



Cornell Cooperative Extension | St. Lawrence County



21st Century Community Learning Center 4-H Before and After School Programs **Hermon-DeKalb Central School** Parent Handbook and Enrollment Agreement

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

"Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities"

Updated: 10/24/24 MM

21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) Programs
Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County

Please read this document in full.

This handbook is a resource as well as an Enrollment Agreement for our programs. You will find all information pertinent to the 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School programs at your child's school. Your agreement with the terms contained within this handbook is demonstrated by you permitting your child to attend the program.

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1. Contact Information

Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County

2043B State Highway 68

Canton NY, 13617

HD Program Phone (at site): 315-414-7205

Phone: 315-379-9192

Fax: 315-379-0926

Website: www.stlawrence.cce.cornell.edu

Email address: stlawrence@cornell.edu

Office Hours: Monday—Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Before & After School Program Hours:

		EKCS	PHCS	CPCS	HDCS
Before School					7:00- 8:00am
After School	Snack/Homework	2:40 - 3:30pm	2:25 - 3:10pm	2:25 - 3:20pm	3:00 - 3:30pm
	Enrichment Block 1	3:30 - 4:10pm	3:10 - 4:00pm	3:20 - 4:10pm	3:30 - 4:10pm
	Enrichment Block 2	4:10 - 5:30pm	4:00 – 5:15pm	4:10 - 5:15pm	4:10 - 4:50pm
	Clean-up/Dismissal	5:30 - 5:40pm	5:15 - 5:25pm	5:15 - 5:25pm	4:50 - 5:00pm

Ages and Grades served: 5-14; Kindergarten to 8th Grade

Main Office Staff (call 315-379-9192)

Patrick Ames

Executive Director

Badra Rouhi

Finance/Personnel Manager

Erin Farrell

Administrative Assistant

Tamara Hill

4-H Youth and Family Team Leader

21st Century Community Learning Centers Staff

Mysti Murphy

21st CCLC Program Leader

Inclusiveness Statement

Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County realizes the dignity and worth of each individual and works to eliminate human barriers based on all assumptions which prejudice individuals.

Civil Rights Law

Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County does not discriminate in the registering of children due to race, religion, color, creed, economic status, national origin, physical and mental

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handicap, or gender as per A.S. 18.80.230 and AMC 5.20.50 and Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County North Wind policies.

2. 4-H's Guiding Statements and Our Purpose & Vision

4-H Way

4-H empowers young people with the skills to lead for a lifetime.
It's a research-based experience that includes a mentor, a hands-on project,
and a meaningful leadership opportunity.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County Commitment To Our Customers

We value our relationship with you.
We seek to understand and meet your needs.
We communicate clearly and thoughtfully.
We provide quality programs and services.

3. Our Purpose & Vision

The purpose of the 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School program is to establish an inclusive and transformative learning environment that expands educational opportunities beyond the regular school day for students in St. Lawrence County. Through this program, we aim to address educational disparities and provide equitable access to high-quality academic support, enrichment activities, and social-emotional learning opportunities. Our purpose is to inspire a love for learning, foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and promote the holistic development of students, preparing them for a successful future. By collaborating with schools, families, community organizations, and stakeholders, we strive to create a comprehensive learning ecosystem that nurtures students' diverse talents, cultivates their sense of belonging, and empowers them to become lifelong learners and active contributors to their communities.

Our vision for the 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School program is to create a vibrant and inclusive learning community that empowers every student in the program to reach their full potential. We envision a future where educational opportunities extend beyond the traditional school day, providing students with innovative, personalized, and interdisciplinary learning experiences that foster creativity, critical thinking, and a passion for lifelong learning. By embracing emerging technologies, fostering collaboration, and leveraging community partnerships, our vision is to cultivate a dynamic and engaging educational environment that equips students with the skills, knowledge, and character traits needed to thrive both academically and personally. We envision that students in the program will grow academically, build social and emotional resiliency, and develop skills to make meaningful contributions to their schools and communities.

4. Health Profile & Authorizations

Parents are responsible for completing a Health Profile and Authorizations prior to their child's first day at a 21st CCLC program. Parents are also required to keep updated contact information, addresses, phone numbers (cell, work, and/or home) as well as a list of persons authorized to pick up children. **It is crucial that this information be kept up to date in case of emergency. Incomplete health profiles and**

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authorizations will result in the child being removed from the program until the profile and authorization have been completed.

