



# YMCA OF GREENWICH RUNNING START PROGRAM PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Running Start is a program aimed at providing local school children with the opportunity to go back-to-school clothes shopping. This program is directly aligned with the YMCA of Greenwich's commitment to nurture the potential of every child and teen.

This program serves children entering Kindergarten through 5th grade, providing them with clothing, shoes, school supplies, and backpacks so they can begin the new school year with confidence.

Each child is paired with a volunteer from the community for a special night of back-to-school shopping at Kohl's. Before they go shopping, they enjoy a pizza party at the Y with other children and parents participating in the program, as well as the volunteer they will spend the night with.

## 2026 DETAILS

**PROGRAM DATES:** We will be hosting the program on 6 separate nights in July and August. The dates available this year are:

- Monday, July 27
- Wednesday, July 29
- Tuesday, August 4
- Thursday, August 6
- Monday, August 10
- Thursday, August 13

**WHERE:** Activities begin and end at the YMCA of Greenwich. Children and volunteers will be transported by busses provided by Greenwich Public Schools to the Kohl's in Portchester, NY and then back to the YMCA of Greenwich after the shopping experience. Volunteers are required to stay for the entire experience.

# TIMELINE

- 5:00PM** Volunteers arrive at the YMCA for an orientation from YMCA Leadership to prepare them for the shopping experience and working with the children participating.
- 5:15PM** Children will arrive at the Y for the pizza party and to meet with the volunteer they will be paired with. Parents and guardians are welcome to join the pizza party.
- 6:00PM** Children and volunteers will board for the buses for their shopping trip.
- 6:30PM** Arrive and shopping at Kohl's (431 Boston Post Rd, Port Chester, NY 10573).
- 8:00PM** Children and volunteers board the bus to return to the Y.
- 8:30PM** Children and volunteers will arrive back at the YMCA of Greenwich.

## VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

### WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS OF VOLUNTEERS?

All volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Release Agreement, background check, and Child Abuse Prevention training from Praesidium. [This is a Connecticut State requirement for working with children.](#)

The Volunteer Release Agreement can be completed on the Volunteers Matters platform, while the background check and child abuse prevention training will be completed on 3rd party platforms. Please carefully read all the following instructions to complete your required credentials.

### HOW DO I COMPLETE THE VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS?

#### 1. SIGN VOLUNTEER RELEASE AGREEMENT

Create an account through Volunteer Matters: [GREENWICHYMCA.VOLUNTEERMATTERS.ORG/LOGIN](https://GREENWICHYMCA.VOLUNTEERMATTERS.ORG/LOGIN)

#### 2. COMPLETE A BACKGROUND CHECK

All opportunities require a background check before you can begin volunteering.

1. Agree to the statement authorizing a background check on the Volunteer Matters dashboard.
2. CLICK THIS LINK TO ACCESS OUR BACKGROUND CHECK: [CANDIDATELINK.COM/GWYMCA](https://CANDIDATELINK.COM/GWYMCA)
3. Create an account with ADP.
4. Complete all the required steps and forms on the ADP website.

### 3. COMPLETE CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING

Child Abuse Prevention training is required before you can begin in any volunteer/intern role.

Complete the following course: Foundations: Preventing Abuse in Youth-Serving Organizations for your child abuse prevention training. This is the **ONLY** training course you are required to complete through Praesidium Academy. Please read all video titles carefully to ensure you complete the correct training.

This training is required of all Greenwich YMCA Staff and Volunteers/Interns who are posted in the building. Please follow the instructions below to take the training course. **When you are finished with the training, upload a copy of your completion certificate to this credential.**

1. Go to [PRAESIDIUMACADEMY.COM/REDEEM](https://PRAESIDIUMACADEMY.COM/REDEEM) and enroll to complete the Praesidium Foundations: Preventing Abuse in Youth-Serving Organizations
2. Fill in your contact information including First Name, Last Name, Email Address, and desired Password.
3. Enter the registration code: reg-ymcagreenwich-203
4. Click "validate" to confirm registration code.
5. Click the checkbox to agree to the Terms & Conditions.
6. Click "redeem."
7. Write down your user login and password for future reference.
8. Answer the Registration Questions about your status and role within the organization.
9. Click "save & continue."
10. To begin taking training immediately, scroll down and click the **Foundations: Preventing Abuse in Youth-Serving Organizations** course to start the content.
11. Once completed, you will be emailed a copy of your certificate. Alternatively, you can download your certificate by accessing your "transcripts" under your name in the upper right corner of your Praesidium account.
12. Return to your Volunteer Matters account and "upload file" under the child abuse prevention training credential module, then "save."

Once you have completed these three required credentials, please email Janina Casey at [jcasey@gwymca.org](mailto:jcasey@gwymca.org) and Julia Borges at [jborges@gwymca.org](mailto:jborges@gwymca.org) to confirm correct completion. You will then be contacted by the department director in charge of your desired volunteer or internship opportunity with the next steps.

### WHAT ELSE SHOULD VOLUNTEERS KNOW?

- YMCA Leadership and Youth Program Directors oversee the program and shopping trip.
- Volunteers are not allowed to go in fitting rooms alone with any child for any reason.
- Volunteers must stay for the entirety of the shopping experience and travel to and from Kohl's on the bus with the child they are shopping with.