



**Amazing Afternoons Program**  
**PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**2025-2026**

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## **Our Mission**

The Department of Parks, Recreation & Culture provides quality programs, facilities and parks in accordance with the priorities established in the City of Gaithersburg's Strategic Plan. These programs, which are available to persons of all ages & cultures, are designed to enhance quality of life and encourage a sense of pride in the community, highlighting Gaithersburg as an outstanding place to live, work, learn & play.

## **What to Expect**

The Amazing Afternoons After School Program provides a safe, supportive, and engaging environment. By offering a variety of enriching activities, from homework help to recreational and creative projects, we strive to create a space where students feel secure, supported, and inspired to explore new interests and build lasting friendships. Our goal is to help every child thrive in a positive and nurturing atmosphere.

## **Program Standards**

The City of Gaithersburg maintains the following standards for youth programs:

- All hired staff have been through a state and federal background check.
- At least two staff members on site are certified in CPR and First Aid.
- Staff are knowledgeable and trained in positive youth development safety procedures.
- Monthly emergency drills are conducted.
- Maintain a minimum staffing ratio of 1:10 participants.
- Have a daily check-in and check-out procedure to ensure safety.

## **Required Information to Participate in Amazing Afternoons**

At the time of registration, please provide important information about your child to help us provide the best experience and care possible.

Provide update information on:

- Food and medication allergies
- Any special needs your child might have.
- Medication Administration form (if your child requires medication while in program)
- Accurate parent/guardian contact information (phone numbers, e-mail, address) and emergency contact information.

## **Program Fees**

Amazing Afternoons is free to all participants. Specialty activities such as Half Day Hooplas, Break Blasts and Spring Break Camp have fees.

## **Financial Assistance**

City of Gaithersburg residents may apply for financial assistance. Financial Assistance is based on City residency, family's prior year's household income & family size. Applications are available online and at the Activity Center at Bohrer Park (506 S. Frederick Ave).

Supplemental documentation is required”

- Tax Return
- Public and Non-Public Benefits/Assistance
- Copy of Lease or Mortgage Statement
- Copy of recent Utility Bill(s)

For more information or questions, contact Deborah Mubiru at 301-258-6350.

### **Participants & Staff**

Our program serves students in grades first through fifth and participants must attend the school in which the program is offered. Participants are organized into units of about 20 students and the number of units are based on the number of total participants registered. Each unit is supervised by a Senior Counselor, who is at least a high school graduate, and at least one co-counselor who has completed at least tenth grade. All programs have one or more Team Leaders & an Assistant Team Leader. These positions are normally filled by college-age students.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

The City of Gaithersburg is committed to making reasonable accommodations as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you believe you need any special accommodation, please reach out to the program supervisor for support.

### **Inclusion Program**

Children with disabilities may be eligible to participate in our programs, and an inclusion companion may be assigned to work one-on-one with your child to enhance their experience. The objective of this program is to mainstream the child into the overall program setting. The emphasis is not to give special or unusual attention to children, which tends to set individuals apart, but rather to create an atmosphere of friendship and acceptance. In order to prepare for the potential needs of all of our participants, registration and requests for companions must be made no later than three weeks before the start of program, by contacting Jocelynn Thomas at [Jocelynn.Thomas@gaiithersburgmd.gov](mailto:Jocelynn.Thomas@gaiithersburgmd.gov)

### **Withdrawals**

If you no longer want your child to attend the program, notify our team as soon as possible via email at [ASP@gaiithersburgmd.gov](mailto:ASP@gaiithersburgmd.gov).

