

Newsletter



Youth Engaged in Service

January/February 2026

Dear Volunteer,
Hope that each and every one of you have a wonderful holiday season, celebrating with family and friends! Hope that 2026 brings you all nothing but the best!! New Year, New Look - our newsletter has gotten a glow up!

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION EVENT

We have so much to celebrate! Every year, you all impress me even more than the year before! We're wrapping up our biggest year yet - the most activities, volunteers, and community reach! Please see the invitation included in this newsletter, inviting you to attend our **Annual Volunteer Recognition event on Friday, January 30**. I am looking forward to seeing you all there and honoring all the volunteers for their accomplishments.

CONGRATULATIONS 2026 ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

I'm so excited to officially announce that we are adding two new members to our Advisory Board - **Ella Goodrich** and **Gigi Griffith**! I think both will be an amazing addition to our team. I'd like to welcome back the returning AB members for their second term - **Cole DiGesare, Giada DiGesare, Audri Miller, Maddy Pollack**, and **Maddie Radder**! I am looking forward to working with you all in 2026!

NEW! WAITING LIST FEATURE

We have upgraded our Sign Up Genius subscription to include more features, including a MUCH NEEDED waiting list! The new waiting list feature will be live in the Jan/Feb events. If an event is full and someone cancels, it will automatically add the next person on the waitlist to the event. The newly added person will receive a notification that they have been added. With the new system you can choose to also receive text notifications! If you include your cell number at sign up, you'll get a text message and email notification for any waiting list adds or program changes.

NEW! EVENT LIMITS

We have a very active program with volunteers who are eager to help! Please make notice that some activities will have limits - ie. one per month/one per newsletter. We ask that you please adhere to the limits so other volunteers get the chance to participate too! Thank you!

WINTER WEATHER ALERTS

Please make note that if Cheektowaga schools are closed due to weather, Y.E.S. activities will be canceled too. Please make sure you're following up on Remind: @CheekYES - we will communicate closings here!

ODD JOBS LIST

The Cheektowaga Senior Center has reached out to us and asked if any Y.E.S. volunteers would be interested in getting paid to do odd jobs. See attached application for more information!

Thank you for being you and everything you do!
See you soon,
Alicia



**Jan/Feb Online Registration goes
LIVE - Sat Dec 20 at 9:00 am!**

Scan the QR code or visit CheektowagaYES.org



Volunteer of the Month

October 2025 - Lauren Piotrowski

Joined: Sept 2023
Activities: 24
Service Hours: 53



Since joining, Lauren has been a conscientious and mature volunteer. Whether she is face painting during a holiday celebration, packing groceries for families in need at the food pantry, or making balloon animals for children, she is always friendly to everyone and volunteering with a smile on her face!

At October's PTO Babysitting at Theodore Roosevelt Elementary, she really stood out! Lauren stepped up by demonstrating her leadership abilities, guiding the children and volunteers by leading the group in a variety of gym games. She made sure that all the kids were included and having fun in safe environment! Great job Lauren!!

November 2025 - Elaina Carrillo

Joined: Sept 2025
Activities: 20
Service Hours: 38



In the short amount of time she has been in Y.E.S., she has stood out as a dedicated and mature volunteer.

Elaina has become a face painting pro! Between family concerts and special events, she perfected her technique in a few short months. Her artistic skills always shine - plus her patience and good nature make Elaina such a good fit for working with children.

We know how busy senior year can be and so glad that she has found time to volunteer while balancing school work, the tennis team and drama club.

Cheektowaga Y.E.S. Youth Engaged in Service

275 Alexander Ave
Cheektowaga, NY 14211
716.897.7207 ext 6655
716.427.4656 text/mobile
Remind: @CheekYES
cheektowagayes@tocny.org
www.CheektowagaYES.org

Y.E.S. Program Coordinator:
Alicia Hark

Y.E.S. Event Supervisors:
Jessie Cecere
Anastasia Figueroa
Kirkland Nguyen

Y.E.S. Volunteer Advisory Board:
Cole DiGesare
Giada DiGesare
Ella Goodrich
Gigi Griffith
Audri Miller
Maddy Pollack
Maddie Radder



Activities with the Elderly

Peregrine Senior Living

575 Cayuga Creek Rd, Cheektowaga
Join us on the first Wednesday of each month for activities, games and crafts. Cornhole tournaments have become a volunteer and resident favorite! The first time you volunteer here, you'll be required to complete a HIPPA form. Forms can be downloaded from our website www.CheektowagaYES.org. Extra forms will be available the night of the event.

