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Child Care Parent Handbook

YMCA of Cass
and Clay Counties



About YMCA Child Care

You want the very best for your child – and so do we!

YMCA Child Care is a place for children to explore, learn, grow, and feel safe, cared for and celebrated. We encourage positive relationships between the children, child care staff, and parents to ensure a high-quality experience. In every program, and every classroom, we address the specific needs of children based not only on age, but also individual pace of development. We believe the values and skills learned early on are vital building blocks for quality of life and future success.

With so many demands on today's families, parents need all the support they can get. That's why child care at the YMCA is about more than looking after kids. It's about nurturing their development by providing a safe place to learn foundational skills, develop healthy, trusting relationships and build self-reliance. This is all accomplished through our values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. At the YMCA, we believe the values and skills learned early on are vital building blocks for quality of life and future success. That's why our Early Learning, Preschool, and School Age programs are staffed with people who understand the cognitive, physical and social development of kids, the need children have to feel connected and supported in trying new things and the caring and reinforcement parents and families need to help each other.

In YMCA Child Care, babies develop trust and security, preschoolers experience early literacy and learn about their world and school-age kids make friends, learn new skills and do their homework. Most importantly, children learn how to be their best selves. That makes for confident kids today, and contributing and engaged adults tomorrow.

Connect with the YMCA

We love having you and your family as part of our YMCA community! Stay connected with the YMCA through our website, social media, and more!

ymcacassclay.org | [@ymcacassclay](https://www.instagram.com/ymcacassclay) | [#ymcacassclay](https://www.facebook.com/ymcacassclay)



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YMCA Philosophy & Values



YMCA Philosophy and Values

Mission

The YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties is a not-for-profit community service organization dedicated to enhancing the spirit, mind and body of all persons through quality leadership, programs, services and facilities.

Goals & Philosophy

YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties Early & School Age Learning Center Programs are dedicated to enhancing the spirit, mind and body of all persons in a positive Christian environment through quality programs, services and facilities. Upon that foundation, children, families and staff in our Learning Programs are considered to be the three components of our programs. Our integrated curriculum, consistent administrative policies, health and safety standards and positive guidance are built upon these statements.

What you can expect from the YMCA:

- Your child will be treated fairly and with respect.
- Employees who are trained and provide quality care and a safe environment.
- We will inform you of behavior concerns and work with you to create a plan to support your child.
- We will do all that we can to provide a safe and happy experience for you and your family.

What we ask of families:

- Your commitment to your child's learning experiences at the YMCA.
- That you are a champion, along with us, in your child's development.
- Your help in developing a consistent plan to work through behavioral concerns.
- When in our programs, you follow our core values: honesty, respect, responsibility, caring, and health.

The following actions are not permitted by or at the discretion of the YMCA staff:

- Corporal punishment or emotional abuse
- Punishment for lapses in toilet habits
- Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as punishment for unacceptable behavior
- Use of physical restraints other than to physically hold a child when containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm.
- Use of mechanical restraints

The YMCA Supports Positive Behaviors

At the YMCA, we believe the most useful means of supporting children in making good decisions is to reinforce and encourage positive behaviors. We always want to have a reliable and easy to understand

system to recognize when kids are “doing the right thing”. We do this by re-enforcing the YMCA’s core values of Caring, Respect and Honesty as well as other positive reinforcement activities.

When children display challenging behaviors we know that there are many reasons why a child acts out. It is important to address these challenging behaviors with empathy and fairness, while also remembering that no two children or situations are the same. At the YMCA we have four core rules: **1. Take care of yourself 2. Take care of others 3. Take care of this place 4. Stay with your group.**

When staff are presented with a repeated challenging behavior there are steps that we follow to help reinforce our rules. First step is a Think Sheet: Take 5.(typically only used with the older preschool and school age children). This is used when a child shows a repeated challenging behavior and they have not done anything to purposefully harm themselves, others or property. When this happens the child works with a staff to calm down and complete the form. Once they are ready they are able to rejoin the group.

If a child has recurring behaviors the Site Director or Coordinator will fill out a Behavior Documentation form. This is to keep a running documentation of behavior to determine if there are certain things that are triggering this behavior. If the behavior continues we then set up a meeting with the parents or guardians to and create a plan, and we document that plan on our Behavior Action Plan. This is to try and help the child thrive in our program.

If a child has physically caused harm to another child, YMCA staff; or destroying a classroom, the child maybe be sent home or suspended for the day until a parent meeting can be held to formalize a plan to help with the observed behaviors.

The more severe behaviors may warrant a multiple day suspension. This is left up to the discretion of the YMCA Directors.

Suspensions are necessary as it gives time to form a plan or revise a behavior plan as safety of all children, and staff are of the utmost importance.

Please remember that our programs may not be for everyone, but that we will take all steps to work as a team to help each child. The YMCA does not provide 1 on 1 care for children, and our staff are not trained in specific behavioral interventions. If a child receives 1 on 1 care while in school hour, our group size is 14 children to 1 staff after school.

Grace at Meals

As a Christian based organization, songs or grace are said every day before we eat lunch. These songs may have an occasional reference to a deity. Please share your ideas for new graces with us as we try to develop a spirit of thankfulness in the children for the bounty that is available to them.



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Our Credentials



Our Credentials

Our Quality Staff

Quality, continuity, and longevity of staff is a priority in a quality child care program. Picking our staff based on experience, competence and education is a priority to ensure that we have the most highly qualified staff available to care for your children.

Learning Program Directors, Coordinators and Teachers have a two to four year degree in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education (or related field), or a CDA and practical experience working with young children. Learning Center Leaders receive on-the-job training and gain experience in youth development and working with families. Staff are provided with annual trainings to ensure they are educated on best practices when working with youth. During our trainings and monthly staff meetings some things we focus on are behavior guidance, child development and curriculum.

Licensing

All of our programs are required to be licensed in the state of North Dakota and certified in the state of Minnesota. This includes following all state requirements:

- Staff to child ratios
 - o 6 weeks - 2 years 1:4
 - o 2-3 years 1:5
 - o 3-4 years 1:7
 - o 4-5 years 1:10
 - o 5-6 years 1:12
 - o 6-12 years 1:14
- Completion of Basic Childcare Training
- All staff must have a background check and be fingerprinted
- All staff must be certified in CPR and First Aid
- Monthly emergency drills and evacuation plans
- Also includes ongoing annual training requirements

Accreditation

All of the Early Learning Programs are currently accredited or are working on accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Accreditation signifies that our programs meet the highest standards in ten core areas, exceeding standards required by state licensing. The ten core areas are: Relationships, Curriculum, Teaching, Assessment of Child Progress, Health, Teachers, Families, Community Relationships, Physical Environment, and Leadership/Management.