## **Program Schedule and Pick-up Procedures**

### **Magnificent Mondays- Summit Hall ES**

- Program Start Time: 3:25pm
- Pick-up: Beginning at 5:30 pm and no later than 6:00 pm
- Pick-up Location: Double doors near the gym

### **Terrific Tuesdays – Brown Station ES**

- Program Start Time: 3:25pm
- Pick-up: Beginning at 5:30 pm and no later than 6:00 pm
- Pick-up Location: Double doors near the gym

### **Winning Wednesdays – Washington Grove ES**

- Program Start Time: 3:55pm
- Pick-up: Beginning at 6:00 pm and no later than 6:30 pm
- Pick-up Location: Double doors near the gym

### **Tremendous Thursdays – Harriet Tubman ES**

- Program Start Time: 3:55pm
- Pick-up: Beginning at 6:00pm and no later than 6:30 pm
- Pick-up Location: Double doors near the gym

### **Thrilling Thursdays – Fields Road ES**

- Program Start Time: 3:25pm
- Pick-up: Beginning at 5:30 pm and no later than 6:00 pm
- Pick-up Location: Gym double doors

### **Fantastic Fridays – Gaithersburg ES**

- Program Start Time: 3:25pm
- Pick-up: Beginning at 5:30 pm and no later than 6:00 pm
- Pick-up Location: Double doors near the gym

### **Pick-up**

At the City of Gaithersburg, we take our responsibility for the safety of your child seriously. All individuals picking up a child MUST be prepared to present a valid PHOTO ID matching the name as it appears on the approved pick up list provided by the parent/guardian during registration.

Failure to provide an ID could result in longer wait times when picking up as we confirm identity. All participants should be picked up no later than the time indicated in the program schedule.

## **Late fee**

A fee of \$1 per minute, per child will be assessed at the time of a late pick up and will be collected by the Team Leader or can be paid at the Activity Center at Bohrer Park.

## **Attendance**

To serve as many students as possible, and because our programs often have a waitlist, consistent attendance is required. Students who miss more than three (3) sessions may be withdrawn from the program to allow space for others who are waiting to participate.

## **Units**

Each site is divided into units based on age, grade and the number of participants registered. Units are assigned the first week. We understand that participants want to be with friends and sometimes register for that reason. Our staff are here to cultivate and foster the relationships between participants through the various activities they plan for their units. There are times throughout the day where units will come together. Requests for participants to move units will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and should be brought to the attention of the Team Leaders or Site Supervisor.

## **Daily Activities**

Students will enjoy a variety of fun and enriching activities including arts & crafts, sports, and team building games. Activities are broken down in 30 minute rotations. Homework time is during the last 30 minutes of program.

## **Daily Attire**

Please send your child in appropriate clothing each day, taking into consideration the weather forecast and program activities (both indoors and outdoors). Sneakers or athletic footwear is required, no sandals or flip flops will be allowed. Please remember to label your child's belongings.

## **Personal Items**

Participants are discouraged from bringing money and electronics to program. If a participant brings these items, they should be properly stored in their backpack. The City of Gaithersburg is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

## **Snack**

The MCPS Department of Food & Nutrition Services provides an optional snack. Participants can also bring their own snacks. All food should be non-perishable as refrigerators and microwaves may not be available. Participants must bring a refillable water bottle daily. Please limit nut products and speak with your child about food sharing. We do not allow the sharing snacks with participants outside of their household.

## **Behavior Management**

Appropriate behavior by is always expected. All participants must sign a Character Agreement after reviewing expectations on behavior and turn it in on the first day of program. Staff will partner with parents/guardians to address inappropriate or unsafe behavior, resolve conflicts, and encourage positive interactions. Participants who remain disruptive after consultation with parents/guardians may be subject to suspension or dismissal.

Any participant behavior that creates an unsafe environment (physical or emotional) for themselves or others and requires repeated intervention will be documented through a Participant Safety Report (Appendix A). Reports track safety concerns, indicate the level of action taken, and may require parent/guardian signature to acknowledge receipt of report. Below are the categories indicated in the safety report.