NOTE: TIME CHANGE

Wed Jan 7 - 5:45 - 7:00 pm

Wed Feb 4 - 5:45 - 7:00 pm

LIMIT: ONE PER NEWSLETTER

Elderwood Assisted Living at Cheektowaga

229 Bennett Rd, Cheektowaga (enter by 2nd driveway awning)

Join us for crafts, games, bingo, holiday-themed activities and more! Each month will be a different fun activity.

Tues Jan 27 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm

Tues Feb 24 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm

LIMIT: ONE PER NEWSLETTER

BINGO at Glenwell DePaul Assisted Living

2248 Old Union Rd, Cheektowaga

There are multiple buildings - look for 2248 above the entrance!

Join us for Saturday Bingo! We'll be adding new activities in the future but the residents love weekend Bingo!

Sat Jan 10 & 24 - 1:15 - 2:45 pm

Sat Feb 14 & 28 - 1:15 - 2:45 pm

LIMIT: ONE PER MONTH

Meals on Wheels Favor Making Alexander Center

Give the gift of a smile! Help us make crafts to add to the Meals on Wheels trays for seniors in the community. We've gotten so many thank you notes and phone calls from the seniors thanking us for the favors!

Tues Jan 13 - 5:00 - 6:30 pm

Wed Feb 11 - 5:00 - 6:30 pm

Activities with Children

EVENT LOCATIONS

- Alexander Community Center
275 Alexander, Cheektowaga
- Julia Boyer Reinstein (JBR)
1030 Losson Rd, Cheektowaga
- Anna Reinstein Library
2580 Harlem Rd, Cheektowaga
- Recreation Center/Ice Rink
2600 Harlem Rd, Cheektowaga
- Stiglmeier (Losson Park)
810 Losson Rd, Cheektowaga

Craft Night @ the Library

Join us for crafts, games, story time and fun!

Themes: Jan: Arctic Art

Feb: Gotta Craft em' all!

Thurs Jan 8 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR

Thurs Jan 22 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR

Thurs Feb 5 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR

Thurs Feb 19 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR

Lego Club @ the Library

Help kids embrace their creative side as they build structures, vehicles, and anything else they can dream up!

Mon Jan 12 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ Reinstein

Thurs Jan 15 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR

Thurs Jan 29 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR

Mon Feb 9 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ Reinstein

Thurs Feb 12 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR

Thurs Feb 26 - 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR

Family Craft Night

Help run an activity station while kids make crafts, cook, bake, play games, and more!

Theme: Gonna Be Golden

Tues Feb 3 - 5:45 - 7:45 pm @ Alexander

We're about to TAKEDOWN craft night, all inspired by everyone's favorite K-Pop stars become heros! We'll be helping kids make their own ceramic ramen bowl, boba tea slime, and more!

Y.E.S. AB Member Spotlight Cole DiGesare

Sophomore @ Cheektowaga Central

Volunteer: June 2022 - present
AB Member: Jan 2025 - present

Total Activities since 2022: 213
Total Service Hours since 2022: 449.25
(activities & hours as of 12/1/2025)

Favorite Y.E.S. Event: PTO Babysitting
Y.E.S. Bestie: Veruca

Favorite Color: Yellow
Favorite Food: Lo Mein
Favorite TV Binge: Ghosts UK
Favorite Band: The Beatles
Favorite Movie: Austin Powers International Man of Myself
Hobbies: Drawing





Activities with the Community

St. Stephen's Hope & Joy Food Pantry

750 Wehrle Dr, Cheektowaga

Help pack grocery orders for families and organize and restock food at a community food pantry. If the weather is nice, we may be helping in the garden.

