* Summer Camp \* Teen Initiative Program

# 2017 Parent Handbook




**“Our Provision of Hope Makes Each Step Possible”**

14 Legend Drive  
Arden NC 28704

(828) 290-4985

[StepsToHopeYouthCenter.com](http://StepsToHopeYouthCenter.com)

Like us on  [fb.com/stepstohopeyc](https://fb.com/stepstohopeyc)



## **Welcome to Steps to Hope Youth Center!!**

**Dear: Parents/Guardians,**

**We are glad that you have chosen us to provide your school age child with the opportunity to be a part of a program where they will be given the skills needed to; grow personally, attempt new activities, build upon their self-esteem, make new and long lasting friendships and memories.**

**We have made it our obligation to provide a safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment for your child. Our specially trained staff are dedicated to help your child have an incredible experience while attending Steps to Hope Youth Center.**

**We look forward to working with each family to create an individualized relationship that will best fit the needs of your family.**

**This handbook is our program guide. It is designed to answer your questions and assist you with understanding our policies, procedures and goals. This is also a contractual agreement between you, the parent/guardian, and Steps to Hope Youth Center.**

**We look forward to getting to know you and your child and developing a rewarding and long lasting relationship.**

## Hours of Operation

Afterschool will operate (Monday-Friday) from 3:00pm-6:00pm beginning the Monday following the 1<sup>st</sup> day the school year begins ending the last day of the school year. Throughout the school year the center will be open on teacher work days/holidays at 7:30am-6:00pm, inclement days (follow times/days announced on WLOS, the \$THYC website or Facebook page), Spring Break and Winter Break will operate (M-F) from 7:30am-5:30pm).

Steps to Hope Youth Center has a cut off time of 9:00am. No child will be allowed to attend for the day if they arrive after 9:00am. Parents should be aware of field trip times and adjust drop off times accordingly.

Summer Camp will operate (Monday-Friday) from 7:30am-5:30pm beginning the Monday following the last day of the school year. Parents should be aware of field trip times and adjust pick up times accordingly.

Teen Initiative Afterschool Program will operate (Monday-Friday) from 3:00pm-6:00pm beginning the Monday following the first day of the school year.

Teen Initiative Summer Program will operate (Monday-Friday) from 7:30am-6:00pm beginning the Monday following the last day of the school year. There will be late stay days made available throughout the summer program to provide additional activity time for teens. Late stay days will be announced well in advance.

## Holiday Closings

Steps to Hope Youth Center will be closed in observation of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Independence Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Day After
- Labor Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

## How Registration Works

Any parent/guardian wishing to enroll their child into any of our programs is encouraged to visit the program prior to enrollment. Registration forms can be accessed online by visiting our website: [www.stepstohopeyouthcenter.com](http://www.stepstohopeyouthcenter.com), or by visiting the business office of the center. Please note that the registration fee must be paid in full at the time of registration (All registration fees are non-refundable). A registration fee is due per child per program. For example: If your child attends afterschool and summer camp you will be required to pay a registration fee per program. Your child cannot attend any programs until all required documents are accurately completed and submitted to the administrator. The parent/guardian who completes and signs the registration documents is the only one authorized to make changes, deletions, additions, etc. to the documents.

### **The following is a list of the required documents:**

- Parent Tuition & Fee Agreement
- Youth Center Application
- Information About the Family
- Child's Health Care Needs
- Emergency Care Information/Emergency Contacts
- Releases/Receipt of Policies
- Field Trip Transportation & Obtain Grades Permission (Afterschool only)
- Aquatics Policy & Permission
- Child's Care
- Drop off and Pick Up Procedure
- Pick Up Authorization Form
- Discipline and Behavior Policy Receipt
- Behavior Contract
- Toys, Games & Electronic Contract
- Illness Policy, Sunscreen and Hand Sanitizer
- Financial Agreement Contract
- Tuition Express Auto Draft Form
- Current copy of child's immunization record
- Current color photo of your child (Wallet Size)
- Valid child care subsidy voucher, if applicable
- Custody Papers, if applicable

## All About Tuition

All programs offered at Steps to Hope Youth Center are full time. We do not offer part time care or drop in care. Tuition rates are not prorated for holiday or weather closings. Credit will not be given for days your child does not attend due to any circumstance. Parents receiving financial assistance through any third-party organization are required to follow the payment schedule, parent fee assigned, and rules set forth by the issuing agency. Any Family receiving financial assistance from The Department of Social Services (DSS) must apply and receive a new voucher for each school year as well as for summer camp. If a parent does not receive a new voucher by the first day the child attends, the parent will be responsible for full payment for the days the child attends care. Each parent is responsible for any fees deemed non-payable by DSS.

