

Grand St. Settlement, Inc.

SONYC @ GLOBAL LEADERS

Parent Manual

Welcome

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The staff at the SONYC @ Global Leaders would like to take this opportunity to welcome your family to our program. Here our students are encouraged to pursue their own interests, develop lasting friendships, and grow confidence, independence, and respect for themselves and others. This parent handbook outlines what you may expect from the Cornerstone Initiative and what the program expects from you in return. In this handbook you will find an overview of our After School Program as well as a brief description of workshops & activities, program structure, schedule and calendar.

Our Cornerstone will be exciting, safe, fun, intellectually stimulating and physically engaging. We will work to ensure that this is a memorable after school experience for your children. We hope it will be helpful and we welcome your suggestions and feedback in this year's advisory board meetings.

Program goals and features:

- Focus on helping children develop self-awareness, self-confidence & self-sufficiency
- Academic programming such as STEM, monthly academic challenges and test prep
- Provide children with individual attention and age appropriate group activities
- Offer nutritious meals
- Self-expression activities such as dance, art and cooking
- FUN trips and activities
- Our staff consists of competent, enthusiastic, talented youth workers who have been selected on the basis of their knowledge of youth development, talent and skills. All staff participates in After School Program orientation, training, and ongoing staff development.

General Information

Contact Information:

Victor Munoz, Program Director, vmunoz@grandsettlement.org 212-473-8152 ext. 2611

Gabrielle Alcala, Assistant Director, galcala@grandsettlement.org

Our Staff

The Cornerstone Initiative strives to hire and train the best qualified staff. Our staff is committed to providing engaging opportunities to the youth participating in our program. All staff responsible for the direct supervision of youth must be 18 years of age or older, staff under the age of 18 will work under the direct physical supervision of a staff member 18 years of age or older. All staff and volunteers have completed and cleared a criminal background check before being left alone with participating youth. Direct physical supervision of staff and volunteers will be provided until the background check has been completed and cleared.

Communication

We utilize many different forms to communicate information to our families. Throughout the After School Program flyers and telephone communication will be utilized to disseminate important messages and information to our families.

If at any time you need to contact the program please call: 212-473-8152 ext. 2611

SONYC Initiative Responsibilities & Expectations

As providers, *WE* agree to:

- Provide a consistent, quality and respectful program
- Provide a safe, wholesome and challenging environment
- Listen to student's concerns and answer their questions
- Treat each student with respect and dignity
- Respect each student and family's confidentiality
- Be sensitive to all cultures
- Encourage creativity, growth, and foster self-esteem in each student
- Assist each student in educational and recreational development
- Provide positive reinforcement and mild consequences to the students for negative conduct

As Parents, *We* agree to:

- I am responsible to provide all necessary information in the application process and update as needed.
- I must provide a recent and completed NYC Department of Health Medical Form filled out by my child's physician. My child will not be admitted until the form is completed. It is crucial to sign the Emergency Medical Treatment part of the application.
- I must read the parent manual and have thorough understanding of the policies and procedures of the SONYC @ Global Leaders.
- I understand that the SONYC @ Global Leaders is not responsible for any lost, damaged or stolen items.
- I understand that SONYC @ Global Leaders will not hold or store property of any participant. This includes the collection of money, electronics, clothing and all other personal property.
- I understand that SONYC @ Global Leaders is not responsible for any medical bills or costs that have occurred as a result of an injury during the After School Program
- I understand that there are no fees for the After School Program.
- I understand that if my child or I are disruptive, destructive, or hurtful he/she may be suspended or expelled from the After School Program and not allowed to enroll for Summer Camp programming.
- I understand that if my child is late on one of the trip dates he/she will not be allowed to remain in the program/building for that day.
- I understand that the program starts at 2:00PM and ends at 5:30pm.
- I understand that my child will not be allowed to pick up food / or purchase items from the store during program hours and/or on field trips.

