

THE HANGOUT

2021-2022 Parent/Guardian Handbook

Welcome to The Hangout!

We are excited for your family to be here and look forward to an incredible year.

Program Details

Location: 358 Beech Street Newland, N.C. 28657

Operating Hours: Monday-Thursday 3:30-6:30pm

The Hangout will be closed on school holidays and snow days. The program will be closed on unplanned early dismissal days. The program will be open on planned early release days. The program will be open on days when there are one or two hour weather delays, however, transportation home after the program for those that use this, will not run. If schools are closed entirely due to weather, the program will be closed.

**Transportation home will NOT run on early dismissal days due to weather.

**Transportation home will NOT run on days when school is delayed due to weather, (Transportation home will run on regularly scheduled early dismissal days).

Program Description

The Hangout will be geared towards outdoor experiential learning, life skills training, promoting social interactions between peers, academic enrichment, and providing individual development assistance to each individual youth. The Hangout is geared to serve youth grades 6th-8th grade. Our afternoon will have a semi-structured environment. The program hours are from 3:30pm-6:30pm. We will provide a snack for the youth during the day. If youth have special food allergies or needs, please let us know.

Behavior & Communication Policy

Your student/students are expected to adhere to all rules and regulations, follow the code of conduct and follow directions from staff, volunteers and program tutors. If behavior, personal safety, or the safety of others becomes an issue; you will be notified to pick up your student immediately. The acting lead staff will review a report with you concerning the incident. They will ask you to sign the report saying that you understand what happened and the consequences for the behavior. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to ask the staff member or contact the program director.

Emily Neff - Program Director: (828) 264-2421 or emily@wamycommunityaction.org

Behavior & Discipline

At The Hangout, we do our very best to work with and encourage all the students. Below is the discipline and behavior management policy. In addition, site coordinators have incident report forms that they fill out

THE HANGOUT

2021-2022 Parent/Guardian Handbook

if a student's behavior is repeatedly inappropriate or unmanageable. A student can be suspended from the program for one day, three days, one week, or the remainder of the school year. Please keep an open line of communication with staff members regarding your student's efforts, improvements, behaviors, achievements, and areas of growth. We do our best to meet each student at his or her individual level and want each one to be active, positive, and excited to be in The Hangout. At times, we must also face very hard decisions about keeping students in the program for a variety of reasons. We find that it helps immensely if guardians can encourage their students to do well in the program and if they keep an open line of communication with the program staff.

Things to leave at home

We are striving to create a fun, safe learning environment for our students. In order to ensure safety, students may NOT BRING: roller/wheel shoes or skates, skateboards, knives, lighters, tobacco, drugs, non-prescription drugs, alcohol, guns (including play guns and water guns), fireworks, weapons, pets, large sums of money, or anything of great value.

Should your student bring one or more of these items, it will be held by the staff member and your student might face suspension from the program.

WAMY Community Action, Inc. is not responsible for any broken or lost items that are brought from home. This includes cell phones, laptops, technology, watches, jewelry, etc...

Parent Conduct Policy

We are striving to create a safe/fun environment for students, staff, parents and guardians. In order to ensure a secure place for your student, the student's parents/guardians must also adhere to all rules and regulations. These rules apply in any setting where students are in attendance whether on school grounds or during field trip settings. If a parent/guardian's behavior is considered threatening or unsafe by the program staff, your student's services may be suspended or terminated if deemed necessary.

Parents/guardians should refrain from any verbal or physical altercation with any staff member, student(s), or other adults. Program staff have received instructions to contact the proper authorities to ensure everyone's safety. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide any item(s) needed by their student in order to participate in the program activities.

Student Pick-Up

ONLY the individual(s) listed on the student/students pick-up list may pick up your student/students. No individual that is a registered sex offenders will be allowed to pick up student(s) or are allowed on program grounds. If there is an existing legal custody document, please send a copy with your registration packet. As legal custody changes, please send updated information.

Late Pick-Up

THE HANGOUT

2021-2022 Parent/Guardian Handbook

Our program ends at 6:30pm every day and just like you, our staff have families and obligations that they need to attend to. Therefore being late to pick up a student will now have consequences. The following policy is for late pick-ups.

1st time: Verbal warning (documented to the Director)

2nd time: Written warning (letter to parent/guardian with suspension warning)

3rd time: Suspension up to 1 week from the program

4th or more: Suspension for more than a week or indefinitely from the program

**We will also be calling the Department of Social Services for students who are left at the site past 7:00pm if we cannot locate or communicate with the parent/guardian. To avoid this, please make sure you have placed an emergency contact or more than one phone number for yourself on your student's packet. This way, we can at least call an emergency contact to pick up the student instead of social services.

Please understand that this policy is being implemented because our program cannot pay staff members to stay past regular program hours. We understand that things happen and that sometimes accidents happen or you may slip up and be late once or twice. These policies and consequences will be used at the discretion of the staff or Director for those families that pick up late often. To avoid receiving a letter from the Director, please make it a priority to have your student(s) picked up on time each day.

Transportation

Transportation home (or to a predetermined meeting spot) from the program will be offered to any student in need. If you are interested in utilizing transportation services home for your student(s), please make sure to fill out the transportation sheet in your student's enrollment packet. We will also need detailed directions to your student's drop-off location for our driver(s). If your home/driveway is not a safe area for our vans to pull into, we ask that you allow us to drop your student(s) off at the end of the driveway or we set up a meeting spot for drop-off.

Snacks

The Hangout will provide all students with a healthy snack each day in accordance with the general nutrition requirements set forth by the Division of Child Development and Early Education and the USDA. We will accommodate students with special dietary needs upon written request from the parent/guardian.

