

MEDIA RELEASE

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PHOTO CAPTION: The new Y logo in five color pairings reflects the vibrancy and diversity of the communities the Y serves.



A Brand New Day: YMCA Unveils New Brand Strategy to Further Community Impact with a focus on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility

SAN FRANCISCO—Take a new look at the Y—beyond your workout, beyond swim lessons and sports—and you’ll discover an organization that does much more than you might know about.

For the first time in 43 years, YMCA of the USA (Y-USA) has unveiled a new brand strategy to reveal what lies underneath—a vibrant, cause-driven organization. As a result, YMCA of San Francisco and its 14 locations from Marin to the Santa Cruz Mountains are joining more than 2,600 Ys across the U.S. to simplify how they talk about their impact in the community, so that people better understand the Y.

The new branding emphasizes three areas of focus:

- Youth development
- Healthy living
- Social responsibility

At the same time, the Y is launching a fresh, new visual system built around a revitalized logo with a forward-looking design and multiple color options. Individual locations will keep more of their full YMCA names. But going forward, the nonprofit collectively is adopting the more informal and welcoming name that is already widely used by most people—“the Y.”

“At the Y, strengthening the foundations of community has always been our driving force,” said Chuck Collins, President and CEO of the YMCA of San Francisco. “We are simply changing how we talk about ourselves, so that people better understand the benefits of the work we do in the community.”

After two years of extensive research and analysis, results show that the organization’s cause and impact are not fully understood and that participation in Y programs represents a significant opportunity for people in all stages of life to learn and develop positive, healthy habits. The strategy will pave the way toward making a more significant impact across the 10,000 communities that the Y serves in the U.S.

“Through our rebranding effort, we hope to more clearly communicate how the Y benefits our communities. We nurture the potential of kids, help individuals and families live a healthier lifestyle, and encourage people to give back and support their neighbors,” said Collins.

Beyond a new visual system and focused messaging, it’s business as usual at the Y.

“Our core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility remain unchanged and are incorporated in everything we do,” said Collins. “We connect people of all ages and backgrounds and provide them with opportunities to learn, grow and thrive. We have the presence and partnerships to both promise and deliver lasting personal and social change.”

Ys across the country will implement the strategy on their own timeline. YMCA of San Francisco anticipates completing the rebranding process by the end of 2011.

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Editor’s Note: This new brand announcement represents a transition in the correct way to refer to the Y in writing. “The Y” should be used whenever referring to the collective organization. “The” should be lowercase unless it is used at the beginning of a sentence. “YMCA” should be used when referring to a specific location, i.e., “Embarcadero YMCA.”