



PARENT INFORMATION PACKET

Welcome Parents!

Open since 2017, The Gate is a drop-in style after-school program that gathers, invests, and supports middle school students in the Hamilton area. We welcome students on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 3-5:00pm (**parent pick up time by 5:30pm**). The Gate is a safe, fun environment where students grow, engage and build relationships. Students are given recreational time, study time, and a community to unpack and tackle everyday struggles and challenges. Each student **must be registered and have a signed waiver** for the program **BEFORE** attending.

You may go to our website: thegatehamilton.com or our Facebook page @theGATEhamilton and click on the registration link or our Procure link which will take you to our Parent Permission Agreement form and our waiver. There is also a volunteer link at both places for the volunteer application as well. We are in need of volunteers to help ensure the success of our program. Please consider volunteering or asking someone you know to help. Thank you!

Should you have any questions or concerns about this parent information document, please reach out and contact The Gate's Board President Ty Potter: tpotter@thegatehamilton.com.

The Gate operates based on the needs of students in the community:

- Positive ways to find acceptance and hope for the future
- Good role models/mentors
- Safe place to go after school
- Help with homework, encouragement/support and life skills
- Build and grow faith

OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We believe all students need support in a safe and stable environment, while receiving encouragement from positive, mature adult figures in order to navigate the pressures of adolescence. The Gate is staffed with background checked, responsible, leaders who are willing and able to help and support students in our community. Our program has a Biblical worldview, while allowing staff, volunteers, guest speakers and students to discuss real-life issues openly and honestly and directing them to Biblical scripture.

OUR SCHEDULE

Drop In: The Gate is open every Tuesday & Thursday while Hamilton Middle School (HMS) is in session. The Gate will be running different hours during summer break. If HMS is closed due to weather or scheduled closings (Christmas Break, Spring Break, etc.) The Gate will also be closed. The Gate after-school program starts at 3pm and ends at 5:00pm with a **pick up time by 5:30pm for parents/guardians**. Students will help with cleaning up and putting things away while waiting for their parents/guardians to pick them up.

Upon arriving at The Gate, students will be given a snack and a devotion lesson. There will be recreational/free time for students, study time and help if wanted as well as time for large group games, and a group discussion periodically. Students will be responsible to cross the street at the crosswalk with the crossing guard to get to The Gate after school. **Parents/guardians are expected to pick up their sons/daughters by 5:30pm.** It is **required** to notify The Gate coordinator if a student is being picked up by someone other than their parent or guardian or if a student is to walk home. Parents may sign an additional form giving their student(s) permission to walk home from programming, please contact the program coordinator for the form.

The Gate intends to protect not only the kids who attend, but also the adults and volunteers who are involved in any capacity. For this reason, NO leader will drive students home or to any other place.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

All students of middle school age (5th-8th grade) may join the activities of The Gate.

1. A parent/guardian is required to fill out and sign the registration form and waiver to be **COMPLETED** prior to attending The Gate. A student **will not** be allowed to attend The Gate until a parent/guardian completes and signs the registration and waiver forms. This is to ensure safety of each student as well as good communication between The Gate and the parents/guardians of students who attend.

2. All students and parents/guardians are asked to review the Parent Permission & Agreement Form. We love having kids attend our program, and this is a privilege not an entitlement. If a student disobeys these rules, his/her parents will be called and consequences will be enforced in order to ensure that The Gate remains a safe and healthy environment. A 3-strike rule will be enforced for any student not adhering to the rules.

First Strike = verbal warning, parents contacted, possible removal for a short period of time depending on circumstances (a case-by-base basis)

Second Strike = second warning given, parent contacted and removal from the program will depend upon the circumstance of rule violation. Length of removal to be determined by the coordinator and the board on a case-by-case basis.

Third Strike = parents contacted and removal from the program.

3. If a student is ill or has symptoms of illness, please do not allow them to attend The Gate.

OUR RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Everyone must sign in and out at the sign in table.

