



HUDSON LEAPS

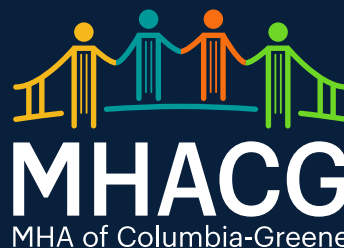
After School Program Handbook

Connecting kids with imagination

MHA of Columbia Greene

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WELCOME TO THE HUDSON AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

A letter to parents & guardians

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to MHACG's Hudson After School Program!

This handbook is designed to give you a clear overview of the After School Program offered at M.C. Smith Elementary and Hudson Junior High Schools. Inside, you'll find important information about program operations, policies, and health and safety procedures. Please take the time to read it carefully and keep it handy for easy reference throughout the school year.

Our program is dedicated to creating a safe, supportive, and enriching environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive after school. We truly value your input, and we encourage you to share your suggestions and ideas with us at any time to help make your child's experience as rewarding as possible..

We are grateful to the school staff for their commitment and support to the After School Program and to you, our parents and guardians, for the encouragement you provide. The success of this program is made possible through the care, dedication, and collaboration of so many wonderful people.

If you have any questions about the content of this handbook, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at (518) 828-4619 or speak directly with the program director. We look forward to partnering with you for a safe, fun, and successful school year.

Warm regards,

David R. Rossetti, LCSW-R
Chief Executive Officer
MHA of Columbia Greene

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

About the After School Program

MISSION

At MHACG, our mission is to advance mental health as a critical part of the overall health and wellbeing of our communities — and the After School Program is one of the many ways we bring that mission to life by supporting children, families, and individuals with care.

We know the value that safe, enriching after-school opportunities have on a child's wellbeing. By encouraging learning, creativity, friendship, and personal growth, we aim to not only support academic success but also foster confidence, resilience, and a strong sense of belonging.

GOALS

MHACG's After School Program is guided to achieve three primary goals:

1. Provide enriching opportunities that support children's social, emotional, and academic growth through educational, recreational, and cultural activities.
2. Build strong partnerships between school, families, and the community to promote positive student outcomes and reduce risks such as violence and substance use.
3. Collaborate with community resources, including schools, health providers, and local organizations, to improve supports and outcomes for children and families.

By achieving these goals, we aim to see these positive outcomes:

1. To improve the social, emotional, and academic competencies of school age children.
2. To reduce negative youth behaviors
3. To reduce incidents of violence in schools and the community.
4. To provide parents with a safe after-school environment for their children.

REGISTRATION & STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

To provide a safe and supportive environment, we maintain a staff-to-student ratio of 1:10 in Elementary and 1:15 for Junior High. This means each child receives attentive supervision and guidance while still having the opportunity to build independence and engage with peers.

MHACG's After School Program is registered as a School Age Child Care Provider through New York State, ensuring that our program meets all state health, safety, and quality standards. Registration periods are valid for a period of two years.

The program complies with New York State (OCFS) training standards. For each registration period, the program director and staff complete a minimum of 30 hours of approved in-service training. Training is conducted on subjects such as age appropriate child development activities, child abuse and maltreatment, nutrition and health needs, and safety and security procedures.

Training and development increase staff understanding of:

- child and adolescent development
- recognizing the range of children's abilities
- developing multiple activities for a wide range of age and skill levels
- understanding cultural diversity
- guiding behavior
- program management and evaluation
- leadership behavior
- communication skills
- group processes
- working with families
- and identifying and working with special-needs children.

MANDATED REPORTING

All staff members are considered mandated reporters under New York State law. This means that if a staff member has a reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, they are legally required to make a report to the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register. Mandated reporting is not optional; it is a responsibility designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care.

PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

MHACG is a healthcare provider and follows all applicable privacy and confidentiality laws, including HIPAA. Staff members of the After School Program must respect each family's right to privacy and are committed to keeping all personal information confidential.

Confidential information will only be shared with program and school staff who need it to support your child, or with your written consent. In certain cases, staff may be required by law to share information in order to protect a child's safety or act in their best interest. Families can be confident that we handle all information with care and discretion.

OPERATIONS

Hours, facilities, & programming

HOURS OF OPERATION

The After School Program operates on all regular, full-day school days, Monday through Friday from dismissal at 2:38 pm to 6:00 pm. The program will not operate on half-days or on any day the school is closed.

