



Parent Handbook
2024-2025



“For Fitness and Fun, WE are the ONE!”

Dear Families:

Welcome to the Cortland/Homer After-school Mentor Program. We would like to take this opportunity to again express our heartfelt thanks for allowing the J.M. McDonald Sports Complex to be of service to you and your family. Our program has been designed to provide quality childcare in a safe, stimulating and recreational environment. The activities offered to your child promote growth in physical, social, emotional, cognitive and creative development. Activities are specially tailored for age 4–12-year old’s. Activities include homework, sports, arts and crafts, outdoor play and games. Children must be enrolled in a public or private grade school to be eligible to attend this program.

The program is scheduled to begin Wednesday, September 4th, 2024, and will continue through the Cortland and Homer School District calendar. Our program runs from 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM Monday through Friday. We will make all reasonable efforts to cover the Cortland and Homer School Calendar whenever possible. Please check the calendar for specific dates for school’s out.

Please read through the parent handbook and fill out all of the enrollment forms. If your child has any special needs, please contact us to set up a meeting to develop a health plan specific to your child. In addition, if your child has any specific learning needs that would help the staff work with your child individually, please include that information with your parental consent forms.

The completed forms in the Parental Consent Packet should be returned no later than one week prior to the child’s enrollment date along with the first month’s enrollment fees to ensure your child’s enrollment. The Childcare Director cannot accept incomplete enrollment packets. If at any time you have any questions or concerns, please call (607)753-8100 ext. 107 for more information or contact Kacie Hubbard, the Childcare Director at childcare@jmmcomplex.com.

Sincerely,

J.M. McDonald Sports Complex / CHAMP Program

Program Overview

The Cortland Homer Afterschool Mentorship Program (CHAMP) is offered through the JM McDonald Sports Complex for children in grades K and up. CHAMP is an exciting NYS approved afterschool activity program designed to provide affordable, quality, and developmentally appropriate afterschool care to area youth.

The CHAMP mission is “To provide a mentorship program designed to connect SUNY Cortland physical education majors with the Cortland/Homer area youth who would benefit from a NY-state approved after-school daycare program.” The CHAMP program is based on a three-prong approach:

- (1) Planned physical activity (using SUNY Cortland PE majors as mentors)
- (2) Healthy snack education and choices (called Snack Attack)
- (3) Creative classroom activities and homework help

The program utilizes the CATCH after-school curriculum developed by Flag house (www.flaghouse.com), which is designed to teach kids the importance of eating healthy and being physically active. Additional program goals include:

- Increase the physical activity levels of Cortland/Homer youth (K-6th grade)
- Provide quality mentorship experiences for college students interested in working with youth
- Decrease the overweight and obesity levels of Cortland/Homer area youth
- Conduct and disseminate practical action-based research on best practices toward addressing the physical activity and nutritional needs of all area youth, including those with disabilities.

This CHAMP program will provide full days programs as well a summer alternative at the close of the school year. Parents will be informed of upcoming events and children will have the choice to attend such programs.

The First Day Sample Schedule

The first day in a new environment can be challenging for any child. We make every effort to be aware of the circumstance that can produce anxiety during the first few days. We will work with you and your child to help ensure a smooth adjustment. We encourage parents visit the program to get a feel for the atmosphere, the daily routine and help ease the transition for their child. We also encourage parents to call any time during the program hours to see how their child is adjusting. Some separation anxiety is normal and expected, and we will be happy to provide suggestions for a smooth and enjoyable transition into the school environment.

Facility Schedules are available by month to help make sure your child is provided for any ice time and turf time. On ice skating days, we ask parents to please provide layers as well as thick tall socks. We also ask for the children to have a pair of sneakers to wear for activity time as well as clothes that are comfortable to move in. Please label all belongings brought from home with your child's name. Lost and found items will be placed on the table underneath the window in the classroom. These items will be donated to the Salvation Army a few times throughout the year - parents will be notified prior to the donation so they have an opportunity to go through the belongings.

There are numerous hooks in the classroom to keep the children's belongings during the day. We have found this work best for organization and structure. It should make for an easy pick-up and help us know who left what!

To ensure your child's first day is as enjoyable and comfortable as possible, please bring the following items to school:

- A complete change of clothes
- Nutritious lunch and light snack
- Any child specific sunscreen, insect repellent or topical ointments

Please label all belongings brought from home with your child's name.

Requirements

State Licensing

We understand the importance of maintaining a strict compliance with the state licensing regulations in order to ensure a quality environment for children. Our program complies with the applicable state licensing regulations and policies, Student Aged Child-Care (SACC). These requirements cover aspects relating to staff qualifications, facility, health and safety guidelines/procedures, and staff/child ratios.