5. Arrival, Departure, and Transportation

The 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School program provides before and after school enrichment programming at Hermon-DeKalb Central School. Students can arrive at school at 7:00 am for before care and should report directly to the cafeteria. All students will be signed out and dismissed to their classes at 8:00 am. For After School programming, students report to either the cafeteria or the library (depending on days) at dismissal for attendance and daily health check. **Please notify the Program Director when your child will be attending other after school functions or will not be attending the program.** Staff ratios will be maintained at all times during arrival until group activity time begins.

Parents that arrive at the school to pick up their child are to call or text the Program Phone (315-414-7205) to alert staff of their presence. Students that are departing via parent/guardian pick up will be guided to the cafeteria via staff escort and/or sight-to-sight transition. Parents/guardians will sign their child out. Those picking up their children will be asked to provide identification as needed. No child will be left alone with a staff member during dismissals, even if a parent/guardian is present.

When picking up your child be sure that staff are aware that they are leaving. Please sign your child out and be sure to reinforce our policy that children always stay with an adult. Traffic for school-related programs may be present at the school during program hours so it is important that staff is aware when a parent has arrived to sign out their child. **Under no circumstances may a parent pick up their child without alerting the Program Staff.**

Emergency Release Form

Please be sure that all individuals authorized to pick up your child are listed as Trusted Contacts in the child's Health Profile and that all phone numbers are current. Any adult not known by staff will be asked for a photo ID. This policy is in place for the safety of your child. If an emergency situation arises, please call the Executive Director or designated staff member with a specific description of the adult picking up the child and have that person be prepared to show photo identification.

Transportation

21st CCLC Programs do not provide transportation. It is the responsibility of the parent to arrange transportation or to sign a waiver, permitting staff to sign out children to walk home or to use the school bus as transportation. A current transportation or walking consent agreement must be kept on file. Any changes to the address where the child will be taken by bus must be made by submitting an updated transportation consent agreement (available from the Program Director) as soon as possible. Attendance will be taken to ensure that all children are accounted for prior to dismissal. Students remaining in the program as of 5:10pm will be signed out of the program will then be the responsibility of the school bus transportation staff.

6. Ratio

A ratio of 1:10 (staff to child) will be maintained for all youth 9 and younger. A Ratio of 1:15 (Staff to Child) will be maintained for all youth 10 and older. If any group has at least one child that is 9 or younger that group will maintain the 1:10 ratio.

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7. Student Absence Procedures

If a child is absent from school due to sickness, they may not attend their 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School program. If a child is absent for a scheduled appointment, they may be brought back to their host school for 21st CCLC program.

Parents are required to text the program cell phone or email the Program Leader if their child is not going to be attending their 21st CCLC program after attending school. This is critically important. The staff at each school need to be notified that a child is not attending in order to maintain continuity of care and supervision. If a child does not attend program and the parent does not notify the staff in advance, the 21st CCLC is not responsible for the well-being of the child. If this happens more than 3 times in a semester, the child may be removed from the program.

8. School Closures:

All 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School programs will adhere to their host school's schedule for closures, delays, and early dismissals. If there is a school closure or delayed opening due to inclement weather, there will be no before care at that location. If school is closed or is closing early due to inclement weather, there will be no 21st CCLC 4-H After School program for the day. Early dismissals are at the discretion of the school administration and the 21st CCLC staff will communicate to parents as quickly as possible in the instance that children are being sent home early. The decision to close early is made by the school district. Please have a backup plan for an emergency dismissal.

School Breaks:

During planned school breaks, a 15-hour, week-long enrichment program may be offered. Should a program run over a school break, the location, enrichment activities, and partner organization participation will be determined by the needs of the host schools.

Emergency Situations:

21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School programs reserve the right to close due to unforeseen circumstances involving but not limited to: utility failures, fire, natural or man-made disasters, unsafe indoor temperatures and/or any other dangerous environmental conditions. Staff may call parents at any time to pick up their child if their ability to maintain the child's safety is in question.

If an emergency warrants the evacuation of the program, the following sites have been set up to accommodate the children and staff:

Hermon-DeKalb Bus Garage & Hermon Town Hall

Parents will be called to pick up their child as soon as the children are settled at the relocation site. In the event that a program must shelter in place, sufficient food, water, and activities will be provided for the children. Parents will be kept informed of the situation via text messages, email, and (when permitted) social media.

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9. Programs

All programs require all participants and staff to adhere to the dress code policies of their host school. During the winter months, youth should have full winter gear to play outdoors including but not limited to, snow pants, jacket, hat, mittens, extra socks, and a pair of shoes they can change into when indoors. During the summer months, youth should have labeled sunblock and bug repellent available for your child to use during program.