Medical Information/Release Form

The Medical Information/Release Form must be fully completed and returned to the site director. Please make sure you indicate a doctor, the doctor's phone number, and a hospital preference. Additionally, let us know of any special medical condition and all allergies. If your student has an inhaler or epi pen, we need to have access to one at the site at all times. Action Plan forms are available if your student has diabetes, asthma, seizures, or food allergies. If your student requires medication during the program hours, you and your doctor must provide prescription information, and a completed medication permission form. All medical information will be kept strictly confidential.

THE HANGOUT

2021-2022 Parent/Guardian Handbook

Sign-in/Sign-out

When entering the program, students will sign in on a clipboard as well as staff will take attendance to make sure all students are accounted for. Each day your student(s) must be signed out by an adult/parent/guardian that is listed on the student's pick up list. Program staff will not release any student(s) unless the person picking them up is on the pick up list. If you come to pick up your student before 6pm, you must come into the building and physically sign your student out. Between 6-6:30pm, program staff and students will be at the door of the building and will bring the clipboard to you. No other student will be allowed to sign out another student, including themselves or other siblings under any circumstances. Students that utilize the transportation home services, will be signed out by the program staff once they are dropped off.

Contact Information for the Program

The Hangout will have multiple cell phones for parents to communicate with program staff. These cell phones will ensure each student's safety and will give parents the opportunity to contact staff in case of an emergency. Please feel free to contact these program phones if you have an emergency. However, due to supervision being the number one priority, you might have to leave a message or try calling the administrative office if you cannot get through. Phones will be on from 3:00 pm to 6:30 pm daily. Phone numbers for after school sites will be provided the first day of afterschool.

Please remember that The Hangout is NOT the responsibility of the Old Cranberry High School or Avery County Schools. If you have a concern or would like an issue addressed, please call 828-264-2421 and ask to speak to the program director, Emily Neff or email her at emily@wamycommunityaction.org

Expectations of the Student

We expect your student to attend the program on a regular basis, if possible. If there is a waiting list, your student could lose their slot in the program if they miss too many days. Failure to attend regularly will result in termination of the program slot. We want your student to be actively involved in setting up individual academic goals and participating in activities. We want your student to have a part in watching his or her progress throughout the year. We expect your student to obey the rules established by the discipline policy and the code of conduct policy. Failure to do so could mean temporary suspension or permanent suspension from the program. We have many students we are serving and need to ensure a safe and secure environment for all involved.

Expectations of the Program

We will work to engage each student and make learning fun.

We will provide enrichment opportunities and life skills training.

We will listen to concerns and work to address them in the best possible way.

THE HANGOUT

2021-2022 Parent/Guardian Handbook

We will do our best to work collaboratively with you and your students.

Homework

The Hangout has a variety of goals and strives to work with each student in the best possible way. However, we cannot guarantee that your student's homework will be completed each and every day without error. While a certain amount of time will be devoted specifically to homework, it will not be the entire focus of the program. We encourage you to partner with us on this endeavor by encouraging your student to utilize homework time appropriately, by understanding that on some days homework might not be completed due to other activities, and to help by looking at your student's work on a regular basis. To help us with this endeavor, we reserve the right to look in student's backpacks to retrieve homework or other supplies. This is to help us and the students achieve their academic goals. We understand the need to devote time and energy to homework and will do the best that we can to help ensure this need is met.

Parent Opportunities

Throughout the year we will advertise and make you aware of special programs of interest to you. You may find a list of programs in the monthly newsletter that you will receive from the program. Additionally, sites will keep you posted by sending home fliers and other important notifications. We want you to participate in the activities that you find interesting. If you are interested in learning or sharing with the students about a specific topic, please contact the program director. We also encourage you to come and spend time at the site with your student, either as a volunteer or audience member during special events. We believe that parents/guardians are a vital part to the success of the program and encourage you to get involved.

Fees

There are no fees associated with The Hangout. The program is completely free of charge and open to any middle school student in Avery County.

Suspected Abuse/Neglect

If The Hangout staff suspect and/or witness incidents of child abuse or neglect, a report will be made immediately to the Department of Social Services by the staff person who suspects/witnesses the abuse/neglect.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

THE HANGOUT

2021-2022 Parent/Guardian Handbook

The Hangout will adhere to the 'Emergency Preparedness Plan' that is attached as an appendix at the end of this handbook. Emergency drills will be practiced monthly and documented on site.

Field Trip Policy

Field trips will be scheduled throughout the school year. Students may be transported by yellow school bus, activity bus and/or program vans. All drivers will be approved by WAMY administration and must pass a background check and DMV record check. All field trips will relate directly to planned activities/objectives of the program. Parents/guardians will receive notification prior to the trip and will sign a permission form that will include date, purpose, transportation mode, destination and departure/return information. Emergency contact information for each student in attendance will be maintained by program staff at all times during the field trip.

Sick/Health Policy

If students need to be given medication during the program, parents/guardians must have a doctor fill out a 'Permission To Administer Medication' form. These forms can be provided by program staff. All medications are required to be in their original container with dosage and current date. Over the counter medications must be in the original container with expiration date and the same procedure as above. Staff will not administer any medication on a form that states "as needed". Parents/guardian(s) will be called to the site to administer any medications that are listed "as needed". If a student is sick or becomes sick, (as determined by the staff), upon entering or while participating in the program, the child will be separated from the group and will be made as comfortable as possible in a designated, isolated location and a parent/guardian will be notified. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up that student as soon after notification as soon as possible. Though isolated from the group, the sick student will continue to be supervised by staff at all times. Staff are trained to recognize communicable diseases and will adhere to specific procedures as outlined in the First Aid Training.