Enrollment

All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed **BEFORE** your child may attend CHAMP. All requested personal information is kept confidential. Please be sure to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home and work telephone numbers, and individuals authorized to pick up your child. Every child enrolled in the program **MUST** have at least one emergency contact and emergency pickup.

Payment Policy

The following payment requirements are in place for the CHAMP program.

- 1) Two weeks written notice prior to terminating enrollment shall be given or mailed to the CHAMP Program Director. If a two-week notice is not provided before the beginning of the calendar month, a 50% monthly payment will be charged. Parents will not be refunded money for any of the following reasons as **tuition is non-refundable**: Snow days, sick days, unscheduled dismissal by schools, changes in parents work schedules, or any other situations defined by the CHAMP program.
- 2) The CHAMP program reserves the right to terminate enrollment of any child based on the best interest of the child and/or other children in the program. We also reserve the right to terminate enrollment if any information has been withheld or falsified by the parent (guardian).
- 3) The CHAMP program reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of any child if the payment schedule has not been met. Children will be prohibited from participating in any J.M. McDonald Sports Complex program until tuition bills have been fully satisfied.
- 4) Payments can be made in person. at the J.M. McDonald Sports Complex main office during the following office hours: Monday through Friday 8 am – 6 pm.
- 5) Your children must be picked up by 6:00 pm. A \$10 fee will be charged if you do not pick up your child by 6:01 pm. Child protective and local police will be called after one hour unless parent contact has been. Children cannot leave the program unattended or with an adult who is not on the approved Parent Consent form without written permission from the primary parent.

- 6) The CHAMP program reserves the right to cancel any “Days Off” program that does not have adequate enrollment 5 days before the date of the school recess. Enroll your children at least one week in advance if you need them to attend the program.
- 7) Parents are required to sign a **Parent Contract** outlining the understanding of these items and acceptance of the terms of this handbook before children can participate in this program.

Arrival

Arrival time will start at 3:00 PM. We will sign your children in with the time of sign in and a signature, however we ask that parents/guardians please sign your children out when they are picked up. All children from Homer and Cortland will be bussed over to the complex beginning at 3:00. The CHAMP staff will be outside waiting for them to get off the bus and will walk them inside to the CHAMP classroom. Students are asked to hang up their belongings on their designated hook and find their mentor for that day. Parents are required to fill out any transportation forms required by their specific school prior to enrollment in this program. It is not the CHAMP program’s responsibility to make transportation arrangements for students.

Child Pickup

Staff will release a child only to the person who enrolled the child, or someone authorized in writing by that person. Under no circumstances will your child be permitted to leave with anyone other than those people designated in writing on the proper authorization form. Anyone picking up a child **will be asked for a photo ID** so that individual should always have one when picking up your child. If anyone who is not authorized to pick up a child attempts to pick up a child, the authorities will be notified. If there is any kind of order of protection against a parent of the child, the program has to have a copy of the order of protection.

Late Pickup

Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. If lateness is unavoidable, notify the program IMMEDIATELY so that a staff member is made available to supervise your child and to help minimize fears your child may have. Please arrange to have your child picked up by another adult designated by you on your emergency forms. If your child is not picked up by 6:01 pm the parent or guardian will be charged a late fee of \$10 per occurrence.

Clothing

The most appropriate clothes for the CHAMP program are easy fitting; comfortable, washable, play clothes. Please provide long pants in cold weather and shoes that are good for running and climbing. Please bring an extra set of clothes for your child.

Mark all clothing with indelible ink or name labels. We encourage children to take care of their clothing; however, we cannot be responsible for lost, stained, soiled, or torn clothing.

Personal Belongings

We would prefer that children do not bring toys from home. However, under certain circumstances it may be allowed. We ask that you take any special accommodations to the Childcare Director so we can work out a plan that would not disrupt any other students and/or stray away from our behavior policy. Make sure that any item is labeled with your child's name and that their mentor is aware of the item's use. We are not responsible for items brought from home.

Meals

The CHAMP program will provide a healthy snack to each child every day. Food preferences for religious or medical reasons may be accommodated. If meal patterns or serving sizes do not meet your child's nutritional needs, a medical statement must be obtained documenting the appropriateness of the variation.

We ask that you work with us and voice any concerns about the snack before children begin bringing in their own goodies from home. Encourage your child to try new snacks they may have never tried before and to finish what they have in their own portion without "trading" with others. Snack time is still a structured part of the day where our goal is to encourage children to try new things, taste and try as many food groups as given and minimize wasteful eating.

