

COMPASS/SONYC Programs

Participant & Family Handbook

2026-2027 School Year

Funded by the NYC Department of Youth & Community Development (DYCD)

DYCD-funded programs are provided free of charge to families.

v.09/2026

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I. About United Activities Unlimited

United Activities Unlimited (UAU) has served Staten Island since 1977. Founded by community activists who stepped in after the city's budget crisis shuttered after-school programs, UAU began as a single free program for kids who had nowhere to go. Today, the agency provides afterschool and summer programming, community centers, workforce development, prevention education, counseling, and family support services across the borough.

2. Contact Information

UAU Main Office

1200 South Ave, Suite 304, Staten Island, NY 10314

Phone: (718) 987-8111 | Website: www.UnitedActivities.org

Administrative Team:

Steven Matteo, Executive Director/CEO

Angela Lesane, Director of Operations

Susie DiStefano, Director of School-Based Programs

Program Sites & Directors

For questions about a specific program, contact the Program Director at your child's school.

Elementary Schools (COMPASS, Grades K-5)

Site	Address	Program Director	Email	Dismissal Time
PS 11	85 Garretson Ave, SI 10304	Rebecca Rodriguez	RRodriguez@unitedactivities.org	5:45 PM
PS 20	161 Park Ave, SI 10302	Franklin Jackson	FJackson@unitedactivities.org	5:45 PM
PS 41	216 Clawson St, SI 10306	Sophia Tang	STang@unitedactivities.org	5:30 PM
PS 45	58 Lawrence Ave, SI 10310	Tylar Simon	TSimon@unitedactivities.org	5:45 PM
PS 54	1060 Willowbrook Rd, SI 10314	Layna Brady	LBrady@unitedactivities.org	5:45 PM
PS 55	54 Osborne St, SI 10312	Danielle Jablonski	DJablonski@unitedactivities.org	5:30 PM
PS 56	250 Kramer St, SI 10309	Dayna DeSando	Dayna@unitedactivities.org	5:45 PM
Petrides Elementary	715 Ocean Terrace, SI 10301	Christina Rapillo	CRapillo@unitedactivities.org	5:30 PM
St. Patrick's	3560 Richmond Rd, SI 10306	Camryn Carbonaro	CCarbonaro@unitedactivities.org	5:30 PM

Middle Schools (SONYC, Grades 6-8)

Site	Address	Program Director	Email	Dismissal Time
IS 7	1270 Huguenot Ave, SI 10312	Adam Baskin	ABaskin@unitedactivities.org	5:15 PM
IS 24	750 Durant Ave, SI 10308	Samantha Goodman	SGoodman@unitedactivities.org	5:20 PM
IS 34	528 Academy Ave, SI 10307	Richard Harris	RHarris@unitedactivities.org	5:30 PM
IS 51	80 Willowbrook Rd, SI 10302	Michael Roche	MRoche@unitedactivities.org	5:30 PM
IS 72	33 Ferndale Ave, SI 10314	Thomas Egan	TEgan@unitedactivities.org	5:30 PM
IS 75	455 Huguenot Ave, SI 10312	Alexandra Richman	ARichman@unitedactivities.org	5:15 PM
Petrides Middle	715 Ocean Terrace, SI 10301	Jonathan Osorio	JOsorio@unitedactivities.org	5:30 PM
New World Prep	285 Clove Rd, SI 10310	Pyachea Heredia	PHeredia@unitedactivities.org	6:00 PM

3. Program Overview

The COMPASS/SONYC programs are funded by the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). COMPASS (Comprehensive After School System of New York City) serves elementary school students in grades K through 5. SONYC (School's Out New York City) serves middle school students in grades 6 through 8. DYCD covers the cost, so families are charged no tuition.

UAU COMPASS/SONYC programs provide activities in academic enhancement, leadership skills, social and emotional learning, career awareness, recreation and health, culture and arts, civic engagement, and life skills.

Homework Support

Homework support is available each weekday in a designated quiet area where students can complete assignments with staff assistance. While homework completion is encouraged, it is not mandatory. Staff provide general guidance but cannot guarantee that all assignments will be completed or offer extensive one-on-one tutoring. Families are encouraged to reinforce good study habits at home. If your child is having difficulty with an assignment, let program staff know so we can identify available resources.

Enrichment Activities

Programming includes STEAM, literacy, leadership, social-emotional learning, physical activity, arts, life skills and youth development, college and career readiness, and recreation.

