



YMCA

We build strong kids,
strong families, strong communities.

ARTHUR M. BLANK FAMILY YOUTH

Better Beginnings School Age Program

YOUTH FIT FOR LIFE

GE³T IT

YOUNG GUYS & GIRLS ENGAGED, EDUCATED, AND EMPOWERED

YOUTH FIT FOR
LIFE!



WE GE³T IT!

THROUGH EDUCATION, WELLNESS, AND ENRICHMENT



GE³T IT CLUB

Engaged, Educated and Empowered
through Education, Sports, Wellness and Enrichment

BETTER BEGINNINGS AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

As the nation's largest provider of child care services, the YMCA is dedicated to providing high-quality affordable child care. Locally, the YMCA is the largest single employer of child care staff and the largest nonprofit provider of child care services in Metropolitan Atlanta serving 7,000 + children daily.

Arthur M. Blank Family Youth YMCA's (CPY) Better Beginnings After School Program is a state licensed program regulated and monitored by Bright From The Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. The program is approved by the principal, and regulated and monitored by the Atlanta Public Schools Department for Learning Excellence Expanded Day/Special Projects.

Each day the Better Beginnings Program provides activities that focus on the mind, body, and spirit. Activities include homework assistance, CRCT prep, arts & crafts, health & wellness activities like indoor rock climbing, flag football, basketball, cheerleading & dance, track, Tae Kwon Do, and enrichment and gender specific activities that foster personal development and social bonding.

The YMCA Better Beginnings Program operates on a 1:15 staff to student ratio. To ensure the safety of the children, all staff are to have a satisfactory background check. CPY seeks to employ only qualified, trained and experienced staff collaborate with local school administrators and consult with teachers and para-professionals to ensure that the needs of every child are met.

The GE³T IT Club is a thematic and brain-based program offered to all children in the Better Beginnings After School program. Themes are important because they are a source to motivate and provide practical relevancy in their lives. The themes chosen are designed for respective groups to develop and deepen the children's interactions with each other, build continuity, and a deeper knowledge of the content and themselves. We know there are structural and functional differences in male and female brains and gender-different approaches to learning that result primarily from brain differences. As such, children are grouped according to gender. The program is designed to demonstrate our philosophy and instill the core values in our children, families, and communities. Our mission is to provide academic, health & wellness, and enrichment gender experiences that develop the whole child, providing opportunities to become more self-reliant, self-sufficient individuals while developing relationships that will positively affect themselves and their communities.

The three core areas of the Better Beginnings GE³ T IT program are: Mind, Body, and Spirit

MIND - Academic Enhancement

The YMCA creates and maintains an atmosphere that promotes learning. After children receive a nutritious snack approved by the USDA's Child and Adult Care Program (CACFP), children spend at least 45 minutes completing homework. Homework assistance, educational activities, creative art projects, spelling bee and public speaking competitions, and chess are activities scheduled to expand the child's sense of self and help to support a student's success in school. Children are grouped according to grade and gender because studies indicate boys and girls learn differently and that these differences can best be responded to by differentiating their instruction and learning environment, and single-sex settings to improve classroom behavior and social development.

BODY - Physical Fitness & Wellness Program

The federal government's Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends at least an hour a day of exercise for children. CPY Youth Fit For Life Program ensures children are participating in 60 minutes of scheduled physical activity daily. The CPY's Youth Fit For Life Program ensures children are meeting the standards by participating in co-ed organized sports. Through vigorous physical activity, we are creating brain cells so teachers can fill them. The underlying philosophy is to instruct kids how to monitor and maintain their own health and fitness, so the lessons learned will serve them for life. Promoting good health habits and vigorous physical activities help improve brain development and reduce factors of obesity, juvenile diabetes, asthma, etc. Children will be empowered through team sport activities like basketball, flag football, cheerleading & dance, Tae Kwon Do, jump rope, track, as well as learn sportsmanship, values and the life long benefits of staying active and engaging in a healthy lifestyle.