Following dismissal from the school day, students are expected to report to the cafeteria (elementary) or library (junior high) at 2:38 pm. Students must be picked up at the cafeteria entrance between 5:30 pm and 6:00 pm. If a student leaves before the end of the program hours, they will not be allowed to return that day.

HOLIDAYS & SCHOOL CLOSURES

The Hudson After School Program operates in accordance with the Hudson School District calendars. Please refer to your school calendar for school closings and other events. The program does not operate on half-days or days the school is closed, either planned holiday closures, or for emergency closures such as a “snow day”.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES & AREAS

Activities are held primarily at the school, which may include indoor or outdoor activities dependent upon weather conditions and the nature of the programming activities for that day. Activities may include various clubs, homework help, or active play and games. Select clubs take place off-site as described, and requires additional permission.

School computers, library, cafeteria, gym, and playground areas are all available for the program utilization. All participants and staff are expected to return the program areas to their original state following each use.

Field trips to community or school events may take place throughout the school year. Parents and guardians will be required to provide permission as these occur. Students will be expected to adhere to program rules, such as wearing a name tag and behaving appropriately.

ENVIRONMENT

After School Program staff will create a welcoming environment for children and their families, and families are welcome to visit at any time. Parents and guardians are also encouraged to join the Advisory Board to provide input into program policies and activities.

Regular meetings will take place between school and program staff to identify areas for complementary goals, determine desired results and goals for individual children, work toward a broad curriculum approach, and share and reflect on successes and challenges. Staff will also work to accommodate reasonable requests and to address any concerns through the proper channels.

CLOTHING AND PROPERTY

Students should come dressed appropriately for weather conditions and activities. Students are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and footwear that supports outdoor activities and active play.

Electronic devices and sporting equipment such as rollerblades, skateboards, or bicycles are not allowed while attending the After School Program. While program staff will make attempts to keep the students organized, the program is not responsible for lost personal property. Please encourage your children to keep personal items or valuables at home.

HEALTH & SAFETY

In case of illness or emergency

Program staff adhere to basic standards provided in the School Age Child Care Regulations under health and safety. All staff are trained to observe and identify physical and mental health issues, including signs of illness.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION & CONTACT

Every student enrolled in the After School Program will have Emergency Information on file, including parent/guardian contact, allergies, special needs, and other important medical information. If a child becomes ill or injured while at the program, staff will promptly contact the parent or guardian and take steps to ensure the child is safe and comfortable. Parents provide permission for emergency medical care (such as ambulance services) at enrollment so we are prepared for urgent situations.

ILLNESS & FIRST AID

If a child feels unwell during the program, they will be provided a quiet, supervised space to rest while waiting for parent/guardian pickup. Our staff are trained to provide standard first aid and will contact emergency personnel if necessary, always prioritizing the child's safety and well-being.

MEDICATION

Program staff are not able to administer any medication for students. Students who need routine or other prescription medication should receive it before or after attending the program. Emergency medications (e.g., rescue inhaler, EpiPen) must be kept by the child for use.

COMMUNICABLE ILLNESS & RETURN POLICY

We ask that children with communicable illnesses, such as strep throat, conjunctivitis, or head lice, stay home until they are no longer contagious. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately if a child develops a fever (101°F or higher), vomiting, diarrhea, or other signs of illness.

DAILY HEALTH CHECKS

Staff observe students each day for signs of illness, including:

- Complaints of not feeling well
- Changes in behavior or activity level
- Skin rashes, itchy skin, or itchy scalp

Our goal is to maintain a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment for all children, while keeping parents informed and involved in decisions regarding their child's care.

BLOOD AND BODILY FLUID PRECAUTIONS

The safety and wellbeing of every child is our top priority. Staff are trained in blood borne pathogen safety and take appropriate precautions whenever there is potential contact with blood or other bodily fluids. Disposable gloves are worn whenever possible, but in an emergency situation, care for the child is never delayed if gloves are not immediately available.

After any incident involving blood, staff follow strict safety procedures to protect both children and themselves. Surfaces and materials that may have been contaminated are cleaned and disinfected with a germicidal solution. Staff thoroughly wash their hands and any exposed skin, and any clothing or fabrics that come into contact with blood must be promptly laundered. These procedures help ensure a safe, hygienic environment while prioritizing the immediate care and comfort of the child.

SAFETY

A minimum of one staff member will be with each group of children at all times. Students are carefully supervised and not allowed to leave the program area without staff's knowledge. Safety rules for all physical and non-physical activities will be discussed before the activity begins.