Parents tuition covers all costs to run the youth center. This includes staff salaries, supplies, building expenses, food, transportation. Additional fees may be requested for field trips and children's spending monies.

**Forms of Payment Accepted:** All fees must be paid through Procure Tuition Express Auto Draft Service and is to be set up with either a credit card, Debit Card or checking account.

**Payment Due Dates:** We have set up 2 options for you to choose from:

- **Option #1: Weekly draft-** All fees will be drafted each week on Friday's prior to your child receiving care.
- **Option #2: Monthly Draft-** All fees will be drafted the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month prior to your child receiving care. If the 1<sup>st</sup> falls on a weekend or holiday. Payment will be drafted the next business day.

**Insufficient Funds:** If a payment is returned by your bank you will be charged a \$35 return fee in addition to the tuition amount. Children will be unable to attend until the account is paid in full.

**Refunds & Cancellations:** All registration and tuition payments are non-transferable and non-refundable. If you decide to withdraw your child from care, you are required to give the director a 2-week written notice. If no notice is given your account will be charged a fee equal to 2 weeks of tuition.

## Arrival and Departure Policies

- Upon arrival, all children must be accompanied inside the facility by an adult and signed in using their first, last name and arrival time on the attendance sheet/kiosk.
- Staff must be notified of the child's arrival.
- Upon the child's departure, an adult must come inside the facility and notify staff that the child is leaving and sign the child out using first, last name and a departure time on the attendance sheet/kiosk.
- Children will only be released to persons listed on the child's application or pick up and drop off form as authorized by the parent/guardian. Staff will request to view a driver's license to verify identity of persons other than known parent/guardian.
- Authorization from parent/guardian is required verbally and in writing when anyone other than the designated person(s) listed on the child's application or drop off/pick up form arrives to pick up the child.
- When a child is transported by the facility to the child's home, an adult must be available to receive the child from the bus or van.
- Sign children in and out using your name per STHYC policies. Daily arrival and departure times must be recorded accurately.
- Children must never be left unattended.
- Children will not be allowed to leave with any person under 16 years of age.
- No child will be allowed to be picked up from field trip sites unless prior approval is made by the director.

## Late Pick Up Policy

Steps to Hope Youth Center closes at 5:30pm during summer camp and 6:00pm during afterschool/school's out days. A late fee of \$1 per min per child will be charged to you in the event you are late picking your child up from either program. If a child has not been picked up 30 mins after the program close and no authorized person has been reached, the DSS worker on call and the local police will be notified. This may result in termination from the program.

## Custody Issues

Parents must supply the director with a copy of the official custody papers to be kept on file. Without the proper paperwork on file STHYC staff must legally release children to either parent. STHYC will not get involved in custody disputes that cause too much conflict in regards to drop off, pick up and payments. ***Parents/Guardians are responsible for resolving these issues. STHYC will not take sides; we will adhere by the court order.***



## Intoxicated Adult Policy

STHYC will encourage any adult who appears to be intoxicated to call another emergency contact or another authorized adult to pick up the child, or request a taxi to transport the adult and child home safely. If the adult refuses to make a responsible decision about the safe transportation of the child the staff of STHYC will document the adults license plate number and call the police.

## Tobacco Policy

The use of any product containing, made of or derived from tobacco, including, but not limited to e-cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco, and hookahs, is not permitted on the premises of the Youth Center, in vehicles used to transport children, or during any off premises activities. This is a NC state rule and will be strictly enforced.

## Emergency Closings & Emergency Procedures

In the event the center must dismiss early due to inclement weather, water or heat problems or any other unforeseen circumstance each parent will be notified and ask to pick up their child as soon as possible. Children must be picked up within 1 hour of notification. Early closings will be listed on the website and Facebook page of STHYC. The staff of STHYC are trained and prepared to activate emergency procedures in the event of severe weather, fire and/or other emergency conditions that require building evacuation or other immediate safety shut in measures. In the event of such a situation, parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as the emergency allows time.

## Staff Ratios

As a licensed facility, we maintain staff/child ratios of 1:25 with a maximum group size of 25 school age children as per the North Carolina Enhanced Licensing Standards.

## Discipline & Behavior Management Policy

Steps to Hope Youth Center will use positive behavior management techniques that are developmental appropriate and that adhere to the center's behavior policy as found in your new registration packet.