Prevention Services

As part of UAU programming, afterschool and summer camp participants take part in Prevention Services. Prevention Specialists may provide confidential counseling services to participants and their families. Participants sign a notice of confidentiality upon being admitted for counseling. Families will not be notified that a participant is receiving counseling, in order to preserve confidentiality.

Prevention Specialists may only break confidentiality under the following circumstances:

- A participant threatens to harm themselves.
- A participant threatens to harm someone else.
- There is a concern that a participant is being harmed.

4. Enrollment & Registration

Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Each site has a limited number of seats set by DYCD.

How to Apply

Registration takes two steps. Both must be completed.

Step 1: Complete the DYCD application. Every child enrolled in a DYCD-funded program must have a DYCD application on file. Go to DiscoverDYCD at discoverdycd.dycdconnect.nyc, create an account or sign in, select After School Programs, search for United Activities Unlimited, choose your child's school, and submit. If you prefer a paper application, contact your Program Director.

Step 2: Complete the UAU registration form. Fill in every required field and upload your child's medical form. The medical form must be dated within the last 12 months. An expired or missing medical form leaves the application incomplete, and your child cannot be enrolled until a current one is on file.

 Important: Submitting the registration form does not enroll your child or hold a seat. A member of the UAU team will contact you once your child's file has been reviewed. Please wait for that confirmation before sending your child to the program. Students cannot attend the first day until the Program Director receives clearance from UAU's administration office.

Required Documents

A new application must be completed for each child, each program year. Applications must include a current medical/physical form (dated within the last 12 months) and immunization records.

Family Orientation (Required)

A parent, guardian, or responsible adult must attend a family orientation session each year. Orientation reviews program guidelines and planned activities. If you cannot attend the scheduled session, contact your Program Director to arrange an alternative time.

5. Hours & Days of Operation

The 2026-2027 Afterschool Program operates September 14, 2026 through June 11, 2027, Monday through Friday. Programs may also be open on select Department of Education school holidays. Check your site's schedule for specific openings and closures.

6. Communication

For immediate assistance or in case of emergency, call your Program Director directly. Contact information for each site is listed in Section 2 of this handbook.

Please keep a current, frequently checked email address on file. We send important updates, scheduling information, and program news by email. If your phone number or email address changes, notify your Program Director right away to avoid missing critical communications.

7. Food & Snacks

Snacks are provided during program hours at no cost to families. Snack schedules vary by site. Your Program Director will communicate the schedule for your child's program.

If your child has a food allergy or dietary restriction, please notify your Program Director and make sure allergy documentation is on file as part of registration. Children with food allergies may be separated from the larger group during snack time for their safety.

8. Dress Code

Participants should wear closed-toe shoes in order to take part in physical activities. Sandals and open-toe footwear are not permitted during active programming.

Your Program Director will communicate any site-specific dress code requirements or special activity days that call for particular clothing or gear.

9. Health, Wellness & Safety

The physical and emotional safety of every participant is UAU's highest priority. The following policies are in place to protect all participants.

Please share: Always tell us about your child's medical conditions, including allergies, asthma, diabetes, or any other conditions, so we can keep them safe.

Change of Medical and Emergency Contact Information

Up-to-date contact and medical information is critical. Parents and guardians must notify the Program Director of any changes to contact information or their child's medical information. Changes must be provided in writing.

In an emergency, staff will call the numbers listed on your child's application in priority order. If we cannot reach a parent or guardian, we will call the emergency contacts.

Sick Policy

Please keep your child home if they are sick. A child who appears ill upon arrival will not be admitted. If a child becomes ill during the program, they will be separated from the group and a parent or guardian will be called for pick-up. Signs of illness that require pick-up include vomiting or diarrhea, inflamed mouth and throat, colored or runny nose, unusual crying or fussiness, head lice, pink eye, ringworm, chicken pox, and measles.

A child showing signs of a communicable disease will need a doctor's note before returning to the program.

Staff will treat routine scrapes and cuts with basic first aid. In an emergency, UAU will contact parents and guardians immediately. Your authorized signature on the Emergency Medical Treatment form allows us to obtain prompt medical attention when necessary.

Bedbug Awareness

Bed bugs can be found in many public places, including movie theaters, airplanes, and hotels. They are a nuisance but are not known to cause or spread disease. Anyone can encounter bed bugs, and their presence is not a sign of unclean living conditions.

If a bed bug is suspected on a participant's clothing or belongings, staff will discreetly bring the child to program leadership for an examination. Program leadership will notify the parent or guardian and send home educational material. If the family identifies an infestation at home, program leadership will encourage treatment.

