



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CHILD PROTECTION

Policies & Procedures

YMCA of Delaware

At the Y, we are committed to providing kids with a safe and positive experience as we nurture community and encourage the joy of being active! Parents place their trust in the Y to help their children thrive. Our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are part of everything we do.

Because of this, we place great value on creating the most child-safe environments possible. We believe when staff members, volunteers, & parents are well informed about safety protocols, it greatly assists our constant vigilance of all who have potential access to children.

The zero-tolerance YMCA policies in this document are regularly communicated with staff members, volunteers, and parents. All YMCA members are regularly encouraged to report any deviation from these policies immediately. As a YMCA staff member or volunteer, your understanding and enforcement of these policies and procedures is essential to keeping kids safe at the Y!

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YMCA of Delaware Code of Conduct

To protect YMCA staff members, volunteers, and program participants, all staff members and volunteers must adhere to the code of conduct. While the YMCA does not discriminate against an individual's lifestyle, it does require that staff members and volunteers abide by the standards of conduct set forth by the YMCA in the performance of their job.

Staff members & volunteers are expected to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Never be alone with a single child where you cannot be observed by others at the YMCA or during a YMCA program. Children should be supervised in a manner that allows staff members and volunteers to see one another. 2. Never leave a child assigned to your care unsupervised. 3. Ensure that restrooms are not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff members and volunteers (not being alone with a child). • If assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. • No child regardless of age should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. • Always take children in groups of at least three. • Volunteers should refrain from supervising restroom activities. 4. Conduct or supervise private activities in pairs (diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc.). When this is not feasible, staff members and volunteers should be positioned so that they are visible to others. 5. Use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Expectations, guidelines, and environment minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), is only administered in a prescribed manner and must be documented in writing. 6. Conduct a health check of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Any questionable marks or responses will be documented. 7. Respond to all, adults and children alike, with respect and consideration and treat all equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Respect children's rights to not be touched, stared at or commented about, in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit. 9. Appear clean, neat, appropriately attired and present yourself in a respectful and positive manner. 10. Be free of physical, emotional, or psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted. 11. Act as positive role models for youth and are expected to maintain an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity. 12. Read, sign and abide by all policies including those related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and must follow all mandatory reporting requirements. The YMCA cooperates fully with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse. Any staff members or volunteer shall cooperate to the fullest extent possible in any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by the YMCA of Delaware or persons given investigative authority by the YMCA of Delaware. Failure to cooperate fully may be grounds for termination. 13. Stop the mistreatment or abuse of one youth by another youth. In addition, the YMCA of Delaware will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such behaviors are disruptive, will take steps to eliminate such behavior. 14. Report concerns or complaints about other staff members, volunteers, adults, or youth to your YMCA supervisor or to Ethics Point's anonymous hotline at 1-866-294-4337. 15. Successfully complete all required training before working a shift/class/practice or any hours other than time to complete the training. 16. Act in a manner consistent with Y values in all aspects of life.
Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engaging in child abuse including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical abuse – striking, spanking, shaking, slapping • verbal abuse – humiliating, degrading, threatening • sexual abuse – inappropriate touch or verbal exchange • mental abuse – shaming, withholding love, cruelty • neglect – withholding food, water, basic care, etc. • <i>Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.</i> 2. Being alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to your home. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to approval by the Vice President of Human Resources. 3. Keeping secrets with youth and will only give gifts with prior permission. 4. Engaging in intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, and staff. 5. Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol during working hours. Should alcohol be served or available at sponsored events or business meals, employees are expected to act responsibly. 6. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs during working hours 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Smoking or use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents during working hours. 8. Engaging in any private electronic communication between staff/volunteers and youth, including the use of social networking websites and from posting pictures of members under the age of 18 without written permission from parents/guardians & Branch Executive. 9. Using profanity, telling inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personnel life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents. 10. Transporting YMCA children in their own vehicles and when in YMCA vehicles will follow, at minimum, the two adults or the three-person rule. 11. Releasing, under any circumstances, children to anyone other than their authorized parent, guardian, or other adult listed on their written parent authorization on file with the YMCA. 12. Dating program participants under 18 years of age. 13. Retaliating toward an employee, volunteer or member who has reported any policy violation or reports a violation under federal or state laws. 14. Being convicted of youth abuse, indecency with youth, or injury to a youth.