No open toe shoes please!

Sun Jan 4 & 18 - 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Sun Feb 1 & 15 - 12:00 - 3:00 pm

LIMIT: ONE PER MONTH

Grace Guest House

MEET AT ALEXANDER

The Grace Guest House provides a place for families to stay while loved ones receive care in area hospitals. We'll be cooking dinner for the guests staying there. Meet at the Alexander Center and we'll be driving together in the van.

Don't forget to bring a hat! All volunteers must wear gloves and a hairnet (or baseball cap while cooking).

Must complete waiver - download at CheektowagaYES.org —>

Volunteer Resources. IF YOU DO NOT COMPLETE A WAIVER YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND.

Tues Jan 20 - 4:00 - 6:30 pm

Tues Feb 24 - 4:00 - 6:30 pm

LIMIT: ONE PER NEWSLETTER

Pancakes with Cupid

Alexander Center

Join us for a fun-filled Valentine's Day event that will WHISK you off your feet! Volunteers will be helping with serving breakfast, face painting, crafts, games, and more.

Sat Feb 14 - 11:15 am - 1:15 pm

Wellness Fair

Alexander Center

Join us for a community-wide wellness fair at the Alexander Center. Y.E.S. will be assisting with activities for families, including face painting, balloons, snack station, and more.

Sat Feb 21 - 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

PTO Babysitting & Special Events

EVENT LOCATIONS

- Theodore Roosevelt Elementary (TR)
2495 William St, Cheektowaga
Enter lot from Parker Ave, enter through the back door
- Woodrow Wilson Elementary (WW)
166 Halstead Ave, Sloan
Enter lot behind school on Reiman Ave, enter through back door
- Maryvale Primary (front door)
1 Nagel Dr, Cheektowaga

PTO Babysitting

Wed Jan 7 - 6:00 - 7:30 pm @ WW

Thurs Jan 8 - 6:00 - 7:30 pm @ TR

Wed Jan 14 - 6:15 - 7:45 pm @ Maryvale

Wed Feb 4 - 6:00 - 7:30 pm @ WW

Thurs Feb 5 - 6:00 - 7:30 pm @ TR

Special Events

Sports & Wellness Night

Th Jan 15 - 5:45 - 7:30 pm @ WW



Happy Birthday!

January Birthdays:

7 - Miabella D, Karon F, Savannah M,
Robert T, Hannah W

12 - Afrah A

15 - Sophia M

22 - Maggie H

24 - Lily J

25 - Chloe C

28 - Jacob A

February Birthdays:

1 - Maddy P

8 - Aaron J

13 - Al M

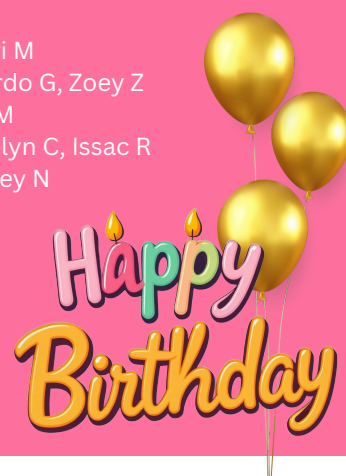
14 - Audri M

22 - Ricardo G, Zoey Z

24 - Ella M

26 - Jocelyn C, Issac R

28 - Hadley N



Junior Rink Guard

Rec Center/Ice Rink

Earn volunteer hours by spending the evening on the ice! Y.E.S. volunteers will skate around the ice, handing out walkers to beginner skaters, and helping any kiddos that fall and need help getting up from the ice.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- You **MUST** know how to ice skate!
- If you have your own ice skates, bring them. If you need to rent skates, it's \$5 cash per event.
- Helmets are strongly recommended (*a bike or hockey helmet is acceptable*)
- A Y.E.S. Supervisor will NOT be in attendance at these activities. Y.E.S. volunteers are to report to the hockey office at the rink (on the left side before entering doors to the ice) to check in with Rec Center Staff. They will provide instructions.
- You'll be given a Rink Staff jacket to wear for the evening while skating.