- I understand pick up starts at 5:30pm in the unless I have notified Staff for early pick up.
- I understand that under no circumstance, I am to make special arrangements with any staff member. I am to speak to site management to discuss possible accommodations for my child, should that be required.
- I understand that my child will be released to authorized persons only. All escorts must be prepared to present identification provided to SONYC @ Global Leaders and can only be escorts listed on child's registration form.
- I understand that if any concerns should arise I am to notify site management immediately.

As a student, I agree to:

- Listen and abide by all directions of staff and teachers
- Be on time
- Practice respect to ALL other students and staff
- Practice respect of property
- Stay with my group at all times
- Try to resolve all conflicts or problems in a productive manner
- Leave personal belongings at home
- Remain drug, tobacco and alcohol free
- Notify any staff about any issues or concerns that I may have happened at the center immediately.
- Display a positive attitude, be kind and show appreciation
- Have the right to feel safe at the SONYC @ Global Leaders
- Not disrupt the program or jeopardize the health and well-being of students and staff
- Have the choice of how I behave, with the full understanding of the consequences of my choices

If a student chooses to bring games, puzzles, books, and personal items, he/she must be prepared to share them with others and parents must recognize that the staff cannot be responsible for the loss or damage of these belongings.

Parent Involvement

Parent concerns, opinions, and suggestions are encouraged at any time. Communication with the program directors and staff assistants is encouraged. The SONYC @ Global Leaders is continually building community partnerships. We are always looking for parent involvement in building community awareness in the importance of the After School Program.

Volunteer Information

The SONYC @ Global Leaders operates with the help of many volunteers in the community. These volunteers are required to fill out an application, and may be required to go through a background. We do not allow our volunteers to be alone with the students at any time. There is always a paid staff present to provide supervision.

Enrollment

The SONYC @ Global Leaders will enroll a maximum of 90 School-Aged participants in grades 6-8 at no cost.

Registration

Prior to your student(s) participation in the SONYC @ Global Leaders a registration packet must be completed.

The registration packet includes:

1. Participant Information
2. Participant Safety
3. Parent/Guardian Consent Form
4. Consent for Photo/Videotaping and Use of Youth Work
5. Physical Examination
6. Income Eligibility Form

Current emergency information and medical treatment form will be kept on file for each student. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the program informed of any change in their child's emergency, medical or physical conditions. In case of serious illness or injury, the staff will follow parental instructions written on the student's medical treatment release form. However, in all cases, staff will call for emergency assistance in situations that are deemed to be serious enough in nature as to cause harm to your child's life.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Sign In/Out Procedure

Staff is expected to dismiss participants properly: Staff is expected to release a child only to persons who are 18 years or older. The person must be **AUTHORIZED on the Registration Form/Authorized pick up list**. A child should **NOT** be released to anyone who is **NOT** listed on this form, unless we receive previous written authorization from the person who signed the Registration Form. **The authorized persons must present valid ID before a child can be released to them.** Parent/Guardian/Authorized pick-up must sign-out next the child's name and indicate the time the child was released from the care of Grand St. Settlement.

The following procedures will be followed when you drop your child off or pick him/her up from the program:

- *Each youth must be signed out of the program by the person picking up the youth, including the date and time the youth arrives or leaves.*
- *Youth may sign themselves in and out of the program only with written permission from the parent/guardian.*
- *Persons signing youth into and out of the program shall use identifiers, such as a signature, initials, or electronic code. Photo identification must be presented if they are unknown to the provider.*

Only parents/guardians or persons with written authorization from parents/guardians will be allowed to take youth from the program. In emergency situations, you may give verbal authorization to the program Director. The staff will question anyone that is unfamiliar to them, check their authorization to pick up a student, and will require identification from anyone who is unknown. ***If someone else is picking up the student, notification to the Director is required in writing.*** Parents are required to provide their own transportation for the student's pick-up each day. Whenever a student is picked up, a responsible adult must go in and sign the student out on their student's sign-out sheet located at the security desk.

Snack/Meal

The SONYC @ Global Leaders will provide daily nutritious snack and meals. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the program if their child has any food allergies. The program will provide appropriate snack options for those with special dietary needs, please indicate on the registration form.