Staff members and volunteers should refer to this document for additional guidance on acceptable and unacceptable practices and seek advice from their YMCA supervisor for further clarification.

II. General Definitions

A. Types of abuse

1. Physical abuse is injury that is intentionally inflicted upon a youth.
2. Sexual abuse is any contact of a sexual nature that occurs between a youth and an adult or between two youth. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or the other youth.
3. Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to a youth that results in an observable and material impairment in the youth's growth, development, or psychological functioning.
4. Neglect is the failure to provide for a youth's basic needs or the failure to protect a youth from harm.

III. Policies

Policies define the bandwidth of acceptable behavior in the YMCA of Delaware. Because offenders often violate policies to gain access to youth, when staff members and volunteers know and understand policies, they can identify, interrupt, and report policy violations. Simply interrupting a policy violation can prevent a false allegation of abuse or put an offender on notice that no one works in private, the rules apply to everyone, and violations will be detected.

A. Physical Contact

The YMCA of Delaware’s physical contact policy promotes a positive, nurturing environment while protecting youth, staff members and volunteers. The YMCA of Delaware encourages appropriate physical contact with youth and prohibits inappropriate displays of physical contact. Any inappropriate physical contact by staff members or volunteers towards youth in the YMCA of Delaware’s programs will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The YMCA of Delaware’s policies for appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions are:

Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Pats on the shoulder or back • Handshakes • High-fives and hand slapping • Verbal praise • Pats on the head when culturally appropriate • Touching hands, shoulders, and arms • Arms around shoulders • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-frontal hugs • Kisses • Showing affection in isolated area • Lap sitting • Wrestling • Piggyback rides • Tickling • Allowing a youth to cling to an employee’s or volunteer’s leg • Any type of massage given by or to a youth • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the youth or the staff member or volunteer • Compliments relating to physique or body development • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas except as required for diapering

B. Verbal Interaction

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from speaking to youth in a way that is, or could be construed by any observer, as harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Staff members and volunteers must not initiate sexually oriented conversations with youth. Staff members and volunteers are not permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with youth.

The YMCA of Delaware’s policies for appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions are:

Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive reinforcement• Appropriate jokes• Encouragement• Praise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name-calling• Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving youth in the personal problems or issues of staff members and volunteers• Secrets• Cursing• Off-color or sexual jokes• Shaming• Belittling• Derogatory remarks• Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate youth• Derogatory remarks about the youth or his/her family

C. One-on-One Interaction

Most abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a youth. The YMCA of Delaware aims to eliminate or reduce these situations and prohibits private one-on-one interactions unless approved in advance by the YMCA of Delaware administration.

In those situations where one-on-one interactions are approved, staff members and volunteers should observe the following additional guidelines to manage the risk of abuse or false allegations of abuse:

Guidelines for One-on-One Interactions

- When meeting one-on-one with a youth, always do so in a public place where you are in full view of others.
- Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted. Limit affection to pats on the shoulder, high-fives, and handshakes.
- If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by.
- Inform other staff members and volunteers that you are alone with a youth and ask them to randomly drop in.
- Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

1. Tutoring/ Private Coaching:

One-on-one situations, such as tutoring and private coaching sessions, introduce additional risks for false allegations. Staff members and volunteers should be aware of our policies regarding tutoring and private coaching:

- a. Staff members and volunteers must have supervisor approval for any tutoring or private coaching sessions.
- b. Tutoring and coaching sessions with the YMCA of Delaware's youth may not occur outside of the YMCA of Delaware.
- c. Supervisors must keep a schedule of private tutoring and coaching sessions, which should include times, youth involved, and location of sessions.

2. Unplanned One-on-One Interactions:

While the YMCA of Delaware strives to avoid opportunities for staff members or volunteers to be left alone with one child, circumstances may arise where this may occur. In those circumstances, the staff member or volunteer should:

- a. Move to an open, public area where they can be viewed by others.
- b. Immediately contact a supervisor by phone if no other adults are within view. Under these circumstances, a phone or video call is the preferred method of contact. The supervisor should remain on the call with the staff member or volunteer until they are no longer alone with only one child.
- c. Supervisors must document the circumstances that caused the one-on-one situation to occur and take steps to prevent a recurrence.