Bright and Early

YMCA Early Learning Centers have partnered with ND Bright and Early. This is an agency who provides observations, training, coaches, and ongoing staff development as part of their Quality Rating System. Program work to successfully complete 4 Quality Rating Steps – with the goal of reaching 4 Star status. Step one is completing and maintaining licensing standards. Step Two focuses on quality learning environments, using the Environment Rating Scale tools (ITERS and ECERS). Step Three is learning about Creative Curriculum Teaching Strategies Gold. Teachers

learning to utilize this program for lesson plans, curriculum, observations, documentation, and assessments. Step Four focuses on quality interactions between teacher and child, using the CLASS tool. As each step is completed, programs are able to work with a coach and must meet all Professional Development requirements. After each step, programs maintain quality and continue working with a coach until the program begins working towards the next level.

21st Century School-Age Programs

Offering the very best quality programming has always been, and always will be a goal of our program. To do this we must assess a modest fee. All fees assessed are put directly back into our programs. Without assessing fees we would serve 226 less children and have 6 less sites. With that being said, YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties will never turn a child away based on their ability to pay at the 21st century locations.



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Enrollment



Enrollment

Hours of Operation

Our programs are open Monday through Friday 6:30 am to 6:00 p.m. YMCA Learning Center programs will be closed on the following six holidays and two staff professional development days per year. These days are: New Year's Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. For Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve the YMCA is open limited hours and the Learning Centers will close early. These hours are subject to change according to the facility hours of operation. Families will be charged regular rates for all holidays listed above.

Enrollment Process

We are so honored that you have chosen the YMCA for your learning center needs. To initiate the process please contact our Enrollment Coordinator. They will be able to help you with locations, openings, scheduling a tour and answer any questions you may have.

Listed below are the steps to take if you decide to choose the YMCA for your learning center needs:

1. Make an appointment to tour with the program Director to discuss your child's needs, meet the staff, tour the program and observe activities.
2. If you choose to enroll you will be given a registration packet, which will need to be completed in full, in order to secure your spot.
 - Additional requirements for Early Learning Programs include: current picture of your child, immunization records and birth certificate or passport.
3. Tuition for care is paid through Tuition Express. This form, and a voided check, will need to be turned in prior to enrollment.
 - We require you to pay the enrollment fee and first two weeks of care. These must be paid with either a check or money order. (Note the first two weeks of care is not a deposit as it is credited to your first billing. Enrollment fee is non-refundable.)
 - For current rates please see our website. www.ymcacassclay.org
 - We offer contract and non-contract rates in our school age programs year round.
4. All completed forms and payments must be turned in prior to processing your registration. Please allow five business days to complete the process.
5. You will receive a welcome email from your Site Director or Coordinator prior to your child's first day. This will include information on what to bring on your child's first day, how to enter the program, how to sign your child in and out of the program and any site specific information.

Please note all information is kept confidential and is disclosed only to pertinent staff. Certain forms will need to be updated annually.

Schedules

We offer full day care with options for full time and part time schedules. Full time is considered five days a week, while part time is anything less than that. We do not offer part time care for infant and toddlers. Full time and part time rates are daily rates as we do not bill hourly. Please work with your Site Director or Coordinator for part time options. We do not allow flex schedules, all days must be set, and the same each week.

If you bring your child in on a day that you are not scheduled, you will be charged for that day. If you give no notice, there may not be room for your child and we might not be able to accommodate

your request. If this is the case you will not be able to leave your child at the program. Please see your child's Director or Coordinator if an additional day is needed, we request at least a two week notice to help fulfill this request. Any extra days will be charged on your next bill. You cannot swap days of care if you are part time. We do not offer half day rates. All rates are based on full days of care. Your child can attend anytime between 6:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. for Early Learning care as well as school out day and summer care for school agers. School agers can attend before and after school on school days (opening at 6:30 a.m. before school, and closing at 6:00 p.m. after school). If you plan to change your schedule, you must give us a four-week notice emailed to childcare@ymcacassclay.org. This will alert your Director/Coordinator, enrollment and billing. You will be billed for your previous schedule until the change goes into effect. If we are able to accommodate a schedule change in under a 4 week period, the change must begin at the start of a billing period and we will notify you of an accurate start date. We cannot guarantee that you will be able to change to the schedule you wish, and you may need to be on a waiting list for the scheduled days you are requesting. A day cannot be banked or made up if your child misses their scheduled day.

Contract vs. Non Contract Rates

Contract Rate allows you to have a lower tuition rate, but you are in a contract and obligated to pay for the school year contract which is September-May or the summer contract which is June-August. We do not allow families out of the contract unless approved by the Learning Center Business Director, and only in extreme circumstances.

Non-Contract is a higher tuition rate, but you have the flexibility to withdraw from program with a 4 week written notice e-mailed to childcare@ymcacassclay.org. This will alert to your Director or Coordinator, enrollment and billing.

If Your Child Will Be Gone for the Day

If your child will not be attending, please be sure to contact the program. For Early Learning please contact us by 10:00 a.m. For School Age please contact us by 12:00 p... Leave a message at your child's site. Please understand that we may not have time to call you back to confirm your message. If your child is not logged in for the day, we will call parents if we did not know they were going to be absent. If the YMCA must call to locate your child, because we were not notified of an absence, you will be charged a Finder's Fee of \$10.00 per occurrence. If your child does not attend one of their scheduled days, you are still charged for that day.

School Drop Off and Pick Up Policy

The YMCA Programs will adhere to the policies of the school your child attends.

When the children are dropped off at school by the YMCA bus, they must go directly into the building. The drivers will watch them go in unless the school requires that they stand outside until the time they are allowed to go into the building.

For afternoon pick up, the bus staff will meet children upon dismissal and take roll of each child (unless families have called before to report a child not riding). If any children are missing, the driver will radio back to the program. Staff onsite will then contact the emergency contacts listed in the child's file.

Buses will wait five minutes after school dismissal; then the bus will be permitted to leave.

If a child is left at the school, families or guardians will be responsible for picking up and transporting the child. If a guardian fails to notify the program their child attends that the child will not be riding the bus, they will be subject to the \$10.00 Finder's Fee.

Inclement Weather

If Fargo Public Schools close for the day, the following Y program(s) will be closed:

Kindergarten Readiness at Fercho

If West Fargo schools close, the following program(s) will be closed: Kindergarten Readiness at Schlossman

If West Fargo and/or Moorhead schools close, the following program(s) will be closed: Grow With Me readiness program at Grace Gardens.