### Behavior Management Techniques

- Each staff will encourage children to adhere to the “center rules”. Staff will guide children by setting clear and concise expectations.
- Staff will redirect children to more acceptable behaviors or activities.
- Staff will use positive reinforcement, including a positive behavior reward program.
- Staff will be open to listen to a child's concerns and frustrations. Being sure to keep good eye contact and responding with, “I understand how you feel”
- Staff will guide children to try to resolve peer to peer conflicts through conflict resolution skills.
- Staff will praise and encourage children.
- Staff will modify and structure the environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
- Staff will use short periods of “Time Out”

### Discipline Guidelines

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Verbal Warning (Child will be told this is a verbal warning)
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Time Out Appropriate for the age of the child
3. Director/Parent/ Teacher Conference

Repeated misbehavior may result in:

- 1 Day suspension
  - 3 Day suspension
  - 5 Day suspension
  - Permanent suspension for the remainder of the school year or summer camp.
- \*The director will communicate all suspensions. Payment credit will not be given for days the child is suspended.



## Termination of Services

Steps to Hope Youth Center strives to work with parents and situations that may arise throughout the time your child is under our care. However, there may be times when services are terminated due to the following circumstances:

- Non-Payment of fees.
- The child if unable or unwilling to follow the program rules and program guidelines and/or reasonable alternatives for behavior management have been exhausted.
- Deliberate disregard for rules or extreme disruptive behavior by a child parent or guardian.
- Custody situations that involve parents who are unable to resolve their differences as they relate to the operation of STHYC.
- Parent continuously picks up their child past closing time.

## What to Bring to Steps to Hope Youth Center

During summer camp children, should bring a small back pack with the following:

- Water bottle: Please be sure to label with your child's name. Your child should bring the water bottle every day.
- STHYC does provide breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack daily. However, if you choose to send your child to the center with a lunch prepared from home please be sure it meets CACFP components of at least 4 of the following: Milk, 2 or more fruits and vegetables, meat or meat alternative, bread or bread alternative. Lunches must be labeled with the child's name and the date. Food from home cannot be shared with other children.
- Do not send you child to Steps to Hope Youth Center with expensive items or valuables of any kind. STHYC is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

## What Should Children Wear to Steps to Hope Youth Center

- Clothes must be comfortable
- Clothes that children can get dirty
- Shoes that are closed toed
- Clothes are free from offensive images or language
- No short shorts
- No mid-drift shirts
- No exposed undergarments

## Children with Special Needs

Steps to Hope Youth Center welcomes all children with disabilities to the extent that is reasonable and allows us to care for the child in a group setting. We request that all information on children with special needs be provided on the registration form. The parent/guardian should discuss with the director, prior to enrollment the specific needs of the child. There may be a time when a child's illness, behavior, or special need goes beyond the scope of care the staff can provide in a group setting. If the safety and wellbeing of the child and other children are at risk the parent/guardian will be contacted and ask to pick up the child.

## Health and Safety

The children's health and safety is our top priority. Immunization records are required for each child. Immunization records must be kept current. If you chose not to have your child immunized an exempt form must be completed by the parent. We ensure areas and equipment used by children are sanitized daily. Meals and snacks provided are nutritious, and children have portion large enough to satisfy hunger. All children are allowed to play outside at least 1 hour per day (weather permitting). In the event, your child is injured, an incident report will be completed by the staff and the STHYC staff will inform the parent/guardian verbally of the injury at the time of pick up. The STYC staff will call the parent should a child sustain a head injury. If a medical emergency or accident requiring a doctor's treatment, we will contact the parent/guardian immediately, and emergency personnel if necessary. Emergency medical personnel will take the child to the emergency room via ambulance if the situation warrants immediate measures.

## Transportation

Steps to Hope Youth Center will provide transportation within the limits of the law. We will be sure to obey all motor vehicle laws, including vehicle inspections, insurance, and vehicle restraint requirements. Children will not be left alone in a vehicle under any circumstance and child-ratio will be maintained.

## Medication Policy

Steps to Hope Youth Center shall not administer prescription medication, topical, non-medical ointment, repellent, lotion, cream or powder to any child without written permission and instructions by the parent or doctor, which shall include: the name of the medication, amount to be given, frequency of the dose, the name of the prescribing physician, and date the prescription was filled. These types of medications have to be in its original container, labeled with the child's name. If a child has a

permission on file and refuses to take any dose, the incident will be documented on the medication log and verbally communicated with the parent/guardian. Please note that the first dose will not be given while at the center. This dose should be given at home under the watchful care of a parent or legal guardian. State licensing regulations require medications be locked at all times. Please do not send medication in your child's personal belongings. Medications are to be delivered to the group leader or director by the parent. STHYC does not administer over the counter medications to children under any circumstance.