D. Off-site Contact

Many cases of organizational abuse occur off-site and outside of regularly scheduled activities. This contact outside of regularly scheduled activities may put staff members, volunteers, and the YMCA of Delaware at increased risk.

The YMCA of Delaware prohibits interactions outside of regularly scheduled program activities unless approved by the YMCA of Delaware's Administration.

Appropriate Outside Contact	Inappropriate Outside Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking groups of youth on an outing• Attending sporting activities with groups of youth• Attending functions at a youth's home, with parents present	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking one youth on an outing without the parents' written permission• Visiting one youth in the youth's home, without a parent present• Entertaining one youth in the home of staff members or volunteers• A lone youth spending the night with staff members or volunteers

In addition, when outside contact is unavoidable, or when a relationship with a YMCA youth member exists prior to YMCA employment or volunteer service, staff members and volunteers may request an exception to the YMCA's off-site contact policy. To do so, the following steps must be followed:

1. Staff members and volunteers should immediately report any need for outside contact or pre-existing relationships with youth to their supervisors. Supervisors should discuss the contact or relationship with the staff member or volunteer and review the YMCA's off-site contact expectations.
2. Staff members or volunteers wishing to continue the off-site contact or relationship must submit the request in writing to the supervisor.
3. Supervisors should forward the request for outside contact to the Vice President of Human Resources at the Association Office.
4. The Director of Risk Management will review the request and issue a response. To properly process the request, additional information may be required.
5. Such requests will not be approved until the YMCA obtains the parents' permission to engage in outside contact with the youth by requiring the parents to sign a release-of-liability statement.

E. Electronic Communication

Any private electronic communication between staff member or volunteers and youth, including the use of social networking websites like - Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, instant messaging, texting, etc. - is prohibited. All communication between staff members, volunteers, and youth must be transparent.

The following are examples of appropriate and inappropriate electronic communication:

Appropriate Electronic Communication	Inappropriate Electronic Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sending and replying to emails and text messages from youth ONLY when copying in a supervisor or the youth's parent• Communicating through "YMCA of Delaware group pages" on Facebook or other approved public forums• "Private" profiles for staff members and volunteers which youth cannot access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating comments• Sexually oriented conversations• Private messages between staff members and/or volunteers with youth• Posting pictures of YMCA of Delaware participants on social media sites• Posting inappropriate comments on pictures• "Friending" participants on social networking sites

In addition, the YMCA of Delaware provides this information to parents so that they know what is considered appropriate and inappropriate electronic communication.

1. Cell Phone & Other Electronic Device Use:

While assigned to work with youth, staff members and volunteers are not permitted to use electronic communications device except for approved business uses (sign in out, file access, etc.) and during approved breaks and emergency situations. Internet use, text messaging and/or emailing pictures while assigned to work with youth is strictly prohibited regardless of the type of device used and whether for business or personal reasons. Employees need to ensure that friends and family members are aware of this policy.

Contacting YMCA of Delaware members and/or program participants for personal and/ or inappropriate reasons shall be grounds for discipline up to and including termination of employment.

2. Acceptable Use of Cell Phones & Other Electronic Device During Program Hours:

There are occasions in which staff members and volunteers will need to use personal or YMCA of Delaware issued electronic communication devices. In these cases, staff members and volunteers will have explicit direction from supervisors governing use. Situations which may require use of YMCA of Delaware issued or personal electronic communication devices include:

- a. Sign In/Out
- b. Field Trips
- c. Off-site Programs
- d. Emergencies

F. Gift Giving

Molesters routinely groom youth by giving gifts, thereby endearing themselves to the youth. They might instruct the youth to keep the gifts a secret, which then starts teaching the youth to keep secrets from parents. For this reason, staff members and volunteers should only give gifts to groups of youth, and only under the following circumstances:

1. Administration must be made aware of and approve the gift.
2. Parents must be notified.

IV. Monitoring and Supervision

When staff members and volunteers are adequately supervised, potential offenders are less likely to act on their impulses because they face detection. When youth are adequately supervised, they too are less likely to engage in inappropriate interactions with others. Similarly, the facility must be monitored, particularly out-of-the-way locations or locations that might permit an offender undue access to or privacy with a youth. Effective supervision and monitoring require that a variety of methods be used frequently, at both scheduled and random times.