Before School Care

The 21st CCLC 4-H Before School Program will focus on physical activity and mindfulness, utilizing curriculum like 4-H Keeping Fit & Healthy, BOKS Kids program, 4-H Mindful Me, and Mindful Mechanics. Homework help, literacy, and creative arts projects will also be available for students.

After School Care

The 21st CCLC 4-H After School Program is designed to complement the daily activities of the school aged child. Children will be provided with homework assistance and will engage in a variety of age-appropriate experiential learning experiences. These activities are designed to keep them active and engaged in the learning process beyond the regular school day. Activity topics will include nutrition and healthy living, physical fitness, STEM, agriculture, wilderness education, teamwork, citizenship, babysitting, financial literacy, creative arts, conflict resolution, mental health, mindfulness, diversity inclusion and violence, drug, and pregnancy prevention. Topics will be varied depending on student age and be led by Program Educators as well as Partner Organizations.

Visitors

The 21st CCLC Programs will have visitors from our community partner organizations. A visitor is defined as a person who is not a day care child, staff person, caregiver, volunteer, household member, employee, parent of a child in care, or person authorized to pick up or drop off a child to the day care program. Visitors do not count towards our mandatory ratios and will at no time be left alone with a child or a group of children. Visitors will be monitored at all times by approved Program Educators and Staff. Visitors will sign into the program, stating their reason for visiting, arrival time, and departure time. Visitors from Partner Organizations and any other approved programs, such as college interns, will provide additional enrichment, educational activities, and assist with scheduled program activities such as outdoor play or snack time. Visitors are not responsible at any time for the care of any children or for the operation of the program.

10. Admission Procedures:

Admission into 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School Programs is an ongoing process and we accept applications throughout the school year. Care is provided on a first come first serve basis. Waiting lists are routinely updated, checked, and revised to assist parents in placement of their child. Opportunities to participate in short term club activities for children on a wait list may be available throughout the year.

Enrollment for the upcoming school year will be open to currently waitlisted families, then enrolled families, before being offered to new families. This will happen in the spring prior to the new school year.

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21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School Programs require a completed Health Profile and Authorizations for each student prior to their first day at the program. A child may be suspended or removed from the program should consent forms or other required program paperwork not be returned to the program within the designated timeframe.

11. Schedule:

The program will be closed on all scheduled and unscheduled school closures.

Hermon-DeKalb Before School Care will be from 7:00am-8:00am.

Hermon-DeKalb After School Care 3:00pm-5:00pm.

During Program Hours, staff can be reached by calling the Program phone at 315-414-7205. Outside of Program Hours, please contact the Program Leader or 21st CCLC Administrator at 315-379-9192.

12. Behavior Management Policy:

21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School Programs seek to provide an environment where individuals respect one another, cooperate, and work together. The goal of our behavior management policy is to help each child develop self-discipline. We define self-discipline as the ability to act in ways that are mutually respectful and beneficial to oneself and to others. The behavior management policy therefore reflects an approach that focuses on preventing behavior problems by supporting children in learning appropriate self-discipline, social skills, and emotional responses. Staff will seek children's input regarding ways to create a safe community while recognizing individual needs. A quality program can take place only in an orderly, mutually respectful, caring environment. Discipline is a process whereby children take increasing responsibility for their actions. It is the child's responsibility to follow the established rules. All staff members, children and parents share responsibility in a cooperative process. Staff will help children to understand the rules and the reasons for the rules, as well as to reinforce positive behaviors and redirect inappropriate behaviors. Please feel comfortable discussing any concerns you might have with the site staff.

To respond effectively when children display challenging behavior, staff will strive to understand typical social and emotional development and behaviors. Measures that prevent behavior problems often include developmentally appropriate environments, supervision, routines, and transitions. All discipline procedures will be applied consistently and appropriately to the ages of the children as well as to their developmental level and abilities. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, physical aggression, the use of foul language, disrespect to staff or other children, consistently ignoring program rules and expectations, and leaving the program area without permission.

The 21st CCLC Staff will implement our progressive discipline policy when behavior expectations are not met. Parents are informed at each level of disciplinary action through a text, phone call, or note at the end of the program day. The steps that will be utilized are: verbal warnings given with an explanation to the child of why their behavior was unacceptable; loss of privileges; verbal communications between parents and staff; face-to-face meeting with child, staff, and parent/guardian. Continued disruptive behavior will result in suspension and/or dismissal from the program.

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When a child's behavior is harmful to themselves or others (including staff or youth), the child may immediately be separated from the group. The child will be always supervised and supported by a staff member and parents will be notified of the incident. The 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School Program reserves the right to discontinue any services to any child or family if the child's behavior is considered harmful or unsafe to staff, youth, or the individual themselves.

