



YMCA of South Hampton Roads

We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

LETTER-TO-THE-EDITOR

YMCA Continues to Adapt to Changing Community Needs, Even in Tough Economy

The uncertain economy has put pressure on everyone, and many Americans face unwelcome choices as they balance conflicting financial and personal demands. Which is why now, more than ever, it is important to focus on things we can control—our health and well-being, our family and community.

The YMCA encourages everyone to make physical activity a priority, especially during tough times. Physical exercise, even at moderate levels, can reduce the physical and emotional symptoms of stress, depression and anxiety. Over the long term, regular exercise can ward against the physical and financial toll of chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes. Experts agree that investing in health and well-being always offers a positive return. Here are a few simple tips to get started:

- Make an "exercise transition" between work and family time. Take a short walk after work to clear away the stress of the day and get a positive boost before interacting with family members. A little "me time" can have a positive influence on "us time."
- Find an enjoyable physical activity that requires some mental focus to steer the mind away from worries, a pick-up game of basketball, a tennis match or even jumping rope.
- Instead of going online to repeatedly check the balance of your 401K, check out training plans for a 5K run or walk and get family and friend engaged to reach a healthy and achievable goal.
- Visit your local YMCA and find affordable family activities such as family swim nights, Parents' Night Out, video-game fitness, gentle aerobics and strength training classes. Programs at the YMCA are designed to foster the five core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith.
- Bring the family to any YMCA of South Hampton Roads location on September 26 between 10am–12pm to participate in *America On the Move Day*. This event, including a family walk, is free and open to the public.

The YMCA of South Hampton Roads is a non-profit 501(3)c community organization open to all, regardless of race, age, faith, background, abilities or income. Financial aid, made possible by private and public donations as well as YMCA members through *We Build People*, our annual giving campaign, is available to make our programs and services available to those facing tough situations.

For more than 160 years, YMCAs have supported families and individuals in good times and during some of the most challenging periods in our nation's history. The YMCA has been a part of this community since 1885. Although smart fiscal management helps, that staying power comes from the Y's connection to the community and its ability to adapt to the region's changing needs.

The pattern of change continues at the YMCA, following the completion of our expansion and renovation at the Blocker Norfolk Family YMCA and the Great Bridge/Hickory Family YMCA, with the addition of the James L. Camp, Jr. Family YMCA, and the construction of a regional day camp facility in Chesapeake to serve South Hampton Roads.

When times get tough, the YMCA is there; it's a place of hope and change. It's tough times like these that bring communities and families together.

For more information about the YMCA, its programs and locations call 962-5555 or visit www.ymcashr.org.

Yours in the YMCA Spirit,
Chuck Harris
YMCA of South Hampton Roads President/CEO