****Students will not be allowed to go to the store to purchase food during program hours and/or on fieldtrips.***

All parents/guardians will be required to complete and return a Meal Waiver form.

Healthy Practices

Staff and youth will wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water at the following times:

- After using the toilet
- Before and after eating
- Upon returning from outdoor activities
- After wiping noses
- After handling animals
- Before and after food preparation

Clothing

Articles of clothing that are not in good taste or appropriate for After School are:

- T-shirts that are sexually suggestive or explicit.
- Clothing that advertises alcohol or tobacco
- Clothing that contains symbols, which are drug, tobacco, alcohol, or gang related.
- Clothing that does not appropriately cover the body causing distractions to others of the opposite sex (spaghetti strap tee's, halter tops, ripped shorts, etc.)
- Inappropriate oversized clothing (pants or shorts worn below the waist line or clothes so large that a safety hazard is created.)
- Hat and/or durags are not to be wore inside the building.

***** Our rule of thumb is that if you can't wear it at school, you can't wear it at After School Program. Students wearing inappropriate clothing will be required to change.**

Mandated Reporting

What is Mandated Reporting? The legal requirement that professionals notify appropriate authorities about case in which children and certain other groups of vulnerable individuals are being abused.

Who Must Report? Mandatory reporters almost always include medical personnel and those in the education system. In other states, law enforcement personnel, such as police, parole and probation officers must also report suspected abuse. Public employees, such as social workers or those who provide public assistance for families are included. Religious leaders, counselors, firemen, child care providers and foster care parents must report suspected abuse as well.

What Must Be Reported? Mandatory reporting does not mean that the person reporting the abuse must witness the abuse. Verbal confirmation and visible injuries require reporting. Taking advantage of the vulnerable financially or being neglectful, while not as obvious, must still be reported. Professionals who are privy to information regarding abuse to vulnerable individuals hold a 24-hour responsibility to report it. If they fail to make a report, they can be held liable.

Please be aware that all SONYC @ Global Leaders Staff are mandated reporters and will report any sign of child abuse.

All staff and volunteers are legally required to report any instance of observed or suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Program Director.

Youth Accident/Injury

If a child becomes ill or is injured in program or prior, the child will be separated from the group and his/her parent will be contacted and must make arrangements for the child to be picked up and treated. In the case of emergencies, the staff will administer basic first aid and then contact the parents. If more than basic first aid is necessary and a parent cannot be reached, the injured child will be taken to the nearest hospital or clinic by ambulance. If your child cannot go outside or participate in the program due to illness, please keep your child at home.

Safety of Child

Talk to your child about the importance of telling you if someone does or says something that makes them feel uncomfortable. Emphasize that adults should not ask them to keep secrets from you. Explain to your child that he/she has a basic right to privacy, and that no one should touch them inappropriately or compel them to touch someone else inappropriately. Instruct your child to always remain a part of a group. Stress safety in numbers. Be concerned if your child suddenly becomes withdrawn, balks at attending certain activities or being around a particular person, and seek, gently, to find out why.

Exclusion of Youth

Youth with any of, but not limited to, the following symptoms should not attend the SONYC @ Global Leaders

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed Rash
- Inflamed or Matted Eyes
- Severe cold, cough, and/or sore throat

We do not care for ill youth. If your student shows signs of illness after arriving at the facility, we will separate him/her from the other youth. Your child will be supervised and kept in a quiet area away from others until someone comes to pick him/her up. If your student becomes ill during program time, the Program Director(s) will contact you and require you or an authorized person to pick the student up from the program. If a parent cannot be reached, the youth's emergency contact numbers will be called.

Medication

We cannot administer *any* medication to youth.

Attendance Policy

For the safety of your student, we ask parents to notify the SONYC @ Global Leaders if their youth will not be attending the program according to registration guideline. In the event of illness, vacation or other activities on a regularly scheduled attendance day, the ***Program Director*** needs to be notified by parents. A written note or personal phone call is suggested to notify the directors. **Please note that all participants must maintain a rate of participation of 90% throughout the After School Program.**

Absence Policy

Participants will be allowed a maximum of **three (3) unexcused absences**. We have a large waiting list and if your child cannot be here on a consistent basis, we will have to give their spot to someone from our waiting list. If your child is absent, you must provide documentation for their absence for it to be counted as an excused

absence. Participants should only be absent if they are going to a doctor's appointment or in the event of a family emergency.