SPIRIT - Social Development

Encouraging children to engage in discussions about topics that affect them individually and collectively. Students will improve self-esteem and self-awareness by learning about their culture, their history, and their responsibility in honoring both. In addition to community service learning projects, instruction in conflict resolution, etiquette, hygiene, etc., are incorporated in daily activities.

Our staff teach the core values of honesty, caring, respect, and responsibility and provide positive reinforcement. We encourage children to engage in discussions about topics that affect them and the world while integrating conflict resolution and participating in service learning projects. During these activities, children are grouped according to gender. **Why same sex development?** Research indicates same-sex development builds confidence in young students and allows them to concentrate more on their studies. Same-sex bonding is emotionally easier on students. Girls are more outspoken and competitive when boys are not around, and boys tend to become less competitive and collaborate more in the absence of girls.



2009 - 2010 Better Beginnings Program Themes

Grandparents

What children need most are the essentials that grandparents provide in abundance. They give unconditional love, kindness, patience, humor, comfort, lessons in life. And, most importantly, cookies. ~Rudolph Giuliani

Grandparents are the family “watchdog”, nurturer, family historian, and companion. We want to honor them for their legacy, strength, courage, and wisdom. The month will culminate with grandparents invited to spend the afternoon with their grandchild and listen as we pay homage to them.

Music & Dance Appreciation

If our children only knew! This will be the opportunity to show them. Children will learn different genres of music/dance/artist, and watch movies of famous musicals. The month will culminate with a Senior/Sock HOP, Hip Hop Dance where different genres of music will be celebrated.

Empower ME Nutrition Program, “Eat Well, Live Well”

The childhood obesity rate in Georgia is one of the worst in the nation. During this month, children will learn the importance of nutrition, learn the importance of an active, healthy lifestyle by preparing healthy snacks.

Service: GE³T In the Community

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, “Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., students will give back to the community by coordinating volunteer opportunities at the Atlanta Community Food Bank, senior centers, and many other organizations in need. Parents are encouraged to serve with their children.

African American History

Children will learn their culture by writing and reciting poetry, reciting historic speeches, performing monologues about famous Africans and African-American figures. During this month children will learn daily events in African-American history. The month will culminate with an African/African - American History Program.

“In My Own Words”

This month we will celebrate our children, their accomplishments, what they learned, and how they have grown. Children will share their stories parents. Parents will participate in a year end celebration in tribute to our children.

Youth Fit For Life

Our complete health approach begins in the school's Physical Education class using HopSports Training Systems, a multimedia instructional tool for physical education teachers, delivered through Digital Video Recorder (Dm) technology. With 70 fitness lessons plans (more than enough for two years of programming) that meet state and national standards, the HOPSports system focuses on fitness and health-related issues such as good nutrition, weight management, anti-smoking, anti-violence, and other important health-related issues.

The HOPSports system follows the standards of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). Each lesson plan of HOPSports is correlated with the national standards and is consistent with the essential skills that all children need in order to maintain a physically active and healthy lifestyle. Additionally, HOPSports uses the expertise of Atlanta Falcons players and cheerleaders to teach the fundamentals of sport specific curriculum. Children are exposed to various aerobic activities, pilates, stretching & bands, yoga, swimming, baseball, and various other activities that they normally would never be exposed to in a traditional PE class.