If school is closed early or late starts:

We do not transport to school if a late start or pick up from school if there is an early release due to weather. Parents transport their children to schools in these situations. KR (Kinder Kamp) will not be held in the morning session.

Emergency closing sites:

When schools are closed for inclement weather, school-based YMCA programs are not able to operate in the schools, due to district policy. They will however, be able to report to the following locations.

Emergency closing site assignments

Schlossman 701-356-1451 701-356-1455 4243 19 th Ave SW Fargo	Fercho 701-364 4132 701-364-4156 400 1 st Ave S. Fargo	Calvary 701-281-4960 4575 45 th St S Fargo	South ELC 701-551-5181 4225 38 th St S Fargo	West Fargo ELC 701-356-0341 1042 14 th Ave E West Fargo
Schlossman	Fercho	Calvary	South ELC	ECDC
Aurora	Dorothy Dodds	Deer Creek		
Brooks Harbor	Ellen Hopkins	Horace		
Eastwood	HMR	Independence		
LE Berger	Jefferson	Legacy		
Freedom	Madison	Osgood		
Harwood	McKinley			
Oak Grove	Robert Asp			
South Elementary	S.G. Reinertsen			
Westside				
Willow Park				

YMCA Lesson Cancellation Due to Weather

The decision will be made by 7:00 am if we will not be transporting for Y and non-Y activities or school routes. Bus transportation will not be provided when the outside temperature/heat index is 95 degrees or above. Bus transportation will not be provided when the outside temperature/wind chill -15. Other conditions that result in NO transportation include road closures, city-wide emergency status, or travel advisories are established by city/state officials. Please see Inclement Weather policy.

Signing In and Out Each Day

We require all parents to sign their child in and out each day using our electronic tablets. Please do not drop your child off at a program without signing them in yourself. We ask that you walk them in to ensure safety. We are unable to send children out upon parent requests due to safety and ratio requirements. Parents will be given codes for the tablets before their child's first day. These codes cannot be shared with others, this helps us maintain a secure system. Other individuals that are on your child's authorized pick-up list will be able to set up their own codes, and will need to use those to sign your child out. Please be sure to prepare those that may pick up your child, that they will have save time to set-up their own code the first time they come in. Our school age staff will log in all children at the school sites when they arrive from school. If your school age child is not logged in for the day, we will call parents if we did not know they were going to be absent. A \$10.00 Finder's fee will be assessed to any school age child we had to call on.

Please log your child out to avoid a late pick up fee and for accuracy of the child's attendance.

Transitioning to a New Classroom

Transitions to new classrooms is an exciting time. Transitions happen throughout the year, and are based on space, developmental readiness and age. We recognize that every child is unique. That is why our teachers and staff are dedicated to supporting the needs of children and families during this time of change. Transitions are set up to help children succeed. Therefore we give time for children to experience their new room, develop a relationship with their new teachers and acclimate to the new schedule and routines. Regarding our youngest learners, accreditation recommends that infants, toddlers, and twos remain with the same teaching staff for nine months or longer. We will communicate with you on the transition plan for your child. Our goal is to make transitions as smooth as possible for all involved.

Transferring YMCA Child Care Programs

If your child would like to transfer to another YMCA child care location, you will not have to pay another enrollment fee (provided that it is a direct transfer with no break in care). Your name will be placed at the top of the waiting list at the "new" YMCA Child care location should you need to transfer sites, if that program is currently full. You are not guaranteed a spot however, as openings are based on availability. A four-week notice is required to transfer, and your child's tuition needs to be paid in full at your "old" site before you can move to your "new" site. If an early transfer is needed and if we can accommodate, the transfer must begin at the start of a new billing period. Your Director will notify you of an accurate transfer date.

Enrollment Trial Period

The first 30 days of your child's enrollment will be considered as a "trial-period." If we feel things are not "working out," we reserve the right to give notice for removal from the program. If after the probationary period or any time, we feel that we cannot meet the needs of the child, we may give notice to end care for your child.

Withdrawal from Program

We require a 4 week notice to withdraw from our programs, unless you are in a contract rate (school age). If you are in a non-contract agreement (school-age), your tuition rate is higher but you have the ability to put in a 4 week notice to withdraw from our programs. Please contact our Enrollment Coordinator at childcare@ymcacassclay.org to process your withdrawal. This will notify your Director/ Coordinator, enrollment and billing of this change.

Pick up Authorizations

All pick up persons must be authorized. Every authorized pick-up person will be provided codes for building entry. If someone other than yourself is picking up, you must inform us and the designated pick up person must provide photo identification. If a parent is not allowed to pick up a child, we will need a court order stating this. If any person under the age of 18 will be picking up your child, you will need to sign a release form authorizing that pick-up. Please be aware that you are responsible for your child when you, or any other authorized pick up, signs them out for the day.

Photo Release/Information Forms

You will be asked to sign a photo release form before we use your child's picture for external public relations and internal postings (see registration form). You will also be asked for additional authorizations when outside entities conduct photo shoots, surveys, and projects. We are not able to release information about your child to any unauthorized person. We can only accept authorization from the legal guardian to release information.

Clothing

Comfortable and washable clothing that will enable the children to participate freely in all activities without undue concern for spills, spots, and rips is recommended. Please mark all clothing and personal articles permanently with your child's name. Occasionally check the lost and found for misplaced items, we are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Sturdy, well-fitting tennis shoes or non-skid shoes are essential for active play. Socks are required so the children can play in the gym. When skirts are worn, we ask that your child wear pants or shorts underneath. Please be sure to check your welcome email for any additional items needed.

Toys, Blankets, and Rest Time Items

Please leave toys at home, unless it is a specific share day. The YMCA Learning Center Programs do not assume responsibility for personal toys. On share days please refrain from allowing your child to bring any type of toy weapon, electronic toys of any sort, or action figures to the program. Blankets/rest time items are only allowed for Early Learning children. We ask that the items brought fit within the container provided. Rest time items include crib size sheet, blanket, travel size pillow and a small stuffed animal. These items will need to be taken home and laundered weekly. Please note that not all locations participate in share day, please contact your Site Director or Coordinator for more information about your child's site.

Immunization Policy

All Early Learning children are required to be up-to-date with their immunizations and guardians are expected to provide their child's immunization record. (School Age children are not required to provide this, as we know their school has these files on record.) According to North Dakota's Century Code, child care programs cannot refuse to provide care to unimmunized children who are otherwise eligible if the parents or guardians present North Dakota SFN form 16038 for immunization exemption. If a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs at the program, it is recommended for unimmunized children to be excluded for the duration of the possible exposure.



