



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**Cowart Family YMCA
Proposal to DeKalb County
Community Outreach Funding Opportunities**

At the YMCA, we believe all people – especially children – deserve an equal chance to reach their full potential. The Cowart Family YMCA, located on Ashford Dunwoody Road, is a branch of the YMCA of Metro Atlanta, the City's oldest nonprofit. The Cowart Family YMCA serves 14,000 kids, teens, adults, and seniors each year, who primarily reside in the cities of Doraville, Chamblee, Brookhaven, Dunwoody, and Sandy Springs.

Since its inception in 1987, the Cowart Family YMCA has provided programs and services to respond to community needs:

- Youth Development: Day Camp, Youth Sports, Afterschool, and Teen Leadership
- Healthy Living: Wellness facility for all ages, Group Exercise classes, and programs specifically targeted toward seniors, and Swim Lessons
- Social Responsibility: Hunger Relief, Water Safety, and Community Outreach

The YMCA believes that all people should have access to its programs and services, regardless of an individual's ability to pay. Financial assistance is provided based on need.

The Y quickly pivoted its program offerings just days following the COVID-19 shut down in order to quickly fill critical gaps in the Atlanta community. The Cowart YMCA opened its doors to provide childcare for hospital workers and first responders, hunger relief for individuals facing food insecurity, and senior outreach. The Cowart Y continued to shift its programming throughout the year in response to our community's changing needs, by offering day camp in a safe environment throughout the summer of 2020, and the creation of Y Campus Connection, which provided a safe place for children to spend the school day while schools were closed and many parents were unable to work from home. Throughout 2020, the Y served 100 children each day, provided 20,000 meals working with 10 regional partners, and supported 850 seniors.

The Y knows that many individuals in our community were struggling before the pandemic, and that the needs of many people have grown significantly as we entered into 2021. The Cowart Family Y has identified three key areas we believe we are uniquely equipped to serve, as funding allows. We are hopeful that DeKalb County will consider providing a grant to support one or more of the following areas as we work to support our community as we begin to recover from the pandemic.

Youth Development

The Y knows that as we near the end of the pandemic, children will be facing new and unique challenges following a year of virtual learning and social isolation. While the pandemic has impacted all students, those who are under-resourced and under-supported are projected to exit the pandemic with the most significant learning loss and social-emotional impact. With more than 30 years of experience as a high-quality afterschool care provider, the Cowart Y to address these unique needs through Day Camp, Y Afterschool, and specialty camps.

Afterschool

The Cowart Family YMCA currently serves 500 children through afterschool programs, located at the Y and at four local school sites. The Y provides scholarships based on need, and works to identify children most in need of a safe, supportive, and educational environment to spend the out-of-school hours.

Funding Opportunities: Funding from DeKalb County would allow the Y to increase the amount of scholarships offered to children in our community. The cost of an average Afterschool scholarship is \$80 per child, per week.

Day Camps

The Cowart Family YMCA currently serves 300 children through day camp programs, located at the Y and three sites. We know that many children in our community struggle with unique learning challenges, many of which have been heightened by the COVID-19 crisis. Oftentimes, day camps, particularly specialty camps are unattainable to many families struggling financially. The Cowart Family YMCA offers traditional day camp programming and is working to develop specialty camps to support literacy and academic enrichment activities for children ages 5 – 13, using counselors trained in structured literacy and/or reading intervention.

Funding Opportunities: Funding from DeKalb County would allow more children to access day camps at the Cowart Family YMCA. The cost of an average day camp scholarship is \$250 per child, per week.

Hunger Relief

The Y has conducted hunger relief efforts as a key component of our overall programming for many years. Working with partners including the Atlanta Community Food Bank and the Boys and Girls Club, the Cowart Family YMCA has a long history of helping to ensure families in our community have access to healthy foods. The COVID-19 crisis only heightened the need for hunger relief support. In fact, the Food Bank found that 54% of

their recent clients had never visited a food pantry or distribution site until the pandemic began.

The Cowart Family Y demonstrated the power of community partnerships throughout 2020, utilizing more than 10 community partners, such as the Atlanta Community Food Bank, to distribute food each week. This work has not stopped, and the Y continues to call on volunteers to help pack and distribute food to 900 families each month.

Funding Opportunities: The cost to provide groceries to a family per week is \$4. The need is still extremely pervasive, and the Y is capable of managing food distribution sites from the Cowart Family Y parking lot or at any other site to serve struggling DeKalb County residents.

Water Safety

Learning to swim is not a luxury; it is a necessity. In Georgia, drowning is a leading cause of accidental death, a risk that leaves children from low-income backgrounds more vulnerable. The metro Atlanta area is home to several large bodies of water and unattended pools. The Cowart Family YMCA has taught swim lessons and water safety skills to people of all ages in our community since it was built in 1987. Through scholarships and outreach, the Cowart Family YMCA is working to ensure all children have the knowledge and skill they need to stay safe around water.

The Cowart Family YMCA uses a YMCA of the USA developed curriculum, Safety Around Water, to help children learn critical and life-saving water safety skills. The Y offers both in-water and dry land training to teach children the fundamentals of water safety. The Cowart Family YMCA has opportunities to partner with local schools, government agencies, community centers, and low-income apartment complexes to extend outreach to its Safety Around Water program. The Y provides this program free of charge to participants.

Funding Opportunities: The cost to provide the in-water Safety Around Water program (8 weeks) is \$75 per child. The dry-land training is \$15 per child, and the Y has opportunities to provide this 45-minute program off-site for up to 30 children at a time.

Total Funding Opportunities

Funding is appreciated at any level and programs can be adjusted based on the needs of DeKalb County. Potential opportunities for DeKalb County are as follows:

Program	Cost per Child per Week	# Weeks	# Kids	Total Funding Need
Afterschool	\$80	36	50	\$144,000
Day Camp	\$250	8	50	\$100,000
	Cost per Family per Week	# Weeks	# Families	Total Funding Need
Hunger Relief	\$4	12	500	\$24,000
	Total cost per Child	# Weeks	# Kids	Total Funding Need
Safety Around Water (Dry Land)	\$15	1	1,000	\$15,000
Safety Around Water (In-Water)	\$75	8	100	\$7,500