Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child’s experience and development are important to the YMCA. To ensure that your child is in engaged in high-quality programming, we would like to collect data from your child.

**WHY DO WE WANT TO COLLECT DATA?**

In order to assure that the program your child participates in is high quality and has a positive impact, your local YMCA and YMCA of the USA (Y-USA, the national resource office of YMCAs) jointly engage in ongoing research, evaluation and/or quality improvement efforts. Youth programs are periodically assessed to see what is going well, to identify areas of the program that can be improved, and to make sure that the children the YMCA serves are benefitting from the program. By collecting surveys and related information, the Y is investigating whether the goals for positive youth development are being met. This research is also intended to develop a national YMCA dataset that can be used, for example, to provide benchmarked data for local YMCA sites and programs and to provide funders with outcome data.

**WHAT DATA WILL BE COLLECTED?**

As a youth program participant, your child will be asked to fill out a survey at the beginning and at the end of the program. She/he will be asked to reflect on their interests and their experiences in the program.

**Consent to Participate in Program Evaluation**

We are asking your permission to use the information collected from your child (e.g., assessments, survey results). Your local Y and Y-USA will comply with all state and federal laws in collecting, storing, analyzing and presenting data. Expected participation in data collection will be under 30 minutes.

## benefits

A benefit means that something good happens to you or your child. By participating in the YMCA’s program, your child will receive high-quality programming and exposure to enrichment activities. For the research and evaluation component, you and your child will not receive any direct benefit. However, future YMCA participants may benefit from changes to the program that were implemented as a result of the evaluation. That is, the evaluation may make the program better for future YMCA participants.

## keeping your information confidential

Y-USA will follow all applicable federal and state laws that protect your child’s personal and school related information (e.g., FERPA), including maintaining appropriate physical, electronic, and procedural safeguards. Youth information is confidential and will not be shared or discussed with anyone outside of the approved local Y and Y-USA staff, external researchers, their partners, and data collectors.

Your child’s name will not be used in any external/public-facing publications; rather, your child’s data will be aggregated with other students enrolled in the program. All collected data for this project will be securely stored in lockable locations, secure computer files, or on computer servers accessible only to the approved and trained researchers and authorized local Y and Y-USA staff. Y-USA plans on keeping this data indefinitely, in order to identify trends in program participation and youth outcomes. This data may be included in local YMCA reports, Y-USA site and national program reports, as well as in peer-reviewed education and evaluation journal articles.

There is a very small risk that confidential data will be compromised. We will minimize this risk by ensuring that only approved local-Y and Y-USA evaluation staff involved in the program have access to student information. As required for evaluation purposes, we may share your child’s information with our evaluation partners, who are also required to protect your child’s privacy and confidentiality to the maximum extent allowable by law.

**PAYMENT**

You or your child will not be paid for your participation.

**LEGAL RIGHTS**

You will not lose any of your legal rights by signing this consent form.

**ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATING IN DATA COLLECTION**

Participation in data collection activities is voluntary and you can withdraw your consent for your child to participate at any time. Your child’s participation in the program will not be affected. You have the right to refuse your child’s participation in data collection activities. You will not lose any of your legal rights by signing this consent form.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions, or if you have a visual or other impairment and require this material in another format, please contact Seana Hasson, Senior Director of Research and Evaluation at YMCA of the USA (Seana.Hasson@ymca.net).

## AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN DATA COLLECTION

This consent form contains important information to help you decide if you want to be in the study. If you have any questions that are not answered in this consent form, please ask a program staff member at your local YMCA for assistance.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand this consent information, and **I agree** to participate in the YMCA research study

OR

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read this and understand this consent information, but **I do not agree** to participate in the YMCA research study

Printed name of Parent(s)/Caregiver(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: /\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/

(Note: Electronic Signatures must be typed between the // symbols)

Print child’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

YMCA: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(if your child is participating in a school program)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

There are two copies of the consent form and both need your signature. The first copy needs to be returned to the YMCA program staff. Since there is important information in this consent form, including contact information if you have questions or concerns, we want you to keep the second copy for your records.