Staff Qualifications

The quality of our staff is an important determination in the quality of our program. We strive to maintain high quality staff by providing a variety of in-services and other professional opportunities. At a minimum, the following qualifications are met:

All state background check requirements are met.

A physician's health form is required for each staff member and is kept on file.

Personal resumes are looked at as well as three credited references, which are all kept on file.

The mentors are Motor Development students from the SUNY Cortland Department of PE.

Children with Disabilities

Our program complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable regulations pertaining to providing services to individuals with disabilities. We carefully consider each child's individual needs to determine if our program can accommodate a child's special needs. If your child has a disability or has any other special needs, please discuss your child's needs with the Childcare Director.

Withdrawal/Disenrollment

We require a minimum of two weeks' advance written notice of your child's withdrawal. This provides an opportunity to notify another family regarding the availability of that space. We

reserve the right to dismiss a child from the program at any time deemed necessary or appropriate with or without notice. **Any deposits or partial payments are non-refundable.**

Health Plan Summary

Child Health

This program cares for **well children**

Any child who has any of the following **cannot** attend the program:

A suspected or diagnosed communicable disease as defined by the New York State Department of Health until evaluated and approved for inclusion by a health care provider to participate in the program

A fever as defined as the following:

A temperature of 105°F or higher orally, auxiliary (under the arm) or aural (in the ear)

A child with a temperature above 101°F orally or aural (in the ear) which is accompanied by a behavior change, stiff neck, rash, unusual irritability, poor feeding, vomiting or excessive crying.

Neck pain when the child's head is moved or touched

A rash of hives or welts that appears and spreads quickly

**For a full list please ask to see the Program's health care plan.*

Mildly Ill Children:

A child who meets any of the following criteria is defined as "mildly ill":

The child has symptoms of a minor childhood illness, which does not represent a significant risk of serious infection to other children.

The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the usual activities of the program but is able to participate with minor modifications, such as more rest time.

The care of the mildly ill child does not interfere with the care or supervision of the other children.

NOTE: The definitions above do **not** include children who are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Programs must consider each child's case individually and comply with the requirements of the ADA.

The following are the procedures for caring for a child who develops symptoms of illness while in care:

1. Contact Parent/Emergency Contact if parent cannot be reached
2. Parent will be expected to pick up child in 30 minutes unless arranged with program director

3. Isolate and offer a spot (mat, cot, etc.) for sick child
4. Assign worker to care/supervise child until adult picks up child
5. Disinfect mat/cot after sick child is picked up

The program will not provide transportation for the ill/injured child. If the injury is severe, emergency services (911) and the parent will be called. For any head injury the parents will be notified.

NOTE: Parent/Guardian **MUST** notify the program of **any** medication given prior to the child's arrival at the program and of any regular medication the child requires.

Children with Special Health Care Needs

A child with special health care needs is defined as “a child who has a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition expected to last 12 months or more and who requires health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”

Any child identified as a child with special health care needs will have taken an individual plan that will provide all information needed to safely care for the child. This plan will be developed with the child's parent and health care provider. The program must be approved to administer medication if the child needs medication or medical treatment during program hours.

Daily Health Checks

A daily health check will be done on each child when he/she arrives at the program.

Any signs of illness, communicable disease, injury and/or abuse and maltreatment found will be documented and kept on file for each child in the following way:

- In a separate log
- Incident reports will be used if injury warrants

As mandated reporters, staff who have reasonable cause to suspect a child in care is being abused or maltreated, will take the following actions:

Immediately make an oral report to the mandated reporter hotline. (1-800-635-1522)

File a written report using the LDS-2221A form to the local Child Protective Services (CPS) within 48 hours of making an oral report.

Notify the CHAMP Coordinator.

First Aid Kit

The program will:

Keep the following in the first aid kit:

- Provide bandages for all on the surface wounds
- Ice packs for all injuries with swelling
- Warm soap, water and antibacterial lotion to clean all infected areas
- When signed in the packed, SPF 30 spray on Sunscreen be used

Guardians will be contacted when deemed appropriate and all accidents and injuries will be logged promptly by the witness.

Program Decision on the Administration of Medication

The program has made the following decision regarding the administration of medication:

The Childcare Director will be administering medicine to children if needed. Staff who are not certified in administering medicine, WILL ONLY administer sunscreen and insect repellent.

The program will have parent permission to apply any sunscreen or topically applied insect repellent (TO/S/R) in accordance with OCFS regulations.

All observable side effects will be documented. Parents will be notified of any observed side effects by the end of the day. Parent notification will be immediate if the side effects are severe. If necessary, emergency medical services will be called.