Student Harassment and Bullying Prevention

The 4-H Afterschool Program embraces the model of providing a 4-H Safer Space for all youth participants. In accordance with the 4-H Safer Space model, the 4-H Afterschool program strictly prohibits all forms of discrimination, such as harassment, hazing, intimidation and bullying within the program.

Definitions

Bullying: Bullying may be premeditated or a sudden activity. It may be subtle or easy to identify, done by one person or a group. Bullying often includes the following characteristics:

- Power imbalance - occurs when a bully uses his/her physical or social power over a target.
- Intent to harm - the bully seeks to inflict physical or emotional harm and/or takes pleasure in this activity.
- Threat of further aggression - the bully and the target believe the bullying will continue.
- Terror - when any bullying increases, it becomes a "systematic violence or harassment used to intimidate and maintain dominance."

There are at least three kinds of bullying: verbal, physical and social/relational.

- Verbal bullying includes name calling, insulting remarks, verbal teasing, frightening phone calls, violent threats, extortion, taunting, gossip, spreading rumors, racist slurs, threatening electronic communications ("cyberbullying"), anonymous notes, etc.
- Physical bullying includes poking, slapping, hitting, tripping or causing a fall, choking, kicking, punching, biting, pinching, scratching, spitting, twisting arms or legs, damaging clothes and personal property, or threatening gestures.
- Social or relational bullying includes excluding someone from a group, isolating, shunning, spreading rumors or gossiping, arranging public humiliation, undermining relationships, teasing about clothing, looks, giving dirty looks, aggressive stares, etc.

Discrimination: Discrimination is the act of denying rights, benefits, justice, equitable treatment or access to facilities available to all others, to an individual or group of people because of the group, class or category to which that person belongs (as listed under Harassment as defined below).

Hazing: Hazing is an induction, initiation or membership process involving harassment which produces public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule or creates a situation where public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule is likely to occur.

Harassment: The Dignity for All Students Act (§§10-18 of Education Law) defines harassment as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or

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would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical wellbeing; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. The harassing behavior may be based on any characteristic, including but not limited to a person's actual or perceived:

- Race
- Color
- Weight
- National Origin
- Ethnic Group
- Religion
- Religious Practice
- Disability
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender (including gender identity and expression).
- Gender identity is one's self-conception as being male or female, as distinguished from actual biological sex or sex assigned at birth.
- Gender expression is the manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice or mannerisms.

Reporting and Investigation

In order for the 4-H Afterschool Program to effectively respond to bullying incidents and to take prompt corrective measures, it is essential that all targets and persons with knowledge of bullying report such behavior immediately to the 4-H Afterschool Program Site Director as soon as possible after the incident so that it may be effectively investigated and resolved. The Site Director will promptly and equitably investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written. To the extent possible, all complaints will be treated in a confidential manner, although limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. In order to assist the 4-H Afterschool Program staff, individuals should document the bullying as soon as it occurs and with as much detail as possible including: the nature of the incident(s); dates, times, places it has occurred; name of perpetrator(s); witnesses to the incident(s); and the target's response to the incident. If, after appropriate investigation, the program staff find that a student, an employee or a third party has violated this procedure, prompt corrective and possibly disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the 4-H Afterschool Program disciplinary procedures.

13. Electronics Policy

Laptops or Chromebooks are permitted only to be used for homework or educational activities. Any cell phone brought to 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School Program must remain in the student's backpack during the entire scheduled program time. No exceptions! If a child feels they need to contact their parent, they should ask a Staff Member for access to the program phone.

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14. Child Abuse and Mistreatment:

The 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School program is committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment for children to grow and learn in a positive manner. Any abuse or maltreatment of a child is prohibited! The 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School program will not tolerate any form of abuse or maltreatment by a staff, volunteer, or parent. All staff members are mandated reporters, due to Office of Child and Family Services regulations.

15. Accident / Incident Reports:

Children sometimes receive bumps and bruises as part of their daily routines. An accident report will be completed by a staff person when a child is injured and filed with the Program Director by the end of the program day. When an injury is caused by another child, an incident report will be completed, and parents will be notified by the staff. All reports are filed in the child's file. The staff will use basic First Aid procedures for all bumps and bruises. If more care is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to seek additional care with the child's physician.

If a child requires immediate attention, 911 will be called and the parent / guardian will be contacted. The child will be transported by ambulance to the most appropriate medical facility. If the parent is unable to accompany the child to the hospital, the Director or a staff member will remain with the child until a parent/guardian arrives.