Fri Jan 9, 16, 23; Feb 6, 13

6:45 - 9:00 pm

Sat Jan 10, 17, 24, 21; Feb 7, 14

5:45 - 8:00 pm

Congratulations to our amazing volunteers!

NJHS Inductees:
Ashlyn M & Jeanette W



Honor Roll: Violet C

Laynie got accepted at Canisius University!

Ashlyn M made the basketball team!

Charlotte N made the modified cheer team and selected for Youth and Government!

Luca N is on the student council and the jazz band!



Y.E.S. Staff Spotlight

Alicia Hark

Volunteer: May 1995 - June 2000
Event Supervisor: June 2000 - June 2004
Program Coordinator: July 2021 - present

Favorite Y.E.S. Event: Family Craft Nights

Favorite Y.E.S. Memory: As a volunteer, going to the Festival of Lights in Niagara Falls with a whole bus load of Y.E.S. friends! We went ice skating and walked around looking at the Christmas light displays!

Favorite Color: Purple & Teal
Favorite Food: Tacos
Favorite TV Binge: Golden Girls or The Office
Favorite Band: Motion City Soundtrack

About Me: I've only lived in Cheektowaga (or Sloan) my entire life! I've been married to my husband Rob for 12 years. We have an 8 year old daughter, Morgan, who cannot wait to officially join Y.E.S. and loves when she gets to volunteer at activities. We also have two senior citizen kitties - Logan and Calliou - who are both in their 90s in cat years.

I'm a huge sports fan and love going to Bills, Sabres, Bandits, & Bisons games (and Morgan's hockey games)!

Fun Fact: I'm on a health journey and have lost 87 lbs over the past 2 years - my goal is to hit the 100 lbs lost mark!



↑ My sister & me @ Y.E.S. Awards Night 2000



↗ Y.E.S. Summer Carnival 2003



→ BBQ with the Bunny 2025

Workshops

Entrepreneur 101 Workshop

Wed Jan 28 6:45 - 8:00 pm Alexander Center

Join us for an informational workshop led by entrepreneur, David Volpe. He started his own business at only 16 years old! As a teenager, he launched his own e-commerce business and now runs his own successful marketing company and cleaning business. Be inspired to be your own boss and learn about how you can start your own business.

Socials

Volunteer Recognition Event

Fri Jan 30 6:00 - 8:00 pm Alexander Center
RSVP by Wed Jan 15

Regardless of how many activities that you've participated in, everyone is invited to join us for our annual Volunteer Recognition Event! We'll be celebrating all the hard work each of you have put in this past year.

Join us for a night of fun and friendly competition - featuring a team trivia game - where groups of volunteers will work together and earn prizes!

We'll kick off the evening with a brief awards ceremony, recognizing all volunteers for their dedication and commitment to making our community a better place. Dinner and dessert will be served - subs, chicken fingers, mozz sticks, sushi, and more! We're looking forward to the event and hope that you can celebrate everyone's accomplishments with us.

Ice Skating

Wed Feb 18 12:00 - 2:00 pm Rec Center/Ice Rink
Cost: \$5 (Bring that day only if skate rental is needed)

We've got our annual ice skating social on the calendar during February break. We'll have the entire ice to ourselves for skating. Please bring your own skates. **If you don't have skates, rentals are available for \$5. BRING CASH!**

Not an ice skater? No worries— hang out with us at the rink! Lunch will be served, plus we'll have crafts, board games, and more!!

REMINDER: To attend a social, volunteers must participate in at least 2 events during the 2 month newsletter and have ZERO no-shows for the past 6 months.