Behavioral Expectations

It is the goal of the SONYC @ Global Leaders to guide youth in becoming happy, responsible, cooperative participants through positive, non-threatening teaching techniques. We want to increase youth's respect for themselves by guiding them to become responsible for their own actions, and to help them grow in their respect for the rights and feelings of other people. It is our policy to avoid forms of discipline that might impair the youth's self-respect. The staff's role is one of a strong leader and role model helping youth grow towards self-discipline and self-direction. Every effort will be made to obtain information that will help us understand your youth. This may include conferences with parents, classroom teachers, program directors, staff assistants and school principals. When behavior problems arise, youth will be given options. We will find out what works best for each youth. The program uses discipline to encourage the youth's self-control and reduce risk of injury and any adverse health effects to self or others. The program will use the following positive discipline measures for youth or follow the day school behavior management plan:

Positive behavior rewards such as:

- Listen to youth's concerns and answer their questions
- Respect each youth's point of view
- Be sensitive to all cultures
- Encourage creativity, growth and foster self-esteem in each youth
- Assist each youth in recreational and educational development
- Provide positive reinforcement and mild consequences to the youth for negative conduct
- Redirection
- Encourage problem solving and critical thinking

The following rules help staff, parents and youth understand the expected conduct at our program:

- If inappropriate behavior occurs, the concern will be discussed with the youth along with how to make better choices.
- If inappropriate behavior continues, a written warning will be given and documented along with the parent/guardian being notified of the behavior.
- If inappropriate behavior still continues, a second warning will be given and the youth's parents or guardians will be contacted. The incident will be documented.
- If inappropriate behavior still continues, a third warning will be given and the youth will be suspended from the program along with the parent/guardian being notified of the action. The incident will be documented.
- Continued inappropriate behavior will be addressed on an individual basis, with a plan for improvement.

Severe Clause: If a student's actions cause a threatening situation to a peer or a staff member, or serious disruption of normal program proceedings, the student's parents will be called. The incident will be documented and the student will be temporarily excluded from the program. If the student has three documented incidents

and every effort has been exhausted to solve the problem, the child may be permanently dismissed from the program.

MISDEMEANORS

- **Violating Youth Services Ground Rules**
- **Obscene Gestures**
- **Bullying**
- **Spitting on another person**
- **Disrupting or Disrespecting staff or participants**
- **Physical altercations with staff and other participants**

CONSEQUENCES

First Offense

- Participant Incident Log
- Staff must document incident in log book
- Staff will discuss behavior with participant
- Follow up call to parent/ guardian to give update on child's behavior
- Verbal warning will be given to parent/guardian when child is picked up

Second Offense

- Incident Log
- Staff must document incident in log book
- Participant will be given a written warning
- Meet with participants to discuss (or mediate) the rule they broke and the consequences of a written warning, family support, participants, staff to discuss the rule participant broke and the consequences

Third Offense

- Incident Report
- Participant will be suspended from program and will be scheduled to meet with GSS staff before reinstatement into the program is allowed.
- Participant and Parent/ Guardian must meet with director and other key staff and will be asked to come up with a plan for behavior modification.

Final Offense

- Incident Report
- Participant will be terminated from program
- Before being reinstated into the new program year parent/ guardian must meet with director and or key staff to ensure that the child is ready to be included back into GSS Programs.

MAJOR OFFENSES

The following behavior will not be tolerated and will result in immediate removal and possible termination from GSS programs. Other behavior not listed here may result in the same consequences as determined by staff.

- **Fighting/Assault**
- **Spitting on another person**
- **Throwing or destroying property/Vandalism**
- **Threats—(verbal or physical)**
- **Theft**

CONSEQUENCES

If one of the above-listed behaviors occurs, staff will immediately:

First Offense