We recognize the need for immediate access of certain emergency medications as: insulin, inhalers and epi-pens. These types of medications will be kept unlocked and on the person of the child's group leader. At no time, will a child be allowed to keep these medications or any other medication with them. This is a state rule and will be enforced. If the use of an epi-pen is required a staff person will call 911 and contact the child's parent/guardian immediately after administration.

### **Sick or Ill Children**

To ensure the well-being of all children and staff, please be considerate and do not send your child to Steps to Hope Youth Center while sick. If your child shows signs of illness or develops symptoms such as a fever, rash, diarrhea, or vomiting the night or morning before attending the youth center please keep your child at home to prevent the spread of any virus. If your child becomes sick while at STHYC and is unable to participate in the indoor or outdoor daily activities, they will be sent home. If you are asked to pick up your child due to illness, **you must do so within 1 hour of receiving the phone call.** If your child has a confirmed cause of a contagious illness/condition, he/she must be kept at home until the condition is considered non-contagious by a physician and all symptoms have subsided. You will be asked to provide the director with a "return to school" note from the child's doctor's office or local hospital before the child will be able to return to the center. Examples of contagious diseases are:

- Strep Throat
- Chicken Pox
- Pink Eye
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease
- Impetigo
- Lice
- Flu
- Etc.

These types disease spread quickly among children and shall be reported to the director. If head lice are detected while your child is attending the center, your child

will need to be picked up immediately. A child with head lice will not be able to return to STHYC until they are treated and are lice and nit free. The child will also need a note from the doctor noting the child has been treated and my return to the center.

## Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Our Goal is to protect children while in our care. Steps to Hope Youth Center is required by law to report any cases where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused, neglected or exploited, either sexually, physically, or emotionally. We will cooperate with the authorities during the investigation of any reported cases. The report will be made to the Buncombe County Department of Social Services- Department of Child Protective Services (828) 250-5500. The reports can be made anonymously to Child Protective Services. Steps to Hope Youth Center's group leaders receive training on mandate reporting abuse and neglect and suspicions of abuse and neglect as part of their new staff orientation within the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 weeks of employment.

## How to File a Complaint

Steps to Hope Youth Center has an open-door policy. We are here to address any questions or concerns you may have about your child's experience and about the program. We encourage you to report all problems to the director. At no time are you to address the staff personally if the problem is with a staff member. If a parent has an issue with another child in the program, please address those concerns with an adult, in private and never attempt to address an issue with children present unless the issue is with your own child.

## Schedule of Daily, Weekly, and Monthly Cleaning

NC Licensing regulations require that we inform all parents of our cleaning schedule to help insure the health and safety of children. Below is a chart that outlines the areas in the center, the method used to clean the area, and how often they are cleaned.

\*Disinfected agents: Clorox Bleach and Water (Diluted to 200mil or 500mil)

<b><i>Kitchen Area</i></b>	<b>Cleaned</b>	<b>Disinfected</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Tabletops/Counters Used to service food	With soap & water	With 200 spray	Before & after food is served
Food prep areas	With soap & water	With 200 spray	Before & after food is served
Floors	With soap & water	With a concentrated floor disinfected	Swept daily & moped daily and when soiled
Refrigerator	With soap & water	With 200 spray	Once per month
<b>Rest Rooms</b>	<b>Cleaned</b>	<b>Disinfected</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Handwashing Sinks	With soap & water	With 200 spray	Daily & when soiled
Faucets and Handles	With soap & water	With 200 spray	Daily & when soiled
Soap Dispensers	With soap & water	With 200 spray	When soiled & when being refilled
Toilet Bowls	With soap & water	With 500 spray	Daily & when soiled
Toilet Seats	With soap & water	With 500 spray	Daily & when soiled
Flushing handles	With soap & water	With 500 spray	Daily & when soiled
Urinals	With soap & water	With 500 spray	Daily & when soiled
Floors	With soap & water	With a concentrated floor disinfected	Swept daily & moped daily and when soiled
<b>Classroom Areas</b>	<b>Cleaned</b>	<b>Disinfected</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Table Tops	With soap & water	With 200 spray	Before & after use
Chairs	With soap & water	With 200 spray	Before & after use
Dress-up Clothes	With laundry soap & water	With laundry soap & water	Weekly & when soiled
Area Rugs	With carpet soap & water	With carpet soap & water	Vacuumed daily & shampooed monthly
Floors	With soap & water	With a concentrated floor disinfected	Swept daily & moped daily and when soiled
Trash	With soap & water	With 200 spray	Trash is removed daily and when it becomes full
<b>Playground</b>			Inspected daily before use. A playground inspection is performed monthly

## USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Individuals who deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish)

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.