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Tuition & Fees



Tuition and Fees

Tuition

Tuition is due every two weeks and due the 1st day of the billing cycle. Full tuition will be charged for each tuition period, including the six major holidays, two staff professional development days, storm days, early closing days, non-school days or any other days that the program is closed.

For your convenience, we use Tuition Express for payments. You will sign up using the form in your enrollment packet. You must provide an email address to receive your statement. You have three options for payment:

- Automatic withdrawal from your bank account on tuition payment dates. (Preferred)
- Pay online using your bank account. Push the payment from your account prior to due date.
- Credit Card payment (online) manually. (A maintenance fee will be applied for each billing per child.)

Families that choose option 2 or 3 listed above will be required to go to option 1 if payments are not being made in a timely manner. Our rates are reviewed each year and subject to change in order to meet financial requirements for quality child care. As your child grows and transitions from infant to toddler to preschool, you will see a rate change when your child has transitioned to a classroom approved for the older rate. If no openings are available to move your child to the next classroom, their tuition will remain at the rate associated with their current classroom until an opening becomes available.

To find our most current payment calendar click [here](#).

Late Payment Charges

A .87% penalty (subject to change) will be charged for tuition payments not paid within five days of the due date. Failure to pay by the deadline may result in termination of care. Click [here](#) for the updated payment calendar.

NSF Checks

There will be a \$15.00 charge on all checks or ACH payments returned for non-sufficient funds. Returned checks will automatically be re-deposited once. ACH payments will be redeposited with the next billing cycle. If the payment does not clear after being presented a second time, an immediate cash payment will be required to continue to receive services. If your check payment is returned, you will need to use another form of payment for all future payments, such as money order or credit card (processing fees for credit/debit cards will apply) for the next three months.

Payment made by a Third Party

Upon enrollment in a YMCA program, it is to be understood that all child care fees, tuition, and expenses are the responsibility of the guardian(s) enrolling in the program. All families enrolled in the program are subject to the same policies, including policies related to the payment of fees (i.e. two-week payment, late payment penalties, and withdrawal from the program, etc.)

In the event that a third party (i.e. Social Services, Child Care Assistance program, employer-sponsored flexible benefit account, non-custodial parent or extended family member, etc.) is assisting with all or part of the fees due, the agreement is between the guardian enrolling the child and the third party only. YMCA Child Care Services enters into the child care and payment

agreement with the enrolling guardian(s) only. Under no circumstances will any family be permitted to attend the child care program without payment of tuition.

Child Care Scholarship Program

Our Scholarship Program is sponsored by the United Way, the YMCA Annual Campaign and grant resources. The YMCA childcare scholarship is a secondary source of financial assistance and families must apply to their local county agency first, for county childcare assistance. The scholarship awards are based on income, enrollment, family size and availability of funds. An initial application must be submitted to determine eligibility for the program and resubmitted annually by December. Families who receive Child Care Assistance may have their scholarship reduced or removed once the Child Care Assistance payment has been received. If family is receiving a childcare scholarship granted from the YMCA, if any portion of a refund is of those funds that amount will not be refunded to the family.

Find our scholarship application [here](#).

Late Pick-up Policy

If you are picking up your child from the program and you are running late, please call to let the staff know.

You will be charged \$1.00 per minute, per child past 6:00 p.m. Late fee charges will be added to your next tuition statement. If your child has not been picked up by 6:00 p.m., and if we are not able to reach a guardian or emergency contact after 30 minutes, the police will be called for further assistance in locating authorized pick-up persons.

Flexible Benefit Programs

We will make every effort to accommodate your needs when involved with the flexible benefit plan. We can provide billing statements in custom time increments, for the purpose of flexible spending benefits for childcare. Families must provide their benefits flex form to confirm accurate rates and provider signatures. Please see your program's director to complete this benefit process.

Non-School Day and Summer Care (School Age)

Families are charged their regular, scheduled rates for any day their child does not attend. This includes non-school days in which school is not in session and days during the summer. If non-school day care is needed, guardians are required to pre-register and pay an extra fee for the full day care. Sign up is required to assure that your child may attend and we will have the appropriate staffing needed to care for the children. The deadline for non-school day care registration or cancellation of registration will be one week prior to the non-school day, OR one week prior to the start of an extended break. **Once the one week deadline has passed, care will not be guaranteed and cancellation of full day care cannot be made. If your child is signed up for the non-school day, you will be charged for a full day whether your child attends the program or not. If you do not sign up for non-school days and show up, you may not have a spot for your child, and you will be charged an extra fee. (See current rate sheet)** Children who are not registered for the non-school day, may attend their regularly scheduled after school hours at no additional cost. However, if your child attends the program any additional hours on non-school days, full day fees will apply. Please note that we may not have space for your child, due to ratio requirements. If you were not registered for full day care, you may be turned away. However, if we have the space, you will be provided the additional care and charged an extra fee.



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Curriculum & Activities



Curriculum and Activities

Our Curriculum

A planned curriculum provides a dependable sequence of learning opportunities for children. Some components of each day's schedule include learning activities such as music, stories, self-directed play, excursions and academic games. These activities promote learning in science, math, art and literacy. Daily routines provide security in the predictable schedule, and new activities keep interests high.

Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers

Who is Creative Curriculum for? The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos is a comprehensive curriculum that focuses on building relationships and providing responsive care.

What Will They Be Doing? The curriculum focuses on creating a responsive environment for the children where they will be physically and emotionally stimulated with materials, sounds, and experiences, and also have space to relax and learn from those around them. We carefully plan daily routines and experiences, focusing on personal growth and development, making sure they are individualized to each child. Children will participate in: Creative Art, Large and Fine Motor Activities, Language and Talking Activities, Music and Movement, Social, Emotional and Cognitive Activities. The child's own personal care is also individualized to their own needs. Classroom materials and toys are rotated each week to go along with the weekly exploration topic. New items are placed in the learning programs to enhance the environment, keeping it relevant, fresh and fun for the children.

Creative Curriculum for Preschool Children

What is Creative Curriculum? The Creative Curriculum for the Preschool Children is a comprehensive curriculum that focuses on building relationships, the learning environment, how children learn and how teachers and families can work together to strengthen the child's growth and development, ensuring school readiness.

What makes Creative Curriculum so effective?