Parents will be notified of all “as needed” over the counter TO/S/R applied to their child and told what symptoms were observed that required the application.

Confidentiality Statement

Information about any child in the program is confidential and will not be given to anyone except the office, its designers or other persons authorized by law unless the child’s parent or guardian gives written permission.

Information about any child in the program will be given to the social services district if the child receives a day care subsidy or if the child has been named in a report of suspected child abuse of maltreatment or as otherwise allowed by law.

ADA Statement

The program will comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If any child enrolled in the program now or in the future is identified as having a disability covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the day care provider will assess the ability of the program to meet the needs of the child. If the program can meet the needs of the child without making a fundamental alteration to the program and the child will need regular or emergency medication, the program will follow the steps required to have the program approved to administer medication.

Security

The primary mechanism for ensuring the security of the school is strict adherence to established procedures for your child's arrival and departure, including clocking in and out on the program's attendance sheet. Our program meets or exceeds state licensing regulations for building safety.

Mandated Reporting Information

Under current law, reports to the SCR (Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment) must be made by a staff member who has direct knowledge of the alleged abuse or maltreatment. The mandated reporter is then required to notify the director or designee that a report has been made. The director or designee is then responsible for all subsequent internal administration necessitated by the report, including completion of the form LDS 2221A.

Steps to Report Child Abuse/Maltreatment:

1. Call Mandated Reporter Hotline: 1-800-635-1522
 - a. If the State Central Registry does not accept the report, call Dina Volante or the New York OCFS office and file a report with them: (315) 423-1202.
2. Call Cortland County Department of Social Services: (607) 753-5248. Notify them that you have made the report with the State Central Registry, and that the SCR has accepted that report.
3. Notify Alexis that you have made the report; if Alexis is not available, notify the executive director of the building (Michael Drake
4.).
5. Call New York State Office of Family & Children Services to notify them of the report: (315) 423-1202.

Your Child's Experience

Daily Physical Activity

Daily physical activity is led by SUNY Cortland mentors. They are encouraged to bring new, exciting and highly energized games and activities to the program. We also look to adapt activities to lead to the personal growth of your child physically, cognitively, and affectively (social responsibility). College students are expected to lead activities that would benefit their age group they are working with while also stimulating their imagination and personal interests. We will have different themes for the week throughout CHAMP - the mentors are encouraged to incorporate that particular month's theme into daily activities.

Student Grouping

Our programs encourage mixed-age grouping of children whenever possible to provide a rich learning environment that recognizes that all children are unique and develop at their own pace and according to their individual interests and abilities. In mixed-age groupings, children who are at least one year apart are placed in the same group. Mixed-age grouping is an effective tool in child development, providing many benefits including:

- Older children learn to be helpful, patient and tolerant, while developing increased confidence in their skills and abilities.
- Younger children have the opportunity to learn more advanced cognitive and socialization skills from older children.
- Individual differences in development are more readily accommodated.
- Children are challenged to think through problems in a more creative and flexible way as they observe children of other ages approaching problems differently than they do.

At times you will see mixed-aged grouping will be during classroom game time, snack time and transitions into activities, and certain physical activities such as open turf, ice skating, field days, and park days. In activity periods where there is more structure and hands-on teaching from mentors (i.e. group led games), students will be split into two separate groups where they can run, play, and grow with students at a similar developmental level. This will stimulate the growth of the child, help them develop social skills typical for their age group and minimize boredom and/or disruptive behavior. Our goal is to help foster your child's personal growth in all components and keep them engaged during the activities.

Throughout the year we have also developed a Peer Mentorship program where students who have excelled as leaders at CHAMP will have the opportunity to practice leadership skills and good character by assisting and guiding younger students in the program. There will be an adult in that

group as well, but the peer mentor will be the “go to,” exercising their ability to lead as well as incorporate daily theme and life skills into their group’s agenda.

Positive Behavioral Instructional Supports (PBIS)

We take a preventive approach to discipline that teachers’ children positive behaviors rather than punishing them for misbehaving (www.PBIS.org). Our goal is to provide children with the opportunity and motivation to make choices, function independently, learn social skills through gentle, encouraging guidance, respect the needs of others, adapt to routines and simple rules and become responsible group members. Our learning environments are rich and are structured to allow children to pursue their interests and abilities, reducing the occurrence of disciplinary problems arising from boredom or undue restraint.

Preventive discipline improves children’s self-esteem and problem solving skills and encourages positive social behavior. This helps our program maintain an atmosphere of warmth and understanding, and helps children develop as individuals and as part of the group.