A. Facility Monitoring

Building architecture can increase or mitigate the risk of an incident or accident. Because most incidents of sexual behavior occur in private, the extent to which privacy is managed, risk is managed. Designated staff members must complete a site inspection checklist to ensure that all the locations are properly and consistently monitored.

B. Checking Members into a Facility:

1. When anyone (members, guests, residents, construction workers, maintenance, cleaning crews, etc.) enters the facility during operational hours, they must check in with the front desk.
2. When possible, create a single point of entry and exit in the facility. If there is more than one entrance or exit, ensure these other points of access are consistently monitored.
3. All unmonitored entry/exit doors must be locked & secure at all times.

C. General Supervision

General supervision procedures:

1. **Administrative and Supervisory Visits to Youth Programs**– Youth supervisors and administrators regularly visit all youth programs to ensure that all activities are well-managed and that youth policies are observed by all in attendance.
2. **Ratios**– Each program will follow the ratio requirements that are directly related to the goals of the program and the design of the program area. The staff or volunteer-to-youth ratio should be adjusted for programs that serve youth with special needs. Refer to the YMCA of Delaware’s Standards page for expected adult-to-youth ratios.
3. **Mixed Age Groups**– In most incidents involving one youth abusing another youth, the youth are from different age groups. Each program is responsible for establishing specific guidelines for additional monitoring and supervision of activities that involve youth from different age groups. Staff members and volunteers must be aware that close line of sight supervision is required when monitoring programs that mixed age groups.

D. Inclusive Environment

At the Y, we know communities can be safe, vital and cohesive, because we have seen it happen — indeed, we have helped make it happen, by respecting all people and creating welcoming environments. As such, the YMCA of Delaware will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one youth by another youth. In addition, The YMCA of Delaware will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, we will take steps needed to eliminate such behavior.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

1. Physical bullying – when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
2. Verbal bullying – when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
3. Nonverbal or relational bullying – when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
4. Cyberbullying – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
 - a. Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
 - b. Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
 - c. Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
 - d. Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
5. Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person’s willingness to participate.
6. Sexualized bullying – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying.

E. Monitoring Youth in Facilities

The YMCA of Delaware does not allow youth under the age of 12 to be alone in the facility without a parent or guardian present unless they are participating in a supervised YMCA program or activity. When dropping youth off to a YMCA program, the YMCA of Delaware expects parents and guardians to follow each program's drop off and pick up procedures. For programs that use informal sign in procedures, the YMCA of Delaware recommends that parents and guardians escort their child to and from program activities until the child is at least 12 years old. By this age, most youth have had the experience of being without immediate parental supervision. In addition, 12-year-old youth are able to use self-protection skills if they are approached inappropriately by another youth or by an adult.

Because the YMCA is responsible for all youth in the facility, we require the following practices:

1. A parent or legal guardian must complete a membership application which includes identifying information, any special medical or behavioral circumstances, any legal indemnifications, the youth's date of birth, and emergency contact information. In addition, all youth must sign-in into the facility and/ or program each time they visit.
2. All youth & parents must sign the YMCA of Delaware Behavior Expectations & Procedures which outlines the YMCA's expectations regarding appropriate and inappropriate interactions and also include a systematic disciplinary policy which explains that youth will be suspended or dismissed from the program for policy violations.
3. While in the facility, youth may be supervised directly, indirectly, or with a combination of the two techniques.
 - e. For direct supervision, the program may offer structured, scheduled activities like basketball tournaments, swimming activities, arts and crafts, etc. These activities should have one or more staff members and/or volunteers assigned to lead and supervise.
 - f. For indirect supervision, the program must designate certain building areas as authorized areas. Authorized areas could include a gymnasium, a game area, or a classroom for doing homework and so on. Authorized areas must be easily visible and routinely and systematically checked by staff members. Youth should know that they will be supervised by staff members at all times, and all staff members should know which areas are authorized and which are not.
4. YMCA Directors must develop supervision standards for the authorized areas. For example:
 - a. Determine how frequently authorized areas should be monitored by staff.
 - b. Assign staff members specific supervision responsibilities over authorized areas.
 - c. Require staff members to record when they monitor authorized areas with checklists or other methods.
5. All program staff members and volunteers must wear nametags and/or identifying clothing so that the youth can easily recognize them as staff.
6. Train all staff members and volunteers:
 - a. To greet youth that enter the facility; to direct youth to the structured activities or authorized areas; and, to redirect youth who are not in an authorized area or who are not participating in a structured activity.
 - b. To be aware of the risks involved with mixing age groups and how to monitor activities involving mixed age groups.
 - c. To routinely monitor high risk areas (such as bathrooms, locker rooms, and unused rooms). Specific staff members should be designated to supervise these areas (i.e., Managers on Duty). These staff members should document the scheduled and periodic sweeps of high risk locations.