The Creative Curriculum balances both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning, with an emphasis on responding to children's learning styles and building on their strengths and interests. The Creative Curriculum is one of the country's leading research based preschool curricula that applies the latest theory and research on best practices in teaching, learning, and content stands developed by states and professional organizations. The Creative Curriculum clearly defines the teacher's vital role in connecting content, teaching, and learning for preschool children. Children will participate in large and fine motor activities, creative art, and sensory, social, emotional and cognitive activities each day. We consider the outdoor environment is an extension of the classroom, where children have the opportunity to continue their learning outdoors at least twice a day, when possible.

Lesson Plans

Lesson plans are developed around a weekly exploration topic, based off of the children's interests, not just a topic out of a box. Activities are developed around specific goals and objectives that your child's class is working on. Research proves that children learn best when the topic is relevant and interesting to the group. Lesson plans are available in print for families and are posted in the classroom, along with a monthly calendar of classroom events. This is a great extension to the child's learning and helps you and your child make the important connection between home and school.

Other Creative Curriculum Resources

Another aspect of the Creative Curriculum focuses on guiding children's behavior in a positive way. Building relationships with families is a very important part of a successful infant and toddler program. Families are welcome to join the children any time during the day, no appointment needed! Guardians have several opportunities throughout the day to visit with our trained staff regarding their child.

For all children our goal is to teach and enforce the following life skills.

Following instructions: Look at the person, say "Okay," do it right away.

Getting the teachers attention: Look at the teacher and wait for a response followed by using a pleasant voice.

Listening: Look at the person, remain quiet and listen, nod your head or say "okay."

Staying on task: Look at the task, think about what you need to do, focus all of your attention on the task, ignore distractions, work until you are told to stop.

Reporting to the teacher: Look at the teacher and stay calm, ask the teacher if he/she has time to talk to you alone, tell what you have to say and/or heard, answer the teacher's questions truthfully.

Disagreeing appropriately: Look at the person, use a calm voice and tell why you feel differently, give reason, and listen to the other person.

Talking with Others/appropriate voice tone: Look at the person, use a pleasant voice, listen when others talk, match your voice to the setting.

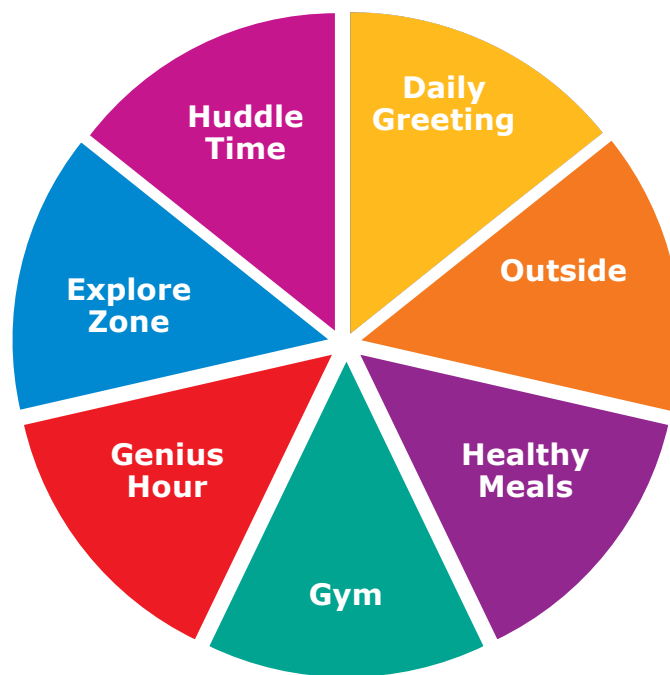
Accepting "No" or a consequence: Look at the person, listen, say "Okay", and stay cool. If you disagree, ask later.

Sportsmanship: Appropriately request to be a part of an activity, cooperate with others in the group, take turns, and play by the rules of the game, use a pleasant voice when talking to others, and remember to accept losing or winning appropriately.

School Age Curriculum

The YMCA School Age Learning Program programs offer a variety of activities specifically planned by the Y leaders to fit the interests of the children in our programs. Each YMCA program works together to fulfill seven common areas to make your child's day a fun and engaging experience.

With our **DAILY GREETING** your child will feel welcomed into the program and be ready to start the fun activities. Your child will also get to go **OUTSIDE** each day (weather permitting) to breathe the fresh air and play with their friends. The YMCA offers **HEALTHY MEAL** each day that fit in the YMCA HEPA standards that are sweet and treat free. The children will also get to work on their large motor skills inside as well when we go to the **GYM** and play instructor led games along with child selected activities. **GENIOUS HOUR** is dedicated to letting your child choose which activities they would like to do and giving them time to create their masterpieces. The **EXPLORE ZONE** time of the day is when we infuse our academic enrichments weekly. These activities include STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics), literacy and physical activity. **HUDDLE TIME** will round out the week by creating a sense of belonging and help the child gain self-control skills and build relationships through fun group games and challenges.



Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a planned part of each day, weather permitting. We do not go outside if the heat index is over 95-degrees or the wind chill is below zero. For infant children, we do not go outside if the heat index is over 95-degrees or the wind chill is below 20 degrees and for School Age children, it is -15 degrees wind chill, due to school policies. Children are supervised at all times. For staffing reasons, all children must go outside if they are in attendance for the day. We will not keep

your child inside due to illness or threat of illness, or if they did not bring proper clothes for outside play. If they are well enough to come to the program, they are well enough to go outside. We will use extra clothing when we do go outside if your child needs it to be comfortable.

When it is warm, we will take water with us outside and on walks. We may take children for walks to destinations that are no farther than one mile from the program, depending on the age of the children. Sunscreen and bug spray will be provided by YMCA. If your child has or shows signs of skin sensitivity, the YMCA will ask families to provide their own sunscreen and/or bug spray.

General Behavior and Guidelines for Vehicle Safety

All children who ride a YMCA bus will be asked to be very responsible for their behavior while being transported. The safety of all children is of utmost importance. All children must get on the bus under their own power to be transported to our sites.

All children are expected to use seatbelts (when available) and sit in their seats on the bus. We do not transport infants and toddlers in our YMCA vehicles. Behavior on the bus must be appropriate. If the child does not follow the rules for riding in our vehicles, we will follow our behavior policies and reserve the right to refuse transportation on any of our vehicles.

Field Trips

Field trips and outings are an integral part of our program activities. Families will be given advance notice of upcoming field trips. (Except for walks to library, parks and other destinations within one mile.) Parents and guardians are welcome to join us on field trips, although you may need to arrange for your own transportation. Talk to your child's teacher, or program staff, if you are interested.

YMCA Swimming Lessons and Swimming Field Trips

Swimming, and learning how to swim, is a life skill. We provide swimming opportunities in two ways.