With the structure of a drop-in center, students can come anytime during the school year. Permission by parents for early sign out is required for students leaving early. Parents release any liability and hold harmless The Gate, its coordinator, staff, and volunteers of all liability after the student signs out. All students will sign out each day and **must be picked up promptly by 5:30pm.** It is **required to notify** the Gate coordinator if a student is being picked up by someone other than their parent or guardian or if a student(s) is to walk home. Parents may sign an additional form to give their student(s) permission to walk home after programming. Please contact the program coordinator for the form. This policy ensures the safety and integrity of The Gate Youth Center and keeps us aware of who is at The Gate, in order to maintain communication with parents/guardians

and for the safety of all students and volunteers who attend. **Parents are encouraged to come inside and sign out their child(ren) so the coordinator and volunteers can meet the parents as well.**

2. No loitering outside of The Gate.

3. No smoking, drugs or alcohol at or around The Gate.

If a student is caught smoking, possessing alcohol or drugs on the property, the police will be called and a report filed. The student will be prohibited from attending The Gate for a period of time, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis by The Gate's board.

4. No fighting, bullying or roughhousing

If a student is involved in a fight, they will need to speak with The Gate coordinator. An incident report will be filed and parents will be called. The student will be asked to leave The Gate Youth Center and may be prohibited from attending The Gate for a period of time. **Absolutely no violence will be tolerated!**

Safety is The Gate's main concern! Therefore, in the instance of a student or staff member being in immediate danger or in harm's way (to themselves or others), appropriate means necessary will be taken in order to prevent further harm from taking place.

5. No swearing, foul language or obscenities

Inappropriate language will **NOT** be tolerated. If a student breaks this rule, they will first be given a warning. If repeated, a strike towards the 3-strike rule will be given and parents will be contacted. This is to ensure the enjoyment and safety for all those attending The Gate.

6. Electronic devices

The Gate promotes relationship building, all devices must be left in the student's backpack and checked in as they arrive. If a student is seen using any of these devices after check in time, they will be taken from the student and returned at the end of the day. A strike will be given towards the 3-strike rule. If a student has to use their phone for an important call/text (to or from a parent or guardian), the student **must** communicate it to the coordinator or a volunteer in the program and make arrangements for a volunteer to be present.

7. No food or drink outside of the cafe area

8. No touching

If any touching, even consensual, such as: kissing, holding hands, or the like at The Gate programming, students will have a discussion with the coordinator or other staff/volunteer and be given a warning. If the behavior continues, parents will be notified and the student will be asked to leave that day (or next scheduled day The Gate is open) and a strike will be given toward the 3-strike rule.

9. Dress appropriately

The dress code upholds the Hamilton Community Schools' code.

If a student does not adhere to the dress code, they will be asked to change the clothing item in question. If they are unable or unwilling, the parents/guardians will be contacted; and they will be given a warning for the day. A strike will also be given toward the 3-strike rule.

Dress Code:

- No short skirts or short shorts, halter tops or spaghetti strap tank tops. If tank tops are worn, the straps must be at least two fingers wide and cover undergarments
- No shirt showing navel or cleavage
- No see-through clothing
- No hats, bandanas, or sunglasses may be worn in the building. Coats may be permitted depending on the current weather situation.
- No clothing or accessories that imply obscenity, violence, drugs, alcohol, sexual innuendo or gang related wear/colors, etc.
- No loose pants worn below the butt or showing underwear

10. Students are expected and encouraged to be a part of the large group activities and discussion supported by staff and volunteers.

We want to encourage real conversations and healthy relationship building; therefore, we highly encourage students to participate in group time for their own individual learning and growth.

11. Students are responsible for their own property.

A supervised room/area will be provided for students' coats, backpacks, phones, electronics or other belongings. These **MUST** be checked in upon arrival.

The Gate will not be responsible for any personal property if it is not checked in.

12. Students are expected to adhere to the rules and respect the staff, and volunteers at all times.

Please review all the rules with your student. We appreciate your help and willingness to share and discuss this information with your child(ren).

Thank you so much! We look forward to seeing you!