Mental Health

Mental health matters as much as physical health. UAU creates a space where all participants feel safe, respected, and supported. Participants are encouraged to talk to staff if they feel overwhelmed, anxious, sad, or stressed. Staff are trained to listen, offer support, and connect participants with appropriate resources. Staff are not licensed therapists but will ensure safety and make appropriate referrals.

Suicidal Thoughts or Self-Harm Concerns: If a participant shares thoughts of suicide or self-harm, staff will immediately listen without judgment, ensure the participant is not left alone, notify program leadership, contact the family, and reach out to mobile crisis services.

Outdoor Activities & Weather

Cold Weather	Hot Weather
We go outside unless it is snowing, the play area is icy, or wind chill is below 0°F. Please dress your child appropriately.	We limit outdoor time and intensity, ensure easy access to water, and follow Air Quality Index guidelines.

Participants cannot opt to stay inside based on personal weather preferences. Families will be notified in advance of any extended outdoor activities during extreme conditions.

10. Program Emergencies & Relocation

UAU staff are trained to follow emergency procedures in the event of severe weather, fire, or other conditions that require building evacuation or immediate safety measures.

Fire and Evacuation Drills

Emergency drills are conducted monthly so participants know the procedures and exits. Directions are posted in all classrooms and UAU afterschool spaces.

Relocation

Relocation is rare but will occur if an emergency or facility issue requires it. All programs have two designated relocation sites. Information on emergency site locations is available from program administration. Staff will contact parents and guardians by phone in the event of relocation.

II. Program Closures & Inclement Weather

When the NYC Department of Education closes schools, COMPASS/SONYC programs do not operate. For closures on days when schools are open, DYCD makes the decision. Families will be notified by email.

If you are ever unsure whether your child's program is running, contact your Program Director directly.



12. Attendance, Pick-Up & Dismissal

Attendance

Consistent daily attendance is required by the afterschool and summer camp model. Participants are expected to attend 5 days a week, with a minimum of 3 days per week, and stay until dismissal.

Physical and mental health appointments and religious instruction are acceptable reasons for absence. Families must provide documentation that includes the dates, times, and location of the appointment or activity.

The COMPASS/SONYC programs are not an appropriate placement for youth with other afterschool or summer commitments, or for families that do not need or want services that last until dismissal.

Early Pick-Up

Participants are actively engaged in program activities until dismissal. Early pick-ups interrupt activities for everyone. Parents and guardians are expected to pick up their children, or provide written notice that a child may walk home or use mass transit, during the scheduled dismissal window.

⚠ Important: Unexcused early pick-ups before dismissal, or attendance fewer than 3 days per week, may affect your child's enrollment and may lead to removal from the program.

Dismissal & Safety Procedures

Sign-out procedures vary by site. Your Program Director will provide specific guidance before the start of the program. The following general procedures apply at all sites.

Car/Driving: Drive to the designated entrance. A staff member will greet you and call for your child by radio. Your child will be escorted to your car. Please follow the line of cars. For the safety of participants and staff, do not cut in line or leave your vehicle.

Walker (Escorted Pick-Up): Walk to the designated pick-up area. A staff member will greet you and call for your child by radio. Your child will be escorted to you.

Walker/Mass Transit (Unattended): Parents and guardians must provide written notice granting permission for their child to sign themselves out at dismissal. This must be indicated on the application.

Releasing a Child for Pick-Up

Proof of Identification: All children must be picked up by a parent, guardian, or authorized person who is 16 years of age or older. Authorized persons listed on the application must show proof of identification. If they do not have ID, the Program Director (or designated staff) will call the custodial parent or guardian for written authorization.

Sign-Out Signatures: Parents, guardians, and authorized persons must sign out participants as they exit the building (unless the participant is a designated walker). Younger siblings may not sign out participants unless they are listed on the enrollment form. Every sign-out must include the correct date, time, and signature.

Releasing a Child to an Unauthorized Person

Individuals not listed on the enrollment form as authorized for pick-up will not be permitted to sign out a child.

If an unauthorized person attempts to pick up a child, staff will ask for identification and call the custodial parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian does not want that person to pick up the child, or staff cannot reach the parent or guardian, staff will not release the child and will contact local law enforcement if necessary.

Custody Situations

At enrollment, the contracting parent or guardian must notify UAU of the child's legal guardianship or custody status. All individuals authorized to pick up the child must be listed on the enrollment or authorized pick-up form.

If there are changes to the child's legal guardianship, custody, or authorized pick-up arrangements, the parent or guardian is responsible for notifying UAU and providing current legal documentation.