JANUARY

2026

SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THURS

FRI

SAT

28

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Food Pantry
12:00 - 3:00 pm
@ St Stephens

Activity Night
5:45 - 7:00 pm
@ Peregrine
Senior Living

PTO Babysitting
6:00 - 7:30 pm
@WW Elementary

Craft Night
5:45 - 7:15 pm
@ JBR Library

PTO Babysitting
6:00 - 7:30 pm
@TR Elementary

Jr Rink Guard
6:45 - 9:00 pm
@ Rec Center/Rink

Bingo
1:15 - 2:45 pm
@ Glenwell DePaul

Jr Rink Guard
5:45 - 8:00 pm
@ Rec Center/Rink

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

Lego Club
5:45 - 7:00 pm
@ Reinstein Library

Meals on Wheels
Favor Making
5:00 - 6:30 pm
@ Alexander

PTO Babysitting
6:15 - 7:45 pm
@Maryvale Primary

Lego Club
5:45 - 7:00 pm
@ JBR Library

Sports & Wellness
Night
5:45 - 7:30 pm
@WW Elementary

Jr Rink Guard
6:45 - 9:00 pm
@ Rec Center/Rink

Jr Rink Guard
5:45 - 8:00 pm
@ Rec Center/Rink

18

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Food Pantry
12:00 - 3:00 pm
@ St Stephens



Grace Guest House
4:00 - 6:30 pm
Meet @ Alexander

Craft Night
5:45 - 7:15 pm
@ JBR Library

Jr Rink Guard
6:45 - 9:00 pm
@ Rec Center/Rink

Bingo
1:15 - 2:45 pm
@ Glenwell DePaul

Jr Rink Guard
5:45 - 8:00 pm
@ Rec Center/Rink

25

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New Volunteer
Orientation
6:00 - 7:00 pm
@ Alexander

Advisory Board
Meeting
6:00 - 8:00 pm
@ Alexander

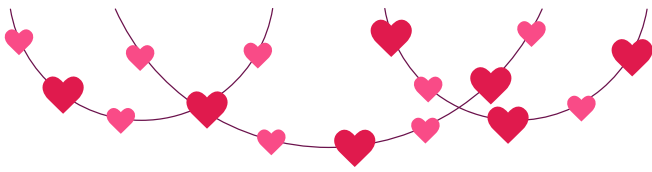
Activity Night
5:45 - 7:15 pm
@ Elderwood

Workshop:
Entrepreneur 101
6:45 - 8:00 pm
@ Alexander

Lego Club
5:45 - 7:00 pm
@ JBR Library




Social:
Volunteer
Recognition Event
6:00 - 8:00 pm
@ Alexander

Jr Rink Guard
5:45 - 8:00 pm
@ Rec Center/Rink



FEBRUARY

2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1 Food Pantry 12:00 - 3:00 pm @ St Stephens	2	3 Family Craft Night 5:45 - 7:45 @ Alexander	4 Activity Night 5:45 - 7:00 pm @ Peregrine Senior Living PTO Babysitting 6:00 - 7:30 pm @WW Elementary	5 Craft Night 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR Library PTO Babysitting 6:00 - 7:30 pm @TR Elementary	6 Jr Rink Guard 6:45 - 9:00 pm @ Rec Center/Rink	7 Jr Rink Guard 5:45 - 8:00 pm @ Rec Center/Rink
8 	9 Lego Club 5:45 - 7:00 pm @ Reinstein Library	10	11 Meals on Wheels Favor Making 5:00 - 6:30 pm @ Alexander	12 Lego Club 5:45 - 7:00 pm @ JBR Library	13 Jr Rink Guard 6:45 - 9:00 pm @ Rec Center/Rink	14 Pancakes with Cupid 10:45 am - 1:15 pm @ Alexander Bingo 1:15 - 2:45 pm @ Glenwell DePaul Jr Rink Guard 5:45 - 8:00 pm @ Rec Center/Rink 
15 Food Pantry 12:00 - 3:00 pm @ St Stephens	16  PRESIDENT'S DAY	17	18 Social: Ice Skating 12:00 - 2:00 pm @ Rec Center/Rink	19 Craft Night 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR Library	20	21 Wellness Fair 11:00 am - 1:00 pm @ Alexander
22	23 New Volunteer Orientation 6:00 - 7:00 pm @ Alexander Advisory Board Meeting 6:00 - 8:00 pm @ Alexander	24 Grace Guest House 4:00 - 6:30 pm Meet @ Alexander Activity Night 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ Elderwood	25	26 Lego Club 5:45 - 7:15 pm @ JBR Library	27	28 Bingo 1:15 - 2:45 pm @ Glenwell DePaul



YOU'RE INVITED

CHEEKTOWAGA Y.E.S. VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION EVENT

Friday, January 30, 2026
6:00 – 8:00 pm
Alexander Community Center
275 Alexander Ave, Cheektowaga

All Y.E.S. members are welcome to attend!
Volunteers are invited to join us for
a celebration recognizing them for their
dedication during 2025.