Each day, attendance is taken when students arrive, so we know every child is accounted for. At the end of the day, children are released only to a parent, guardian, or other approved adult listed on their registration form. Staff may ask for identification to ensure that every child leaves with the right person.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

Students will be made aware of emergency alerts through the use of an alarm that will be used only for the purposes of emergencies or drills.

Students will follow the evacuation routes developed by the school and placed prominently in view for each classroom and hallway in program use.

Students will be supervised and gathered by staff and will meet outside on the sidewalk as determined by their usual school procedure. Staff will take attendance based on the daily attendance sheet to account for all students in attendance.

Program staff will notify parents or guardians, and contact the appropriate authorities as necessary. Students will gather with program staff in the visitor parking lot to await the arrival of their parent or guardian.

Emergency Numbers:

Hudson Police: (518) 828-3388

Hudson Fire Dept.: (518) 828-3009

Poison Control: (800) 222-1222

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Program rules & behavior expectations

CODE OF CONDUCT

We believe children thrive in an environment built on safety, respect, and trust. At the heart of the After School Program, we're committed to creating a community where children feel valued, supported, and empowered to make positive choices. Our Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy are designed to guide, not punish — helping children learn social skills, build self-regulation, and understand the impact of their actions.

The After School Program is designed to be a safe, fun, and enriching environment for all children. To ensure this, students are expected to:

- Respect themselves and others
 - Use kind words and actions.
 - Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- Respect staff and program rules
 - Follow directions from staff promptly.
 - Participate safely in all activities.
- Respect property
 - Take care of personal belongings, school property, and program materials.
 - Use equipment and supplies as intended.
- Practice safe behavior
 - Walk indoors; use playground equipment properly.
 - Stay with the group unless given permission to do otherwise.
- Participate positively
 - Arrive on time.
 - Stay engaged.
 - Make the most of activities.
- Come prepared with appropriate clothing and materials for program activities.

These rules are designed to help all children learn, grow, and enjoy their time in the program. Staff actively model respectful behavior, teamwork, and positive conflict resolution to support students in meeting these expectations.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

When expectations are not met, our approach centers on guidance, learning, and restoration — not punishment. Discipline is fair, respectful, and age-appropriate, with the primary objective of helping children grow.

Our strategies include:

- Gentle reminders and redirection, reminding children of shared expectations.
- Logical consequences — when appropriate, children experience outcomes connected to their behavior (e.g., returned materials when they are cared for).
- Short reflective breaks (no more than 10 minutes), providing time to calm down and refocus.
- Restorative conversations, encouraging children to understand how their actions affect others and repair harm together.
- Immediate adult support as needed — physical restraint is never used except as a last resort to prevent immediate danger of the student or others in the vicinity.
- Parent/Guardian notification — for repeated or serious conduct concerns, parents or guardians may be informed and asked to partner with staff to support the child's success.
- Suspension or termination of program services. In cases of repeated unsafe, harmful, or seriously disruptive behavior, temporary or permanent removal from the program may be necessary.

In accordance with New York State SACC regulations, our staff will never use prohibited forms of punishment:

- Corporal punishment or physical discipline (hitting, shaking, pinching, etc.).
- Verbal abuse, threats, or humiliation.
- Withholding food, rest, or bathroom access.
- Punishment related to a child's development (toileting accidents, etc.).
- Isolation without supervision.

Level	Behavior Examples	Staff Response
Level 1: Minor Disruptions	Calling out, interrupting activities, unkind language, light roughhousing.	Reminders, redirection, short break, informal conversation about making better choices.
Level 2: Serious or Repeated Misconduct	Aggression, bullying, defiance, property misuse, behavior putting safety at risk.	Program Director notified, parent/guardian contacted, restorative dialogue or behavioral support plan developed, may include formal meeting.

Each response is tailored to teach responsibility, and consequences are applied consistently and calmly. When more support is needed, staff work closely with families and school personnel to develop individualized strategies that help each child succeed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Hudson After School Program Handbook

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the After School Program Handbook. I understand that this handbook contains important information regarding program policies, expectations, and procedures.

By signing below, I agree to support my child's participation in accordance with the program's expectations and policies, and will partner with staff to maintain open communication to help ensure my child's safety, wellbeing, and success.

Student's Last Name:

Student's First Name:

Parent/Guardian Last Name:

Parent/Guardian First Name:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Primary Phone:

Secondary Phone:

Email Address:

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Printed Name

Date