F. Monitoring High Risk Activities

Most incidents of youth-to-youth abuse occur in the bathrooms and locker rooms. Therefore, the following supervision guidelines are recommended:

1. Bathroom Activities

When supervising restroom use, adult staff members should first quickly scan the bathroom before allowing youth to enter.

- a. For "Group Bathroom Breaks":
 - Staff members take groups of two or more youth to the bathroom – following the "rule of three" or more.
 - If the bathroom only has one stall, only one youth should enter the restroom while the others wait outside with the staff member.
 - If there are multiple stalls, only send in as many youth as there are stalls.
 - Minimize youth of different ages using the bathroom at the same time.
 - Staff members must stand outside the bathroom door, but remain within earshot.
- b. For bathrooms within a classroom:
 - Require youth to ask permission to use the bathroom.
 - Require all staff members to frequently check bathrooms.
 - Staff members must stand outside the bathroom door, but remain within earshot.
- c. Staff members are prohibited from using the bathroom at the same time as youth.
- d. If assisting younger youth in the stalls, the staff members should keep the door to the stall open.

2. Diapering and Toileting Young Children

Caring for young children necessitates additional safety measures to protect staff members and children when staff members change diapers or assist with toileting.

- a. For diapering
 - Place the changing table in an open area where adult actions can be observed by others.
 - Diapers may only be changed when at least two adults are present or staff are otherwise observable.
 - Staff members must document each diaper change in writing on the child's daily sheet or other approved document.
 - Staff members who notice anything out of the ordinary or concerning while changing the infant's diaper must immediately notify the child's parent/guardian. Staff members working in licensed child care programs must know and follow all licensing requirements having to do with diapering.
- b. For toileting:
 - Staff members must stand in the doorway with the door ajar while children use the restrooms.
 - If staff members must enter the restroom to assist a child, the door to the restroom must remain open.
 - When possible, send in only one child at a time.
 - When not possible, send in only as many children as there are stalls.

3. Locker Room Activities

Locker rooms should be regularly and routinely monitored by assigned YMCA staff members when not supervised by staff in a structured YMCA program.

- a. The locker room procedures include:
 - When supervising locker room activities during structured YMCA programs, staff members must stand within earshot of the locker room when in use by youth.
 - Staff members must intermittently and briefly check inside the locker room so users know the locker room is monitored.
 - Youth of different ages should be discouraged from using locker rooms at the same time.
 - Horseplay, such as towel snapping, is prohibited.
 - When possible, lockers are arranged to minimize unnecessary privacy.

4. Shower Activities

Staff members or volunteers and youth must shower at different times. Create shower schedules that will permit supervision of the youth while staff shower.

- a. While the youth shower, at least one staff member should stand in the bathroom doorway and within earshot of the youth. Ensure that only one youth is in each shower. Shower curtains or other privacy dividers should not go all the way to the floor, so that staff member can easily see how many youth are in each shower stall.

5. Transition Times and Free Times

Transition times and free-choice times (or free times) pose a high risk for incidents because during these times, staff member and volunteers may not be assigned a group of youth to supervise. To decrease the risk of incidents, implement the following procedures:

- a. Youth must remain in line-of-site of staff at all times.
- b. Each program's staff-to-youth ratio must be maintained.
- c. Narrow geographic boundaries should be established in the program areas.
- d. Staff members must be assigned specific areas to supervise ("zone monitoring").
- e. Practices during transition and free times must ensure bathroom monitoring occurs.
- f. Roll calls should be taken for each age group at designated intervals for the program.
- g. Supervisors must conduct periodic check-ins and sweeps of the entire activity area.

