

YMCA Beyond the Bell®

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

The YMCA of Niagara and District School Board of Niagara would like to invite your child to participate in YMCA Beyond the Bell during the 2026-2027 school year.

YMCA Beyond the Bell is an academic-based after school program that keeps the well-being of every child in mind. With a program curriculum designed by a panel of Ontario Certified Teachers, the YMCA Beyond the Bell program emphasises literacy, numeracy, recreation, and homework help all in a fun play-based structure. We provide an environment for children to play and learn that is structured, supervised, supportive and safe.

New this year is a redesigned curriculum that focuses on program structure and consistency while also using the Ontario school curriculum as a guideline for our activities and programming. We are planning a year of fun activities, special guests and new opportunities for learning.

Students will have the opportunity to attend YMCA Beyond the Bell 4 days per week, Monday to Thursday, with program timings differing depending on the school your child attends:

Lincoln Centennial Public School - End of school day to 5:30pm

Harriet Tubman Public School - End of the school day to 5:15pm.

Please be aware that the program is only open to students attending either Harriet Tubman Public School or Lincoln Centennial Public School. We have limited space at each location and no means of transportation. Therefore, we are unable to accept registrations from other school communities.

YMCA Beyond the Bell is scheduled to begin the first week of October. There is no cost for your child to participate thanks to the generous support of local donors, funders and community partners. YMCA Beyond the Bell is designed for students in grades 2 to 5 with school referral.

Students will be provided with an after-school snack in the program and have the opportunity to participate in variety of structured activities. Program activities include homework time, literacy and numeracy activities, gym games, social skills, creative activities, and more!

We look forward to your child's participation in YMCA Beyond the Bell. To register your child for the program please:

1. Review the enclosed Program Information to ensure you are clear on program elements and expectations, and feel the program is a good fit for your child.
2. Use the QR below or visit the YMCA Beyond the Bell webpage at www.ymcaofniagara.ca and complete the Inquiry Form. Once we receive the completed form, a member of the YMCA Beyond the Bell team will then contact you to discuss the information that you have submitted.

Please Note Completion of the inquiry form does not guarantee registration in Beyond the Bell. Preference will be given to those students who have been referred to the program by school administration. Please wait until you have received confirmation from the Beyond the Bell team before having your child attend.**

In the meantime, if you have questions or would like more information about the program please contact us.

Sincerely,

The YMCA Beyond the Bell Team
YMCA of Niagara, Community Outreach
beyondthebell@niagara.ymca.ca



Use the QR code for more information and complete the Beyond the Bell Inquiry Form!

YMCA Beyond the Bell® Program Information

A typical day at YMCA Beyond the Bell

Although each program differs based on our curriculum, the children, and their needs, below is a sample of the activities offered at YMCA Beyond the Bell.

- Social Skill activities (15 minutes)
- Nutrition break and snack (20 minutes)
- Homework and educational activities (45 minutes)
- Physical Activity (60 minutes)

Attendance

YMCA Beyond the Bell offers a select number of spaces for students. Students who are registered in the program are required to meet the minimum attendance requirement in order to maintain their space in the program. If participants do not attend an average of 2 program days per week, they will jeopardize their space in the program and may be removed from the program. Exceptions will be considered for extenuating circumstances, please speak to the program supervisor for more information.

Arrival and Pick Up

Each child must arrive at the program immediately after school dismissal on their scheduled days. If your child is unable to attend, parents/caregivers are required to inform the program supervisor about their child's absence prior to the start of the program.

At the end of program, each child must be signed out by an adult over the age of 16 that is listed on the Registration Form. All individuals listed under parent/caregiver and alternative contact are automatically given authorization to pick up the child. Additional pick ups can be listed on the Registration Form. Individuals picking up must be prepared and willing to show valid Government Issued Photo Identification.

Regular sign out will occur at the front school doors at the end of the program day. For early pick up parents/caregivers can call the on-site YMCA staff using the phone number posted at the front door and the staff will bring out the appropriate child.

Behaviour Management Procedures

It is our goal to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment. Beyond the Bell emphasises the YMCA core values through activities based on caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, inclusion, health, and advocacy. Children who attend YMCA programs are expected to follow the behaviour guidelines and to interact appropriately within the group. Admission into and discharge from the YMCA Beyond the Bell program will be at the discretion of the YMCA.

Behaviour Guidelines

The following guidelines are put in place to ensure all children enjoy their YMCA program experience. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in suspension or removal from YMCA programs.

- People are responsible for their actions, choices and words.
- We respect each other and the environment.
- Honesty will be the basis for all relationships and interactions.

- We will care for ourselves and those around us, make healthy and safe choices and value diversity and seek to include others.

YMCA Staff

The YMCA Beyond the Bell program offers a low 1:5 leader-to-student ratio to allow for individual support. Unfortunately, the YMCA is **not able** to provide 1 to 1 support, or specialized support.

YMCA Beyond the Bell staff teams are carefully selected based on their maturity, area of study and education, experience with children, and ability to role model the YMCA Values. YMCA staff all have Standard First Aid/CPR-C, submit a Criminal Record Check (18+) and receive training in YMCA Child Protection Policies and Procedures.

Outdoor Play

The YMCA strives to provide safe outdoor play for all participants. If weather permits, we will utilize outdoor space at the school for recreational activities. Please ensure your child has appropriate clothing for the weather to ensure full participation in the program.

Program Measurement

The YMCA will complete independent pre and post assessments in the program related to literacy, numeracy, and physical literacy. The purpose of the assessment is to measure the effectiveness of the program, and to allow the YMCA to speak to the impact of the program for ongoing funding. Communication about the program measurement will be in general terms and results will not be linked to specific children. The privacy of all participants is of the utmost importance to the YMCA. Specific information related to student progress will only be shared between the school, YMCA program staff and parents/caregivers when appropriate. The program measurement has been approved by the District School Board of Niagara research committee. For more information about the program measurement please speak to the YMCA Beyond the Bell Team. They can be contacted via email at beyondthebell@niagara.ymca.ca.

Privacy

As a charitable, community-based association, the YMCA of Niagara is committed to protecting your right to privacy. The personal information you share with the YMCA will be used to support the work of the YMCA.

Concussion

If a child is suspected to have sustained a concussion (based on presented signs and/or symptoms) for their safety, they will be immediately removed from the YMCA program. The parent/caregiver will be contacted. The child will not be permitted to return until they are medically capable of full participation in the program. Confirmation from a medical professional may be required.