



AFTER ALL

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a WISCONSIN YOUTH COMPANY program

Wisconsin Youth Company exists so that the children of Wisconsin benefit from communities that nurture them at a sustainable cost.

www.wisconsinyouthcompany.org

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Flexibility, Range of Programming in AFTER SCHOOL Day Camps

Flexibility and a range of programs for different ages and skill levels are two good reasons to choose an AFTER SCHOOL summer day camp experience for your child this summer. Each week includes five full days of camp activities as well as extended hours before and after camp to meet the needs of working parents. In Waukesha half day camp and programs are offered at two sites for four and five years who have not completed 5-K.

Besides flexible and extended program hours, parents also have a choice as to what weeks they enroll their child. That way, they don't need to register for weeks when they will be away on a family vacation or if their child has other summer commitments.

AFTER SCHOOL summer camp programming is designed to fit the needs of children according to their age. Children can choose from a variety of themes planned for their age group, four to five years old (Waukesha only), five to seven year olds and eight to 12 year olds. Older campers

take part in units that emphasize skill-building and hobbies such as "Ball Sports" or "Discover 4-H." Younger campers take part in hands-on traditional summer fun in units with themes like "Balloons, Balls & Bubbles" and "Beach Party." Each week the whole camp goes on a field trip and every Friday is the Friday Festival which can be anything from a carnival to a talent show all put on by the campers themselves.

There will be eight summer camps operated in the Dane Region and four in the Waukesha Region. All camps are state licensed and accredited by the American Camp Association. Summer camp registration materials will be available by March 1.

For a complete listing of all camps and theme units contact your regional office. In Dane County call 608-276-9782; in Waukesha County call 262-547-8770. You may also visit our website www.wisconsinyouthcompany.org.

Summer Camp Information Coming Soon!



Group games are fun for campers at the camp finale in August.

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Many Things Go Into Safe Fun at AFTER SCHOOL

When you pick up your child from AFTER SCHOOL what do you see? Do you see kids playing basketball in the gym, finishing homework, chatting with their friends or working on a craft project? You might not see the other things that go into keeping your children safe and helping them have fun.

AFTER SCHOOL. "They also want to know that their kids have a chance to explore, to do things they might not be able to do at home."

All AFTER SCHOOL programs are licensed. According to Capps, that means that the basics are covered: the kids are safe, the space is clean, staff-child ratios are met, records are kept accurately and children are properly supervised.

"We talk to staff about going above and beyond what licensing requires," said Capps, "and that means focusing on the way staff interact with children and with each other."

Capps teaches staff that once the licensing basics are met, the sign of a quality program is staff engaged with children.

"That means you're going to see staff making eye contact with the children and expressing a genuine interest and warmth towards them," said Capps.

Not all AFTER SCHOOL sites will look the same Capps noted because each

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All AFTER SCHOOL sites have quiet areas where kids can read and hang out with friends.

"I think parents want to know that their kids are safe and doing enriching activities," said Nora Bergeon-Capps, Dane Region Director for

SAVE the DATES

Waukesha Region Spring 4-H Fair
March 9, 2010
Waukesha Expo Center

Dane Region Spring 4-H Fair
April 29, 2010
Alliant Energy Center

Global Village, Weaving at Celebrating Youth!

Global villages representing at least four different cultures and a large scale weaving project are two of the highlights of the 2010 *Celebrating Youth!* event January 31, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Monona Terrace. This year's theme is "Weaving the Web."

Celebrating Youth!, which is presented by AFTER SCHOOL's parent company, Wisconsin Youth Company, had a circus theme for

several years. Last year's theme was "Up in the Air."

"The idea behind this year's theme is to highlight the connections between all of us," said *Celebrating Youth!* Coordinator Ilana Caplan. "Visitors will be able to activity areas, and visit

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Dance performances by area youth groups are a highlight of Celebrating Youth!

Dane Region Has New Office Manager, Assistant

Amy Thomas, former Dane Region office assistant, has been promoted to office manager. The new office assistant is Toya Robinson. Thomas has been with Wisconsin Youth Company for two years. She also serves as the grants coordinator. Thomas has nearly completed her degree in business marketing at UW Madison.

Thomas said the job appealed to her because she likes to organize things and likes to be helpful to people.

“When customers come into the building I want them to see that we have happy, helpful people who will see that they have what they

need to be a part of our programs,” she said.

New office assistant Toya Robinson has worked in office management for 16 years, most that time in non-profits.

“I like working for organizations that are child-related,” she said. “I like the services they offer to children.”

Robinson is currently a junior studying business management at Concordia University. She hopes to get a masters degree in either business or theological counseling. A native of Kentucky, she has four children ranging in age from 16 to six years.



Amy Thomas, left, is the new Dane Region office Manager. Toya Robinson, right, is the new office assistant.

Card Sales Help Scholarship Fund

Thank you to all of those who purchased holiday cards this season. Proceeds from the sale of the cards support the Wisconsin Youth Company Scholarship Fund. The fund helps qualifying families to pay for before and after school care and summer day camp for their children. Boxes of 10 cards with designs created by children enrolled in AFTER SCHOOL programs were sold for \$10 each.

For those wishing to get a jump on next year’s holiday plans, you may still purchase cards. They are available at the Wisconsin Youth Company offices in Madison at 1201 McKenna Blvd. or in Waukesha at 1800 Dolphin Dr.

“All sites have staff who truly like children, who listen to what children say and plan activities based on the interests of the kids.”

AFTER SCHOOL Staff Engage With Children

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site will have its own culture, its own sense of community.