In **extreme** situations and as a last resort, separation from the group may be necessary for the benefit of the child and the remainder of the group. Staff utilize this time to help the child regroup before returning to the group, and children are allowed to re-enter the group when they feel ready to do so. There will be specific places for students to take these breaks where they are still seen by the teacher and not seen as being “punished” by other students.

Here at CHAMP, we will continue to encourage students to make their own choices, but also learn and accept the consequences of their choices. The way will be paved in the beginning days of CHAMP and students will grow and learn in their decision-making and social skills as the year unfolds.

In cases of safety an adult will always step in.

CHAMP Program Behavior Guidelines

It is the purpose of this facility to provide a safe and fun environment where children can interact and play. The CHAMP Program will provide activities that will build skills and confidence in young boys and girls. Each child’s safety and program experience will be valued. Should the behavior of one or more children interfere with a positive experience for any other child the following procedures will be followed.

- Any behavior deemed to be dangerous by CHAMP personnel will be noted on a group attendance sheet and addressed with the child and parent.
- All significant incidents will be written in the daily log.

Should any one child cause three incidents deemed to be dangerous to other children or a disruption to program activities, a conference between parents, CHAMP Staff and mentors will be held to determine appropriate action. At that time, either a behavior plan will be put in place

outlining specific behavioral expectations from the child in question or a determination to release said camper will be made.

Severe behavior will result in parental contact and immediate dismissal from the program.

Each child will be expected to follow the directions given by any CHAMP personnel and all children will be expected to be always supervised. Should a child choose to leave his or her group without permission for any reason, or choose to disregard instructions of staff, further discipline may need to occur.

It is the intention of the CHAMP program to provide a safe and fun environment for kids. Parents are encouraged to share any comments or ideas with staff to improve the quality of our program.

College Student Participation

The Cortland/Homer Mentorship Program provides students with the opportunity to not only interact and learn with other students but work alongside a SUNY Cortland college student. SUNY Cortland Physical Education students will split their time every week to work alongside 1-3 students and help them specifically with their homework, encourage and interact on a personal and individual basis according to your child's needs and interests, and simply serve as a mentor in the program to keep your child safe and enjoying their time at CHAMP.

The college mentors will pick one day they can consistently come to each week to participate in this program. The mentors will not change until the close of the semester to help establish a relationship with your child and keep a sense of flow and consistency with the program. This means if your child has one mentor on Monday afternoon that will always be their mentor on Monday afternoons. College mentors will be responsible for the specific homework help and study needs of your child, accommodating personal interests' needs on an individual basis with your child, as well as leading many activities for the group to participate in as a whole. This program is designed to foster a relationship between children's mentors so that your child can have the best possible opportunity as well as provide this new wave of teachers with the experiences and tools needed to go further in their education.

Parent/Guardian Communication & Involvement

Communication

The success of our program is based on establishing a partnership between our parents and the program staff. Open and frequent communication between parents and teachers will help your child have a positive early learning experience. We hope you will feel free to talk with the coordinator or your child's mentors when you drop-off or pick-up your child. Please feel free to schedule conferences for longer discussions with your child's mentor to ensure that additional staff is scheduled for child supervision. While we encourage such communication between our staff and parents on all issues related to their child and classroom activities, we ask the parents not engage staff in conversations regarding program or company policies or other children in the school as staff is expected to keep such matters confidential.

Memos, feedback forms, and monthly newsletters will be available throughout the month to help keep you up to date with CHAMP. Meetings and conferences are highly encouraged with any needs or concerns you and your child may have.

Parent Involvement

Parent participation is a very important part of our part of our program. Your involvement is a valuable part of the teamwork involved in providing the best education possible for your child. Feel free to come in and observe your child at any time. Your ideas, concerns and comments are always welcome.

Let us know if we can help

If your child has experienced an upsetting incident, such as an illness in the family, and extended business trip by a parent, or a relocation of a close friend, please feel free to let us know. If we know what might be motivation a child's behavior, we can better respond and perhaps even help the child work out worries or concerns through play and creative activities.

Quality Assurance

We are committed to ensuring your full satisfaction with our program. Experience has demonstrated that open communication between parents and school staff is key to maintaining a positive relationship. We continually look for parents' input on how we can improve our programs.

If you have a problem:

Discuss the problem with the childcare director. We maintain an open-door policy in which parents are encouraged to visit the program at any time. Staff will make every effort to be available to discuss parental concerns regarding their child or program operations. Parental concerns or questions that cannot be resolved or answered by your child's teacher should be redirected to the director who is fully capable of responding to most issues.

In rare instances, an issue may arise that cannot be resolved to the mutual satisfaction of the program and the parents. Under such circumstances, it may be necessary to dismiss the child.