In the event of a custody dispute, UAU will follow the most recent valid court order provided to the program. The Program Director may request a copy of any applicable court order or legal documentation. It is the family's responsibility to provide this documentation.

If no valid court order or legal documentation has been provided, UAU will not make determinations about which parent has custody or parental rights. Staff will follow established release procedures and applicable legal requirements.

Divorce or Separation

If the contracting parent or guardian wishes for a divorced or separated parent to pick up the child, that individual should be listed on the authorized pick-up form. Parents and guardians are responsible for providing UAU with any applicable court orders that restrict or address custody, visitation, or access rights.

If a biological parent who is not listed on the authorized pick-up form arrives for pick-up, staff will contact the contracting parent, explain the program's release procedures, and advise the individual that staff must follow UAU's established procedures and any applicable legal documentation. If the situation cannot be resolved, staff will contact the appropriate authorities for assistance.

To prevent confusion or distress, families should provide UAU with copies of any current court orders or legal documentation regarding custody, visitation, guardianship, or access restrictions. Communicate any changes to authorized pick-up arrangements directly to the program.

Custody situations can be stressful for everyone involved, especially the child. Families are encouraged to communicate custody and visitation arrangements with one another and with program staff in advance whenever possible.

Adult Under the Influence

If staff observe signs that an adult arriving for pick-up may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including the odor of liquor or drugs, unsteady movement, slurred speech, bloodshot eyes, or anything that raises concern for the child's safety, the child will not be released to that individual. Staff will call another authorized adult to pick up the child. If the adult becomes aggressive or threatening, staff will call 911.

13. Field Trips & Community Activities

Field trips provide valuable learning experiences outside the classroom. When these opportunities arise, parents and guardians must complete a permission form giving consent for their child to participate.

14. Bathroom Procedures

Staff establish bathroom routines at the start of each program cycle. Group bathroom breaks are used to maximize program time, and staff use their judgment for individual requests. Please help your child be prepared: make sure they use the bathroom before arriving, can manage their own clothing, and can handle their own hygiene. Children must be fully toilet trained to participate in programming.

Families of K-1st grade children should send a labeled change of clothes in September in case of bathroom accidents. Replenish as needed throughout the year.

Adults and UAU staff may never be in bathrooms while participants are using them.

15. Personal Belongings & Electronics

Cell Phones, Electronics & Valuables

UAU is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones, electronics, or other personal items. Participants should be mindful of their belongings and are encouraged to leave valuables at home.

 Important: UAU requires that families communicate issues, concerns, and notifications through the program office phone, not through personal participant cell phones. Participants are not permitted to call a parent or guardian until staff has addressed an incident. Failure to comply with this policy may result in a suspension.

Toys and Items from Home

UAU strongly discourages participants from bringing toys and personal items such as action figures, plush dolls, trading cards, nail polish, jewelry, art supplies, and other valuables from home. UAU is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal items.

16. Privacy, Photos & Social Media

Photos & Media

UAU staff may photograph and record participants during program activities. These images may be used in reports to DYCD, on UAU's website and social media accounts, and in printed materials about the program.

During registration, families are asked to indicate whether they give or do not give permission for UAU to photograph or record their child. Your answer does not affect your child's enrollment. If you wish to change your selection at any time, notify your Program Director in writing.

Social Media Policy



Important: Families and participants must not post, share, or distribute photos or videos of other participants' children on personal social media accounts or any online platform. This is a privacy and safety matter. Violations may result in a warning, parent/guardian meeting, or removal from the program.

17. Behavior Expectations & Code of Conduct

UAU works to maintain a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all participants, families, and staff. The same standards apply to everyone.

Participant and Family Code of Conduct

Participants are expected to practice good manners and positive behavior at all times:

- Follow program rules.
- Respect the dignity and equality of all participants and staff.
- Treat program and school equipment with care.
- Avoid any physical aggression, verbal abuse, or threats.
- Be polite, truthful, and cooperative toward staff and other participants.
- Use respectful language. Profanity, slurs, and discriminatory language are not permitted.
- Participate in program activities and events.
- Follow directions from staff.

Progressive Discipline

Staff document participant behavior and communicate serious or repeated incidents to parents and guardians. Discipline follows a progressive approach:

Step	Action	Description
1	Redirect	Staff guide the participant toward more appropriate behavior.
2	Verbal Warning	Staff remind the participant of expectations and give a formal verbal warning.
3	Temporary Removal	If behavior continues, the participant is removed from the activity. Program leadership is notified.
4	Parent/Guardian Contact	Program leadership contacts the family by phone or in writing. Written notifications are kept on file.
5	Behavior Improvement Meeting	A meeting is scheduled to create a behavior improvement plan. Failure to communicate may lead to suspension or removal from the program.