Swimming lessons are offered at our Fercho YMCA Aquatic Program, and transportation for specific lesson times is provided. Swimming lessons are provided through the YMCA during the school year in our Early Learning Programs. During the summer, swim camps are scheduled for all age groups. These run on a two week session, and your site will be assigned to a specific camp. If you would like your child to attend at another time, you will have to provide your own transportation. For both the school year Early Learning Programs, and School Age Summer Explorers, you will be asked to register and pay according to the session instructions. *If your child attends the Fercho Early Learning or School Age programs please see your Site Director for other opportunities and times.

Swimming Field Trips are planned for our school age programs throughout the summer. We use the local public swimming pools, and you will receive a field trip calendar ahead of time as to the location and dates. Certified lifeguards are always on duty at those locations. Please be sure to always provide your child with a swimsuit and towel on those days. At the beginning of each summer we participate in the community wide Water Safety Day. This is a time where your child will be swim tested for the summer. We use this information, as well as the information you provide on your registration form, to determine your child's swimming abilities. Children will be given a

wristband with a corresponding level indicator before each field trip. This helps our staff, as well as pool staff, know where that child can participate while at the pool. If you miss the scheduled water safety day, you will be given other opportunities to bring your child in to be tested or your child will automatically be given a red band.

Other YMCA Program Opportunities

Our YMCA Youth Development department, and other partners, will offer various experiences throughout the year; such as, but not limited to, Sports of All Sorts (summer), Basketball Club, Wacky Science and Cooking Club etc. You will be notified ahead of time, and given the opportunity to register when they are available to your child. All payments for these activities will be billed to your Tuition Express account.

Rest Time/Chill Time

Rest time is regularly scheduled each afternoon for all preschool age children. Each child may bring the approved items as stated in the *Toys, Blankets and Rest Time Items Policy*. A cot will be provided for each child. We do not require the children to sleep, but they should stay on their cot and lay quietly for 30 minutes. We require guardians to sign an authorization form so that staff of the YMCA may rub the child's back to ease them into a nap. (See the registration form.) After approximately 30-45 minutes, children who are finished resting may do quiet activities until rest time is over. Infant nap time is handled on an individual basis according to their schedule.

Chill Time is a time to rest, or just relax. We do this for up to a one hour period for all School Age programs during non-school days and summer programming.

Infant Sleeping Policy

All infants under the age of twelve months will be placed flat on their backs for sleep in a safety-approved crib or playpen. If guardians request that their infant is placed in an alternative sleep position or in another device/equipment for sleep, a written order from a health care provider is required stating the medical reason and the time frame to follow the order, as well as written permission. This includes swings, car seats, high chairs, or other equipment not certified for infant sleep. Programs have the right to refuse care if they do not feel comfortable following the request.

Pets

Some sites may have small pets or fish in their classrooms or programs. You will be notified if your child's site has a pet. Please inform your child's caregiver if your child is allergic to any pet in particular. Children may not bring their own pets for a visit unless they can show their pet has the proper vaccinations and there are no allergies in the classroom. Please contact the site director/coordinator for more information.



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Parent/Guardian Information



Parent/Guardian Information

Connecting with Families

Quality child care includes an open line of communication between the family and the program. Families will have access to program phone numbers and Director/ Coordinator contact information. In addition, listed below are other ways our programs will share information with you:

- A monthly newsletter and/or calendar describing program activities and events, announcements, items of interest and other general happenings will be sent out. Please be sure to check your parent mailbox daily for other reminders and announcements so you are always in the know.
- A parent engagement app will be provided. This is a place to see regular updates, photos and videos of your child's daily experiences. We will also use this as another messaging tool to communicate pertinent information to you. Be sure to sign up for this app at enrollment time. Your Site Director/ Coordinator can help you with this at any time.
- Advisory Committee may be an opportunity for you to play an active role in your child's program. If this is something you are interested in please contact your Site Director/ Coordinator.
- ProCare is a tool we use to post messages at the time of signing in/out, and to send out emails to families. Please be sure to read these carefully, as this is also how your billing statement is sent to you. Be sure to check your junk mail if you feel you are not receiving these.
- Monday Memos are sent out weekly in our School Age programs. These include information about weekly happenings and reminders.
- Daily Boards are used in our Early Learning programs. Check these at pick up time to see what your child has been up to each day.

Families Are Welcome at Any Time!

Families are welcome visitors to our programs at all times. We hope that parents/guardians will attend family functions, help with classroom projects or attend field trips with us. We also encourage you to help with swimming or schedule lunch with your child occasionally. Just give us a call to enable us to prepare for your lunch time visit.

Conferences

Conferences or Parent Meetings may be called upon by the request of the program staff or the guardians. Parent/Teacher conferences will be offered two times per year in the Early Childhood Program to go over your child's progress. Although our staff would love to visit with you daily, it may not always be possible as they may be working with other children, or gone for the day. If you have a specific question or concern please contact your child's teacher or Site Director/ Coordinator.

Grievance Procedure for Guardians

If you have a grievance concerning something regarding our program, you should refer to the following procedure. If you do not feel that you have reached satisfaction, then you must continue through the process stopping when you feel you have satisfaction on the matter. Final decision lies with the President of the YMCA.

1. Site Coordinator, Teacher or Room Leader of your child, as appropriate.
2. Site Directors or School Age Directors
3. Learning Center Program Director
4. VP of Learning Center Programs
5. Write a letter of Grievance that will be reviewed by Learning Center Committee

It is unacceptable for guardians to discipline another child in the program if that child has done something inappropriate. Please refer the matter to the staff in charge of the child at that time. Please note that our YMCA Learning Centers work with multiple Licensors. The contact information for the licensors, is available upon request.

Toileting

We encourage children to use the toilet by themselves. We would like all children to be completely potty trained and independent prior to transitioning to a preschool room. As a best practice we do not allow cloth diapers in our programs. Diapers and/or Pull-ups are not allowed outside of the toddler room.

Breastfeeding Policy

The YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties Early Learning Programs are committed to provide ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. We will provide the opportunity and location to breastfeed your child throughout the day and hold off giving a bottle, if possible, when mom is due to arrive. Formula and solid foods will not be provided unless the mother has requested. Babies will be held closely when feeding and bottles will never be propped. Breastfeeding mothers may store their expressed milk in the program refrigerator. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with the infant's name and date. The program will follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Programs for Disease Control in ensuring that breast milk is properly handled to avoid waste.



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Health & Safety Information



Health and Safety Information

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA)

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) teaches children how to make healthy food choices, and to enjoy physical activity, contributing to their social and physical development. Our YMCA has committed to meeting these nationally recognized standards. For more information about the HEPA standard, and to learn more visit www.ymca.net/hepa .

