



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

7TH GRADE INITIATIVE PROGRAM FAQ

2025-2026

MADISON AREA YMCA

Providing area 7th graders with a foundation for healthy living through fitness, activities and volunteer service.

Why 7TH Grade?

The 7th Grade Initiative Program is a middle-school engagement program which strengthens healthy behaviors for young teens **at the beginning** of their transition from childhood to adulthood. It is designed exclusively for young teens, giving them a voice and a choice as they develop positive relationships with peers and adults. Our 7th Graders are encouraged to try different activities and discover who they are and what they can achieve, in a safe place that will enable them to learn, play and grow, all while learning the importance of giving back to their community.

Who can register?

Any 7th Grader who resides and/or attends school in our service area may register for the program. Serving: The Chathams, Florham Park, & Madison.

How do I register?

Registration must be completed in person with parent/guardian present. 7th graders will complete, with their parent/guardian, a membership application and sign the 7th Grade Code of Conduct Form. **Participants must show proof of residency/school attendance and proof that they are in 7th Grade.** Proof may be in the form of a report card showing completion of 6th grade, a 7th grade school ID, parent/guardian driver's license showing residency in our service area or a household bill showing residency in our service area. To enroll in this program, 7th Graders must complete the Fitness Center Orientation and a tour of the facility. **Fitness Orientation and tour must be completed before a registering for this program.**

What if I already have a membership but want to register for this program?

Older Youth memberships can suspend during the 7th grade program year; there will be no effect on Family Memberships.



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What are the benefits of participating in the 7th Grade Initiative Program?

7th Grade Initiative program participants have use of the facility, during all hours that the YMCA is open. 7th Grade Initiative program participants will have limited access to fitness areas as explained during the tour/orientation. 7th Grade Initiative Program participants will receive member rates for Teen Scenes, Teen fitness classes, and program registration during their 7th grade year.

As a part of the 7th Grade Initiative program, participants are expected to complete 1 hour of service learning each month to maintain active enrollment. Opportunities within the Madison YMCA can include supporting our School Age Child Care program, supporting Special Needs programming, or assisting in projects with various departments within the Y. If a participant chooses to take part in our Teen Leaders program, they will be able to use any of these service projects to fulfill this requirement.

Why Service Learning?

- Teens who engage in community service are **50% less likely** to engage in risky behavior.
- Individuals with volunteer experience are **27% more likely** to find employment in the future than those without it.
- **82%** of students who participate in service-learning had increased positive feelings toward attending high school.

When does this program begin? The 7th Grade initiative program opens beginning on Sept. 8th, 2025, and ends June 30th, 2026. Enrollment in this program is on a rolling basis and can be completed at any time during the 7th Grade year.

What is Fitness Orientation? 7th graders will get a tour of the fitness center and learn to use the equipment safely. One session with a Teen and Family Director is required to complete the orientation. Fitness orientation must be completed before enrollment in this program is completed.

Are there limitations within the 7th Grade Initiative Program? 7th graders who are on a competitive team at the Madison Area YMCA (Gators, Mariners, Rosettes, Royals or Storm) do not qualify in the 7th Grade Initiative program due to Y-USA Membership guidelines, however, they are invited to participate in our Teen Leaders program should they be interested. 7th Grade Initiative program participants will not have access to free weights or weight room in the fitness center. Failure to complete the fitness orientation, tour, or breach of the code of conduct will result in suspension of program enrollment. **Participants should always have their membership card while inside the facility and must use it to enter the building, they are encouraged to use our Madison YMCA app as well.**