Through its customized database, the YMCA compares pre- and post-assessments to track the progress made in each measured area. Results have been used to adjust Wellness Plans and tailor individual PE classes to address concerns flagged by pre-assessment data. Another great benefit of HOPSports is that PE classes can double in size, thus increasing physical activity and allowing for more teacher planning time or specialized instruction. This is what your YMCA measures:

- ☑ **Height/Weight** – Illustrates how much a child is growing naturally, or gaining or losing weight abnormally.
- ☑ **Sit and reach** – Measures the flexibility of the lower back and hamstring muscles.
- ☑ **One minute sit-up** – Measures endurance of abdominal and hip-flexor muscles. Core training is important to maintaining overall body strength.
- ☑ **One minute push-up** – Assess strength and endurance of upper body muscle groups.
- ☑ **Leg/trunk strength** – Measures back and leg strength.
- ☑ **Vertical jump** – Power = Strength x Speed, therefore, Vertical jump is a key indicator of both leg strength and speed.
- ☑ **Shuttle run** - Measures speed and aerobic endurance
- ☑ **3-cone run time** – Measures agility, including speed, quickness, flexibility, change of direction, body control.

HOPSports can also be used for the faculty and staff as their own personal gym. Weekly workouts can be used to keep physically fit, build teamwork, camaraderie and, to simply just have fun.

Arthur M. Blank Family Youth YMCA Better Beginnings FAQs

What is the cost of the Better Beginnings After School Program?

The cost of the Better Beginnings After School Program is \$65.00.

Is there a registration fee?

Yes, there is a \$25.00 annual program fee for each child enrolled. If you are a member of the YMCA then there is no program fee. The annual program fee is due in January for preschool participants and

Is there a discount for additional children?

There is a 10% discount for each additional child.

Does the YMCA provide financial assistance?

Yes, scholarships are based upon the household income. Fill out scholarship application and provide 2 recent check stubs. Applications are located at the front desk. The application is usually reviewed within 48 hours. If the application is approved, applicant will receive confirmation via email or by written correspondence. Normal fees apply until notification of approval.

How long are the scholarships valid?

Scholarships provided by the YMCA will be valid for up to 180 days.

If awarded, can I reapply for assistance after 180 days?

We encourage you to, just repeat the application process.

Does my scholarship carry over to other YMCA programs?

No, you must apply for assistance for each program.

When are payments due?

Payments are due every Friday before the up coming week.

Who do I make payments to?

Make checks or money orders payable to the Arthur M. Blank Family Youth YMCA.

What forms of payment do you accept?

In addition to the aforementioned, the Arthur M. Blank Family Youth YMCA accepts MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Discover.

Can someone under the age of 18 sign my child out?

No, it is against the YMCA policies to release children to minors.

Can weekly fees be debited from my bank account?

Yes, to have weekly fees debited, just submit your request to kathyb@ymcaatlanta.org

Arthur M. Blank Family Youth YMCA Better Beginnings FAQs cont'd

Who do I talk to to discuss my account?

Any questions regarding your account should be sent to kathby@ymcaatlanta.org. In an effort to maintain personal account confidentiality, the front desk staff does not have any access to personal accounts. Front desk staff can only handle transactions & receipting.

What are the program hours?

Program hours are from 3:00-6:30 p.m.

Should I expect my child's homework to be completed daily?

No, the Better Beginnings GE³T IT CLUB is an enrichment program. Although homework is extremely important, the YMCA believes in providing a holistic approach to child care. In addition to 45 minutes of homework, children will be exposed to health & wellness and character building activities. Staff will help children with homework assignments, but keep in mind there are additional children that will require assistance during the homework period. However, the Better Beginnings Program is adding an additional 20 hours of academic assistance a month to assist school's Georgia Performance Standards and Individual Lesson Plans.

How will the YMCA keep me informed on Better Beginnings activities?

We will do our best to keep parents informed on all activities. If you haven't already, please give us an updated email address. We will primarily notify parents on all events, activities, issues, etc. via email. We also provide written updates at the sign out table. Lastly, there's a board at the sign out table that will have updates.

If my child does not attend the program for an entire week, will I still be charged the weekly fee?

Yes, parents will be charged ½ the weekly fee. As a licensed program, we staff our programs according to the number of children enrolled in the program, not attending for the week. In essence, parents are reserving their child's slot.

Is there any additional information I should know?

Additional information and all important documents can be found in the Parent Enrollment Packet.