



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

FREE YMCA MEMBERSHIPS FOR 7TH GRADERS!

YMCA of the Brandywine Valley is excited to participate in the “7th Grade Initiative” which provides a free YMCA membership to all students in the 7th grade. The goal of the 7th Grade Initiative is to inspire youth to discover their passions, develop a healthy lifestyle, and gain the assets needed to avoid risky behaviors and succeed in school and life.

Why 7th Graders?

Research shows that 7th grade is a critical time in a young person’s life when exposure to risk factors greatly increases. Risk factors are conditions or influences that have been shown to increase the likelihood for unhealthy behaviors including substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school drop-out and violence. It is also during the early teen years that youth begin to distance themselves from family and positive support systems.

YMCA of the Brandywine Valley has a 120-year history of building strong kids through programs that engage, educate and foster positive self-esteem and critical core values that kids need to become healthy, productive adults. Through this positive, proactive and strength-based approach, the YMCA aims to buffer young people from the effects of risk exposure by providing them with opportunities to be involved in, and contribute to, their community, their school, and their peer group in meaningful ways.

Where is the membership available?

Membership is available at the YMCA of the Brandywine Valley locations listed below. Visit www.ymcabwv.org for branch addresses and phone numbers.

- Brandywine YMCA (West Brandywine Township)
- Kennett Area YMCA
- Jennersville YMCA (West Grove)
- Octorara YMCA (Atglen)
- West Chester Area YMCA (East Goshen)
- Oscar Lasko Youth Program Center (West Chester Borough)

Brandywine YMCA * Jennersville YMCA * Kennett Area YMCA * Octorara YMCA
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www.ymcabwv.org

How do kids join the YMCA?

To start the free membership, 7th graders should bring their school ID, roster or report card, and a parent or guardian with them to the YMCA. Parents complete the required membership paperwork and then youth can begin using the membership right away. The free membership expires at the end of the summer before students enter 8th grade.

What does the membership include?

- Use of YMCA indoor facilities (in accordance with policies), during operating hours.
- Monthly calendar of teen programs including group exercise classes, Friday and Saturday night events, enrichment and sports classes, open socialization time, junior lifeguard classes, martial arts programs, Youth and Government Program and more!

(Programs vary by YMCA location. Fees apply for some programs.)

The YMCA Is Measuring Kids' Developmental Assets

The YMCA of the Brandywine Valley will be conducting assessments with 7th grade members to learn how we can develop programming that increases the assets among youth at this critical age. Developmental assets are the key building blocks that young people need to grow up to be caring and competent. Through studies involving more than two million young people, the Minneapolis-based Search Institute has found that assets are essential to young people's success.

Assets are not financial; they are opportunities, skills, relationships, values, and self-perceptions that all young people need in their lives. A few examples of developmental assets include healthy relationships with adults, service to others, creative activities, honesty, peaceful conflict resolution, self-esteem and more.

Get Involved!

We're looking for members of the community to sponsor 7th Grade Initiative programs and volunteer to assist during activities. For more information about making a difference in a young person's life, please visit our website: www.ymcabwv.org.