Physical Activity: We provide a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity in our half day programs, and 60 minutes of physical activity in our full day programs. Activity is a blend of moderate and vigorous levels of physical play, and will take place both indoors and out. This will also include age appropriate physical movement for infants. Y staff will model active living related to physical activity by being fully engaged with the children.

Screen Time: Screen time in our programs is very limited. When screen time is used, it is with the intention of enhancing our educational lessons. There is no screen time for Infant and Toddler and 3 year old age groups.

Food: Meal and snack times are presented in a family style manner intended to make meal time a pleasant social experience that is positive and enjoyable. Children are offered all of the foods on our menu and are encouraged, but not required, to try them. Our nutrition program includes educational activities that promote proper nutrition and meet the ND Department of Health and USDA requirements. Menus are posted on the Parent Information board. Y staff will model healthy eating behaviors at all times. This includes consuming the same foods and beverages as children during program times.

We provide all meals for **breakfast, lunch** and **snack**. (We do not provide breakfast at schools that offer a breakfast program.) If your child has special dietary needs or food allergies, please contact your site director/coordinator. We will work to accommodate your request(s) by providing a food modification form that must be signed by physician or provide the doctor order. We encourage children to eat the foods provided and try new foods. Our menu includes whole grains, fruits and fresh vegetables. We avoid fruit juices and all other sugary beverages by serving skim milk or water at every meal. For this reason, we do not allow parents to bring food for their child. We do encourage your child to try new foods. Infants are fed according to their needs and schedules. We will provide Parent's Choice formula and baby foods. Guardians must provide formula if different from our choice in an unopened, sealed container.

We ask that the children do not bring gum, candy treats or food to the program. The YMCA is a Sweet Free, Treat Free, and Nut Free facility. If your child would like to share a birthday or special occasion treat, they must be store bought and meet our Sweet Free, Treat Free, and Nut Free Policy. Please inform the staff of what you are bringing, and please keep in mind that we like to have the children learn good nutrition habits when you are choosing your treat.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race,

color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) [found online](#) at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

(2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Biting

Although biting is common in a group setting of young children, when it happens it is impactful to both families and staff. The staff will work with families to understand why children bite and take measures to prevent any potential occurrences from happening. They do this by supervising children carefully, reacting quickly when children are in dispute (paying extra attention to children who have been known to bite), providing enough toys, activities and space to minimize frustration, providing teethingers to children who are teething, and meeting children's needs promptly before they become frustrated. If a bite should occur, staff will notify parents at pick up time. If a bite should occur and breaks the skin, staff will notify parents immediately. If a child establishes a pattern of biting, staff will work with families to develop an action plan.

Water Safety Policy

Per licensing in the state of North Dakota, each child must have a water activity permission slip on file for the current year. Children enrolled at YMCA child care programs may participate in the following types of water activities depending on children's ages: wading pool/public swimming pool/splash pad/sprinkler/water table/lake or manmade beach. Child to staff ratios will be maintained at all times during water activities. Children will be kept in sight at all times and staff will not be involved in any other activity other than direct supervision of children during these times. Children in diapers are required to wear diapers designed for swimming/water activities. Children with diarrhea or open sores will not be allowed to participate in water activities.

Medications

Prescribed medications brought to the program must be in the original container, be current and labeled with your child's full name. No substitute containers will be allowed. A medication release form must be filled out completely and signed by a guardian before a medication is given.

Instructions on the form must match the instructions on the container exactly. Please ask your teacher for assistance. A note from a doctor outlining the purposes of the medication, recommended dosage and the length of time that it is to be given must accompany all non-prescription medications. Medication will be placed out of the reach of children.

Cough syrup, acetaminophen or other over the counter medications will not be administered at the program without a doctor's note. (Talk to your director about over the counter drugs for teething, immunizations or runny noses.) We will not allow cough drops because they pose a choking hazard.

Child Sickness Policy

Our goal is to provide a full day of activities for your child. If your child is not feeling well, they may take longer to feel better and they may have a very unpleasant day at the program. We ask that you keep your child home until they are well enough to participate in all activities, including gym, outdoor play and swimming. Our health policies will not be superseded by a doctor's authorization for attendance. A child may not be contagious and yet not be well enough to attend a full day of care. If a child is sick at school, they may not attend afterschool care. Children with any of the following symptoms will not be permitted to attend the program, as these symptoms can compromise the health and safety of other children:

- Fever of 101°F or greater until the temperature is normal for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- Uncontrolled, persistent coughing; wheezing; difficulty breathing.
- Chicken pox until no new pox are developing and all pox are crusted over and dry (typically six days).
- Impetigo until treated for 24 hours or unless covered
- Vomiting of two or more episodes until 24 hours have passed from the last episode and the child can keep food down. One episode if other symptoms are present or if child has recent history of a head injury.
- Strep throat until the child has been on medication for 24 hours.
- Rash or unusual skin conditions until a physician documents that the child is not contagious.
- Evidence of lice or nits until all nits and lice have been removed and the home and clothing has been cleaned. Must be Nit Free before returning to program
- Diarrhea if it is not contained in the diaper (unless child is teething); or if it causes accidents for toilet-trained children; or if bowel movement frequency exceeds two or more stools above normal for the child; until the child has a normal stool or 24 hours have passed since the last episode.

If a doctor diagnoses an infection and places your child on prescription medication, your child may not be brought back to the program until he/she has taken the medication for at least 24 hours (ear and urinary tract infections excluded depending on the child's condition). In order to return to programming, your child must be able to participate in all program activities. Our policy is that if the child is well enough to be at the program they are well enough to go outside and participate in all activities.

If your child becomes ill while at the program, we will call you immediately. If you cannot be reached or an hour has passed, we will call the emergency person indicated on your child's authorization form. We will try to keep your child as comfortable as possible until you arrive. We will notify you if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease such as chicken pox, pink eye, or strep throat. We will post this information in a pertinent area in the program. Please notify the program if your child contracts any of these illnesses so that we can notify other families in the program.

Handwashing Standards

To help control the spread of germs and disease we follow these standards.

Hands are washed:

- Upon arrival to classroom
- Before and after all meals
- Dispensing of medication
- Before food preparation (including bottles)
- Setting tables
- After Toileting
- After sneezing, coughing, or wiping runny noses
- After diapering
- Coming in from outside or playing in gym
- Before and after using sensory table

Sanitizing/Disinfecting

All toys are washed at a minimum each week or when dirty. Infant/ Toddler toys are sanitized after being mouthed. Toilets, sinks and bathrooms are cleaned and disinfected daily. Tables are sanitized before and after each meal. Blankets and sleep toys are sent home each week for cleaning. Cots are disinfected each day and between uses. Floors are swept and vacuumed daily.