Understanding Bullying vs. Conflict

Bullying	Conflict
Intentional, repeated harmful behavior where one person or group targets another. One child holds power over the other.	A disagreement between children that is hard to resolve on their own. Power is more equal between the parties involved.

Some situations may not fit either category. They may look like bullying but involve a one-time incident without a power imbalance. UAU staff are trained to correctly identify and address all three types.

Suspensions

If a participant shows a continued disregard for program rules or threatens the safety of themselves or others, a suspension of one to five days or longer may be necessary, depending on severity and past incidents. Grounds for suspension include:

- Violation of program rules.
- Verbal or physical aggression toward participants or staff.
- Bullying, persistent name-calling, or intimidation.
- Disrespecting or disobeying program staff.
- Using derogatory slurs about race, ethnicity, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability, or sexual orientation.
- Placing oneself or others at risk of harm.
- Possessing another person's property without permission.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Defacing program or school property.
- Violating field trip rules.

A parent or family member who is verbally or physically aggressive toward UAU staff or other participants may also cause their child's suspension. The suspension length is at the discretion of UAU administration.

UAU partners with host schools and is required to report serious code of conduct violations to the school principal. UAU is also required to report criminal offenses to local authorities, including but not limited to assaults involving weapons, threats involving firearms or bombs, sexual assault, and possession of a firearm.

De-Enrollment

De-enrollment is the last resort and means a participant is no longer permitted to attend the program. Grounds include:

- Severe verbal or physical aggression toward staff or participants by a participant or family member.
- Seriously endangering the safety of oneself or others.
- Repeated suspensions without behavioral improvement.
- Failure to maintain minimum attendance.
- Repeated early or late pick-ups.

Incident Reports

UAU documents behavioral incidents for safety and regulatory purposes. Involved parties, including staff and participants, may be asked to provide a written statement. Copies of incident reports and statements are not shared with families, but program leadership will discuss incidents verbally with parents and guardians.

Serious incidents involving weapons, threats, sexual assault, or possession of a firearm are reported to the host school principal and local authorities as required by law.

Mandated Reporting

UAU staff are mandated reporters under New York State law. They are required to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Administration for Children's Services (ACS). Staff do not investigate. They report. Please treat staff with courtesy and respect when these situations arise.

18. Staff Interaction Policy

It is UAU policy that staff do not interact with program participants outside of the program. UAU staff are not permitted to babysit, spend time with (digitally or in person), or transport children enrolled in our programs.

19. Accessibility & Inclusion

UAU is committed to serving participants of all abilities. If your child has a disability, special need, or requires any accommodation to participate in programming, please speak with your Program Director during registration. UAU will work with families on a case-by-case basis to identify reasonable accommodations and ensure that every participant can take part in activities safely and meaningfully.

20. Grievance Process

If you have a concern about your child's experience, program operations, or any interaction with staff, UAU encourages you to raise it. Concerns are taken seriously and addressed promptly.

01	02	03
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Raise your concern with your site's Program Director. In most cases, issues can be resolved at this level through a conversation or meeting.	If you are not satisfied with the resolution, contact UAU's Director of School-Based Programs, Susie DiStefano, at (718) 987-8111.	If the matter remains unresolved, you may submit a written concern to UAU's main office at 1200 South Ave, Suite 304, Staten Island, NY 10314, or by calling (718) 987-8111. UAU administration will review the matter and follow up with you directly.

21. Family Involvement

Children do better when their families are involved. UAU recognizes the importance of family participation and encourages parents and guardians to attend family workshops, parenting events, and program activities. UAU COMPASS/SONYC programs have an open-door policy. Families are encouraged to maintain an open line of communication with staff and to share questions, concerns, or ideas at any time.



22. Handbook Acknowledgment

Your signature confirms that you have received the UAU COMPASS/SONYC Participant & Family Handbook and agree to follow its policies and procedures.

Children Enrolled

Child's Name	Grade	School/Site

I, _____ (parent/guardian name),
have received the UAU COMPASS/SONYC Family Handbook and agree to abide by UAU's policies and procedures. By participating in UAU programs, all participants and families agree to follow the policies within this handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
_____	_____

Handbook Version: v.09/2026

United Activities Unlimited, Inc. reserves the right to update and change any and all policies listed in this handbook.

DYCD-funded programs are provided free of charge to families.