We'll kick off the evening with
a catered spread of food, drinks and dessert,
followed by an awards ceremony
and Trivia Game Night with prizes!

Please RSVP by Thurs Jan 15 via Sign Up Genius.



Want to earn some extra spending money???

The Cheektowaga Senior Center has reached out to us and asked if any Y.E.S. volunteers would be interested in getting paid to do odd jobs. You could be helping with shoveling snow, raking leaves or light housework.

If interested, please complete the form on the back and return to the Y.E.S. office or by email - CheektowagaYES@tocny.org. Y.E.S. will share your contact information with the Senior Center and as jobs come up, you'll be contacted by the Senior Center Outreach Coordinator.

Y.E.S. volunteers will be responsible for their own transportation.

A Y.E.S. director will not be present for any "odd jobs" scheduled, as this is not a Y.E.S. activity.

How does it work?

The Cheektowaga Senior Center receives calls from residents who need assistance in or around their homes. A teen participant will then be contacted about the job. If interested, the teen will be given the resident's contact information to discuss the job and salary earned. Youth will be contacted based upon neighborhood area.

Youth ages 11 - 18 can select from a list of jobs that they'd be interested in. Youth will NOT be asked to climb ladders/roof work, carrying heavy/large items up or down stairs, provide child care with use of pool, trampoline, etc.

The price paid to the teens by the resident for the work is decided between both parties. These should be decided fairly between youth, their parent, and the resident before the work is done.

Adult assistance and encouragement are important. It is up to the parent to make sure your child is safe doing whatever the resident needs done. We encourage you to talk to your child before and after working for the resident. You may want to consider accompanying your child on the initial visit. Getting to know the resident is an important safeguard.

The Cheektowaga Senior Center will be in contact with you when there is a job available in your area that meets your job criteria.

The Odd Jobs List is not limited to Y.E.S. volunteers only. Siblings within the age requirements are eligible to join the list as well.



TEEN APPLICANT INFORMATION

Date of Application:

Name:

Gender:

☐ M ☐ F

Address:

City:

Zip:

Phone:

Date of Birth:

Age:

Grade:

E-mail Address:

School:

Parent/Guardian E-mail Address:

Parent/Guardian Phone:

Check type of job(s) you are most interested in (Check as many as possible):

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rake Leaves | <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel Snow | <input type="checkbox"/> Yard Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Weeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mow Lawns | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Put Away Groceries | <input type="checkbox"/> Light Housework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning
Garage/Basement | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing
Cupboards/Closets | <input type="checkbox"/> Anything! <i>(If you select anything, you could be called for any job but you may refuse if not interested.)</i> | | |

Please list days/times you are NOT available:

Please list any experience, training, work history (including volunteer work):

Teen Signature:

Date:

THIS SECTION MUST BE FILLED OUT BY PARENT/GUARDIAN

Does your child have any health limitations that would make him/her unable to do certain jobs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list limits:

Would you be willing to drive your child to other areas of Cheektowaga outside of your neighborhood? ☐ Yes ☐ No

I have read the information contained in this flyer and reviewed my child's information in the above application. I have discussed the program with my child. I will strongly encourage my child to return calls to adults residents and the Cheektowaga Senior Center promptly.

I, will permit my child, to participate in the Odd Jobs program
(Parent/Guardian Name) (Child's Name)

and have read and agree to all terms of the program stated above.

Parent Signature:

Date:

**Return completed for to Cheektowaga Y.E.S., 275 Alexander Ave, Cheektowaga NY 14211
or by email CheektowagaYES@tocny.org**