6. Playground Activities

The playground procedures require:

- a. Youth must remain in line-of-site of staff members at all times.
- b. Narrow geographic boundaries should be established around the playground area.
- c. Program Directors must provide staff members with specific instructions on how to monitor barriers of supervision (such as storage sheds, playhouses, tunnels, and shrubs).
- d. Staff members must be assigned specific areas to supervise ("zone monitoring").
- e. Practices during playground activities must ensure bathroom monitoring occurs.
- f. Roll calls should be taken for each age group at designated intervals for the program.
- g. Supervisors must conduct periodic check-ins and assessments of the activity period and of the entire activity area.

7. Transportation Activities

Transporting youth may increase the risk of abuse or false allegations of abuse because staff members and volunteers may be alone with a youth or may make unauthorized stops with youth. In addition, transportation activities may provide a time for unsupervised youth to engage in youth-to-youth sexual activity.

- a. When transporting youth for YMCA activities, the following procedures must be followed:
 - Youth may only be transported in YMCA approved vehicles according the YMCA driver policy.
 - All youth on the trip must have a written parent permission form on file. Staff members must take these permission forms and medical releases with them on the trip.
 - Staff members must have a list of the youth on the trip. The staff must take roll when boarding the bus, when leaving the bus, periodically throughout the trip, and then again when boarding the bus.
 - Program staff-to-youth ratios must be maintained at all times. When possible, do not count the driver in the supervision ratio.
 - Staff members must sit in seats that permit maximum supervision. When traveling on a bus, staff should Use the “rule of three” when transporting youth: At least two adults must transport a single youth, or at least two youth must be present if transported by a single adult.
 - Staff members must be spread out throughout the bus.
 - Mixed age groups youth and youth of opposite genders are discouraged from sitting together. When possible, high risk youth are seated by themselves or with a staff member.
 - Drivers are prohibited from making unauthorized stops.
 - Where applicable (such as in mentoring programs), staff must document the beginning and ending time of the trip and the mileage, names of the youth being transported, and the destination.
 - Any unusual circumstances must be documented.
 - Youth must be transported directly to their destination. No unauthorized stops may be made.
- b. When public transportation is used:
 - In addition to the transportation procedures listed above, youth should remain in one area of the bus, if possible.
 - Staff members and volunteers that are assigned to a group must remain with that group on the bus.
 - Take a head count or call roll immediately after entering and leaving the bus.

8. Off-Site Activities

When supervising youth during off-site activities, the following procedures must be followed:

- a. All off-site activities require supervisor approval.
- b. All off-site activities require parental approval.
- c. Each program's staff-to-youth ratio must be maintained.
- d. Requiring staff members, volunteers and youth to be easily identifiable.
- e. Specific bathroom and locker room procedures as applicable to the outing should be reviewed with staff members, volunteers & youth.
- f. Transportation procedures are followed for all off-site activities that require transportation.
- g. Supervisor must regularly observe the off-site activities at scheduled times and random intervals.
- h. Consider specific recommendations based on the location and type of activity (for example, Amusement parks, Water Parks, Arcades, etc.).

9. Overnight Activities

Overnight stays present unique risks to youth, staff members, and volunteers. They often involve changing clothes, groups of both genders and different ages in a more intimate atmosphere than usual, more unstructured activities, and increased supervision demands for staff members and volunteers.

When supervising youth during overnight activities, the following procedures must be followed:

- a. All overnight activities must be documented and approved in writing by the Executive Director.
- b. Program Directors are expected to regularly and randomly observe overnight activities on a scheduled and periodic basis.
- c. The Director should appoint a "lead" staff member to supervise the overnight. A meeting with all staff members and volunteers must be conducted to discuss the unique risks of overnight trips, unique elements of the specific overnight trip and to review the specific policies and procedures.
- d. Provide parents with written information about the overnight activity. All parents must sign a permission slip for their youth to attend the overnight.
- e. Determine the appropriate staff-to-youth ratios before the event and schedule staff accordingly.
- f. Meetings with the group should be hosted in open and observable areas; meetings should not be hosted in staff member, volunteer, or youth rooms.