“But all sites have staff who truly like children, who listen to what children say and plan activities based on the interests of the kids,” she said.

In AFTER SCHOOL’s Waukesha Region where CindySue Nielsen is Regional Director the focus is similar.

“We look for staff to be engaged with children as

cares role models in a nurturing environment,” said Nielsen.

Nielsen’s approach is to teach staff that working for AFTER SCHOOL means having a customer service approach.

“I tell them that every day,” said Nielsen. “Our job is to listen to the kids, the parents, the schools and the community at large and to be responsive to all of them.”

One of Nielsen’s favorite techniques for getting feedback on how sites are doing is to ask the newly hired staff to look critically at what is going on at their site.

“New people often have the best insight because they’re coming to it with fresh eyes,” said Nielsen.

She also has site supervisors read a book and discuss it at weekly meetings. Each supervisor takes a chapter and leads a discussion on it. This year they’ve been working their way through *Managing Up: 59 Ways to Build a Career Advancing Relationship With Your Boss* by Michael and Deborah Singer Dobson.

“I ask them to tell me what they learned, how they will use it with staff and how it will affect the kids,” said Nielsen.

The approaches to training staff may differ slightly from Dane Region to Waukesha Region. But the emphasis remains the same. Children are kept safe and they are with adults who care about them and their families.



Eric Theis, left, and Michael Graveen, right, made gingerbread houses with kids who were part of the winter break program at WYFC in Madison.

Global Village, Weaving Part of Celebrating Youth! This Year

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explore different aspects of culture through displays, pictures and hands-on activities.”

Cultural “villages” will include a Latin American area, created by Centro Hispano; Hmong, created by the Hmong-American Student Association of UW-Madison; Norwegian, created

by the Sons of Norway and Arab, created by Habiba Chaouch, an organization with a mission to further understanding between Arabs and Americans. At the Arab and Norwegian areas visitors can learn how to write their names using calligraphy and the alphabets of those cultures. The Norwegian area will also

offer an opportunity to learn how to weave heart basket ornaments.

The Latin American area will have an opportunity to screen print traditional designs on shirts or posters. The Hmong

area will feature a mural of the mountains of Laos where the Hmong people originally lived. Visitors can hold traditional Hmong objects and have their photograph taken in front of the mural. A Hmong basket weaver from Sheboygan will be demonstrating his craft.

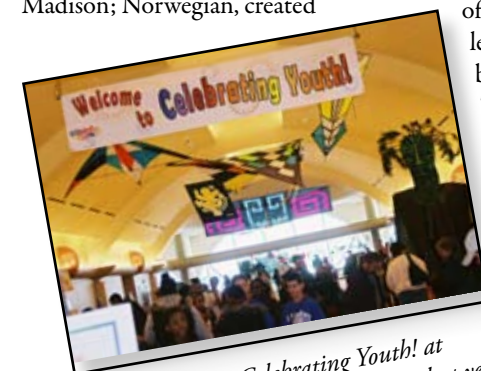
“We want visitors to see the variety in different cultures and also to notice the similarities that connect us,” said Caplan.

The weaving area is being coordinated by two local textile artists, Christine Thompson and Elizabeth Walker. There will be 11 small tabletop looms

for visitors to try out, as well as five Marudai, Japanese braiding looms.

“The pieces created at the event will be woven together, to create a tapestry of our community, that will be displayed at future events,” said Caplan.

In addition to the activity areas described above, there will be four stages with youth performances, an art exhibit and many other exhibitors with resources for youth and families. *Celebrating Youth!* is a free event but donations of \$1 for children and \$2 for adults are welcome. For more information, see www.celebratingyouth.org.



The entrance to Celebrating Youth! at Monona Terrace welcomed visitors last year.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE BOY SCOUTS

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS IN 2010!

Scouting is available at many Dane Region AFTER SCHOOL site organized by Glacier’s Edge Council, Madison.

Don't Miss It! **CELEBRATING Youth!**
January 31, 2010
 11 am - 5 pm
 Where: Monona Terrace Theme: “Weaving the Web”
www.celebratingyouth.org

Health and Safety Highest Priority at AFTER SCHOOL

Colds, seasonal flu, H1N1, hypothermia, frostbite, sledding accidents—it’s enough to scare any parent. Parents can rest assured that at AFTER SCHOOL we make health and safety our highest priority during the winter and all year around. Our staff manual describes the health and wellness and safety and risk management practices designed to reduce the spread of illness and keep children and staff safe while at our programs.

These practices include:
 1. Training for all staff on how to recognize the signs

and symptoms of childhood illnesses and a procedure to follow for notifying parents and school officials and the health department if it is a reportable communicable disease.

2. Procedures to follow in case of minor or major injury. At least one staff person at each site is trained in CPR.

3. A first aid kit stocked with the supplies required by state licensing. Kits are checked regularly by site supervisors, program directors and risk managers.

4. General hygiene procedures

including hand washing practices and special guidelines for H1N1 flu.

5. In-house training on “Risk Management 101” for all staff to ensure their understanding of all risk reduction practices such as keeping weather radios turned on during program, making sure program cell phones and two-way radios are charged and landlines are working and assessing the site space and playground for safety hazards.

6. Procedures for dealing with hypothermia and frostbite as

well as specific rules for safe sledding.

Parents can help too! Make sure your children are prepared to play in the snow and outdoors on cold winter days. Send them with warm jackets, boots, hats, mittens or gloves and snow pants if they plan to sled. Make sure your child gets enough rest and eats healthy foods, especially in the winter when so many germs and viruses are around. Keep your child home when they are sick. Together we can keep kids healthy and have fun in the winter.