- Log- Minor record of incident and does not require parent/guardian signature.
- Warning- Formal notice to participant and guardian when behavior becomes a challenge. Report requires a parent/guardian signature.
- Early Dismissal/Suspension- For serious or unsafe behavior that poses an immediate danger; children may be sent home early or suspended. Requires parent/guardian signature.
- Removal from Program- If unsafe behavior continues to endanger the participant or others (including physical or emotional safety), removal from the program may occur. Requires parent/guardian signature.

\*Serious or disruptive/destructive behavior that interferes with the safety of others will not be tolerated and could result in immediate dismissal with no previous notice to a parent/guardian.

### **Toileting Regulations**

If a participant has two (2) toileting accidents during program, they may be removed from the program. Please let your child's Team Leader(s) know if you have any concerns.

### **Extreme Heat**

Outdoor activities may be limited, and code red and high temperature alerts are issued. Activities may still be held outdoors for short periods of time during these days and frequent water breaks will be encouraged.

### **Emergency Cancellations**

We will work with the school to determine if there is an emergency cancellation to ensure students are not dismissed to the after-school program. In the event of an emergency cancellation, program staff will contact parents/guardians via email as soon as possible to provide notification. If you have any questions related to an emergency cancellation, please email [asp@gaithersburgmd.gov](mailto:asp@gaithersburgmd.gov) or call (240) 956-8048.

### **Health and Safety**

#### **Health Care**

The health and safety of participants and staff is our number one priority. There are multiple CPR and First Aid certified staff on site and available throughout the day. Participants should be in good health when attending the program. If there are any indications of illness, we will contact parents/guardians to pick their child to ensure the health and safety of all participants and staff.

*A child will NOT be permitted to attend program with the following conditions:*

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher

- Vomiting
- Yellow or green nasal discharge
- Any contagious disease (such as chickenpox, ringworm, scabies/lice, conjunctivitis, impetigo). We follow the state guidelines for exclusion for all communicable diseases, including COVID-19.
- Unexplained rash
- Any symptoms requiring one-on-one care or causing severe discomfort without the use of medications

Amazing Afternoons follow guidelines provided by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH).

## **Medications**

- All medications must be checked in with the Team Leader. Please do not pack medications in participant's belongings.
- All prescription medication brought must:
  - Be in the original prescription container.
  - Be accompanied by written orders (Medication Administration Authorization form) that is signed by a health care provider and parent.
  - Include the participant's name, dosage, and time to be administered.

All medication, including over the counter (Ex. vitamins, ointments, ibuprofen, etc.), must be checked in with Team Leaders and accompanied by written orders (Medication Administration Authorization form) that is signed by a health care provider and parent/guardian.

All medications will be stored in a lock box. Emergency medications (epi-pen, inhaler) may be carried by participant with parent/guardian and health care provider approval or be with the staff member assigned to the participant's unit at all times.

## **What Participants Bring to Program**

Participants should be dressed comfortably and ready to engage in recreational activities.

Electronics should be kept away in participants backpacks. Should a family want to reach out to a child, they can contact the program at 240-956-8048. For Harriet Tubman ES only, call 240-805-0018.

# Appendix A

## Participant Safety Report



Participant Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit/Site: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Log    \_\_\_ Warning    \_\_\_ Suspension/Early Dismissal    \_\_\_ Dismissal from Program

Parent Notified: \_\_\_ YES    \_\_\_ NO  
**Parent must be notified for a Log, Warning, Suspension/Early Dismissal or Dismissal from Program.**

**What Occurred:** Include objective information; opinions should be noted as such.

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Steps Taken to Improve the Situation:

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Name of person completing report: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Team Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Senior Camp Supervisor (Not for Log): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Division Chief (Not for Log): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*We regret to inform you that your child's behavior does not comply with the agreed guidelines set forth by this department to ensure the positive experience for all our participants and staff. We would appreciate your support and reinforcement of the Character Agreement.*

*Please be advised that behavior such as this is not acceptable and may lead to suspension and/or removal from the program. Please contact the Team Leader if you wish to discuss this matter further. Signing this form is an acknowledgment of this agreement and any future repercussions.*

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_