Child Abuse and Neglect Procedures

All YMCA Learning Center staff members are mandatory child abuse reporters. Suspected cases of child abuse or neglect must be reported to the Department of Human Services. Staff members may directly report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the North Dakota Department of Human Services and will complete all necessary paperwork. The staff member should inform the director or coordinator and they will help you through this process.

If a Learning Center staff member is accused of abuse and/or neglect by a parent or co-worker, such an accusation will be reported to the Director and a determination will be made as to whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse and/or neglect. If there is reasonable cause, a report must be made to the Department of Human Services (DHS). YMCA Learning Center will cooperate with any DHS investigation. In addition, the accused staff member will be informed of the allegations and be given an opportunity to respond to those allegations. Staff person "accused" will be removed from ratio until investigation is completed. Termination of employment after a child abuse allegation and investigation is at the discretion of the YMCA. The following is regarding mandated reporters and reporting abuse, as stated in our staff Handbook:

Reporting Abuse:

You are mandated to report any indication of, suspicion of, or warning signs concerning abuse or a violation of this policy.

- Concerns of child abuse should be reported to the County Authorities. Their phone numbers are listed on a poster in each child care area.
- Concerns of child abuse and any other violation of this position should be reported to your supervisor
- Results of these incidences will be shared with the appropriate staff and parents.

General:

- You will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others at all time while in the presence of children, parents, and staff. (This includes kisses and long hugs.)
- You will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture.
- No pet names such as: honey, sweetie, cutie, etc.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
- You will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
- Under no circumstances should you release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA).
- You are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.

First Aid procedures/Accident procedures

All staff are certified in First Aid and CPR. We will provide basic first aid for your child in the event that it is necessary. We will not remove splinters, wood ticks, etc. We will apply ice, clean the injured area as best as possible and apply a Band-Aid if necessary. We are not able to put any creams, gels, or any type of antibiotic ointments on the injury, due to possible skin allergies and adverse reactions.

A form authorizing emergency medical care for your child is signed at the time of enrollment. In case of an emergency, you will be called. If our program staff is not able to reach you, we will attempt to notify the emergency contact(s) indicated on your child's authorized form. If we feel the child needs medical attention and we are unable to reach the family or emergency contacts, we will call EMS to transport them for further medical attention.



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General Information



General Information

Building Access and Security

At the YMCA, we have many locations between our main sites and school-based programs. Each site has their own access and security procedures. Please see your Site Director or Coordinator for building access and security policies.

Parent Board/ Parent Mailboxes

In each program and/or classroom a parent board is displayed. Our parent boards are a wealth of information about our programs, safety information, upcoming events and highlights from your program/classroom. Parent mailboxes should be checked regularly for important news and information.

Social Media

For privacy purposes, we ask that you not post pictures of children from our programs on your social media platforms. These pictures may be taken innocently at school and program events, but not all families provide photo release consent. Note that the YMCA does not condone posting pictures of children without written permission from a parent.

Staff Babysitting Policy

As a client of the YMCA, you are notified that the YMCA supervises its employees and programs within the confines of the facilities under the policies of the YMCA and the programs approved and managed by the YMCA. The employees of the YMCA are not supervised by the YMCA during their off-duty hours and are not acting within the scope of their employment. If you would like an employee to baby-sit for you, please ask for a Babysitting Authorization Form at your site. After completing the form, you may give to the site director/coordinator.

Birthdays and Celebrations

We like to make each child feel special on his or her birthday and we welcome you bringing healthy snacks for your child's birthday. We follow the YMCA's HEPA standards, please see that policy for more information. Birthday celebrations and other special events can be celebrated with the following options: Stickers, veggies, low fat yogurt, fat free pudding cups, sugar free Jell-O, pencils, mini Playdough, book, string cheese etc. For health and sanitary reasons, we require that all treats be store bought.

Since children have a difficult time when they are not invited to parties, we ask that you either invite everyone in the class, or discuss options with your Site Director/Coordinator.

Christmas, Kwanzaa, winter celebrations, events of the world (such as the Olympics), Hanukkah, Halloween, July 4th, Valentine's Day, and Thanksgiving are times when we often have program parties. Parents and guardians are encouraged to help us celebrate these days and any other times that are important to your family. We are always looking for other cultural and ethnic celebrations that we could include in our program. Please share your customs and traditions with your teachers/leaders.

Parking

When parking at the YMCA, please turn your vehicle off. For safety reasons, we highly discourage leaving your vehicle idling. Parking can be an issue at certain times at our locations. To ensure the safety of the children, please drive extremely carefully in our lots. Each site has specific drop off and pick up areas. Ask your Site Director/Coordinator for further information.

Lost and Found

The YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. We make every effort to help teach your child responsibility to keep all of their belongings in order. At our main locations we will have a lost and found location for any items that are found. At our school-based locations, any found items will be placed in the school's lost and found. Items not claimed within a reasonable amount of time will be donated.

Liability Insurance

Our programs are covered under liability insurance in case of a major accident or incident involving your child. Your insurance would be required to cover injuries for your child, as the YMCA coverage is secondary. Your insurance coverage would include the calling of 911 and other emergency room care needed for your child.

Release of Information

If you would like information to be released to another person, ask you director for a Release of Information authorization form. This is appropriate for courts, schools, counselors or agencies. We will require the same information if a request is made to us for any information.

Fire Procedures

In case of a fire during the program, we will ensure all children are out of the building safely and accounted for. The program has an evacuation plan posted by the exit at each location. Fire drills are done once per month at alternate times.

Tornado Procedures

In case of a tornado warning, the children will be sheltered. Each location has specific shelter areas. We practice tornado drills in the months of April through September.

Lock Down Procedures

When instructed by the authorities or when necessary, we will lock down the program until a dangerous or questionable situation has subsided in the neighborhood, school or community. We will not be able to notify parents in most cases of the event until the lockdown has ended. We do lock down drills during the year with the children.

Smoking Policy

The YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties prohibits smoking at YMCA facilities and on YMCA grounds. In addition, staff are prohibited from smoking during work hours.

Gun Policy

The YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties prohibits carrying concealed weapons and firearms of any kind at YMCA facilities and on YMCA grounds.

Sex Offenders

Sex offenders are not allowed into the Early and School Age Learning Program regardless if they are a guardian or relative.