16. Safety Drills

In accordance with SACC regulations, each program will perform one evacuation drill per month and one shelter-in-place drill every six months. Notice will be placed at the registration area during drills for any parent that arrives to pick up their child during this time.

17. Health Care Plan

We have an approved health care plan with the Child Care Council. The health care plan has procedures that are followed if a child gets sick during program time. If a child becomes sick, we will call and inform the parent/guardian of the situation.

Criteria for exclusion of children who are ill (immediate pick-up will be requested if the child is at a program)

- The child is too ill to participate in program activities.
- The illness results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other youth.
- An acute change in behavior – this could include a lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or having a quickly spreading rash.
- Fever – Temperature at or above 100° orally.
- Head lice until after the first treatment (Exclusion is not necessary before the end of the day)

For a full list, please refer to the Program Health Care Plan.

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Children with severe allergies or medical conditions requiring immediate medical intervention must have an individual health care plan on file stating the necessary intervention and signed by the child's physician on file. Failure to turn this completed health plan into the program will result in the child not being able to start or continue in program until this documentation is received.

18. Staff

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) follows staff qualification guidelines set forth by Cornell University. High standards are used to determine the character of the person considered for employment. An extensive interview and three personal / professional reference checks are completed. New staff members cannot be left alone with children until the Director is confident in their abilities and they have been cleared by the Central Register Clearance System and the Office of Children and Family Services. All staff will go through yearly evaluations to determine job performances.

Training, Correction, and Termination

All staff are required by the Office of Children and Family Services to complete thirty hours of training every licensing period. All staff will also go through yearly evaluations to determine job performance goals. If staff are not performing their duties to the standards set forth by the Office of Child and Family Services, Child Care Council, and Cornell Cooperative Extension, a work plan will be created to help staff stay on track with their performance goals. If the work plan is not followed, the staff will be terminated, and a replacement will be hired as soon as possible. All staff, whether paid or volunteer, must complete the OCFS-6044 Medical Statement to interact with youth.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All staff and visitors will be trained in upholding a strict policy of confidentiality for all participating students. This includes all names, identifying information, and health profile information. These items will be held securely in locked file cabinets and/or on electronic devices that are only accessible through two password-protected locks.

19. Parent Communication / Involvement

Divorce / Separation / Custody Agreements

The 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School program wants to serve all families in the best possible way especially during difficult transitions. Unless we have legal documentation, we cannot presume any custodial rights. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent/guardian to provide the Director with a certified copy of the court ordered or other legally binding documentation stating who is legally allowed/prohibited from visiting or spending time with the child. Custody papers will be kept confidential and in your child's file and staff will be notified of the arrangements.

Parent Volunteers

We welcome parents to come into the classroom and attend field trips. We encourage parents to share special skills, knowledge, or hobbies. Please speak with the Program Director for more information about opportunities to volunteer.

Family Engagement

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Throughout the school year, your family will receive invitations to participate in a variety of activities and events as they pertain to the 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School Programs. We encourage you and other important people in your child's life to join us during these times. These opportunities are designed to let you see and participate in the type of activities your child is participating in while they spend their time in our program or are a chance for you to provide program feedback and hear about program updates. Additionally, there may be events that cater to the trusted adults in the child's life offering knowledge about different topics directly related to caring for a school aged child, such as preparing nutritious snacks, ideas to get your family outdoors more, and practicing internet safety.

Concerns About Our Program

Program applicants, participants, and their family members, have the right to express concerns without interference or retaliation. All concerns should be resolved as informally and quickly as possible by all parties involved. There are a number of avenues you can pursue if you have a concern with our program.

1. You can visit the site where your child attends the program and speak with the Site Director. You can visit the program at any time during operational hours to talk to staff about your child or voice any concerns you have about your child's care. If you require a meeting which may take an extended time, we will gladly schedule a time outside of the program hours to ensure we are still giving appropriate attention to the children in our care.
2. You can call the Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County Office and speak directly with Mysti Murphy, Program Director, at 315-379-9192 ext 234. If you still have concerns, you can call and ask to speak with Tamara Hill, Youth and Family Program Leader.
3. The State Office of Children and Family Services maintains a toll-free complaint line for complaints about childcare programs. The Office is empowered to investigate any possible violation of child care regulations. Your complaint will be investigated, and if it is substantiated, staff will work with the provider to correct any violations. If you wish to make a complaint, call: 800-732-5207.

Thank you for choosing the 21st CCLC 4-H Before and After School Programs for your child's care. We understand and appreciate that you have placed your trust in us to watch over your child. Our goal is to provide exceptional care in a comfortable, welcoming, and educational environment for children. We look forward to working together through the 2023-2024 school year.