Overnights at the Facility, except Resident Camps:

- a. Physical boundaries within the YMCA of Delaware must be clearly defined and explained to the youth.
- b. Assign each staff member or volunteer to a specific group of youth to supervise. Each staff member or volunteer should then maintain a role sheet that lists all the youth in his or her group. Head counts and roll checks should be conducted routinely throughout the overnight.
- c. Assign staff members and volunteers to high risk areas in facility, such as the bathrooms, entrances and exits, hallways, etc. If it is not possible to assign specific staff members or volunteers to these areas, assign specific staff members and volunteers to conduct periodic facility "walk-throughs".
- d. With regards to sleeping arrangements, separate the male and female youth into separate rooms and post staff members or volunteers at the entrances and exits to these rooms. If this is not feasible, separate males and females by as much space as possible.
- e. When performing room checks, staff members and volunteers should always go in pairs.
- f. At least one staff member must stay awake overnight.

Overnights at Resident Camp and/or Away from the Facility:

- a. Overnight stays at private homes are prohibited unless approved by the administration.
- b. Physical boundaries at the off-site location must be clearly defined and explained to the youth.
- c. Assign each staff member or volunteer to a specific group of youth to supervise. Each staff member or volunteer should then maintain a role sheet that lists all the youth in his or her group. Head counts and roll checks should be conducted routinely throughout the event.
- d. If in a cabin type setting, the staff member or volunteer should be placed in bunks to maximize supervision around the cabin and in a way that decreases the chances of youth sneaking out (such as by the door).
- e. In hotel rooms, assign youth to rooms based on sex and age. Staff members and volunteers should have their own rooms. If staff members or volunteers must share rooms with youth, they must have their own beds and never change in front of youth.
- f. All staff members and volunteers are to be on duty in the halls or cabins at night until an hour after lights out and all rooms are quiet.

10. Teen Leadership Program

Older youth who participate in teen leadership programs are still youth participants and not staff members or volunteers. Therefore, even though they are often given more responsibility, teens in the leadership programs must be provided with guidelines regarding appropriate behavior, and then supervised accordingly. In addition, staff members and volunteers must understand and recognize that these teens are still youth and not their peers. Therefore, the following procedures are required for teen leadership programs:

- a. A Teen Leader screening process is in place and includes, at least:
 - A standard application
 - An interview with behaviorally based interview questions
 - References (from teachers, counselors, family friends, etc.)
- b. Teen leaders must be trained in their role in programs and on program policies about appropriate and inappropriate interactions. This training should include the following information:
 - Appropriate and inappropriate physical and verbal interactions and the importance of maintaining behavioral boundaries between teen leaders and younger youth and between teen leaders, staff members and volunteers.
 - Prohibiting teen leaders from being one-on-one with youth.
 - Prohibiting teen leaders from escorting youth to the bathrooms.
 - Prohibiting teen leaders from assisting youth with changing their clothes.
- c. The Program Director must ensure a system is in place to monitor the teen leaders.
 - Designate a specific employee or volunteer who oversees the teen leadership program and its participants.
 - Require teen leaders to wear clothing or lanyards that identify them as leaders-in-training and differentiate them from both staff members and volunteers and from younger youth.
 - Require a supervisor to conduct daily check-ins with teen leaders and their program supervisors.
 - Consider requiring teen leaders to keep a log documenting their daily activities and any problems they encounter. The program supervisor should review these logs daily.

G. Supervisors and Administrators Monitoring On-Site and Off-Site Programs

1. **Keep a record.** Document your supervision visits. Include information like your arrival and departure times, which youth and parents were present, and a summary of the information collected. Provide staff members and volunteers with feedback about visits.
2. **Vary your observation times.** Do not develop a predictable pattern of observation. Drop in at different times each day. Occasionally leave and come back immediately.
3. **Arrive before staff members and volunteers.** Check punctuality and the routine that staff members and volunteers follow to prepare for the youth to arrive.
4. **Survey the physical environment.**
 - a. Is this a suitable location for the activity (e.g. size of area for number of youth, ability to supervise all areas used by youth, landscaping that may inhibit supervision)?
 - b. Are unused rooms, offices, storage areas, and closets locked?
 - c. Do windows permit observation into all program areas? Are any objects preventing information observation through windows?
 - d. Are staff identifiable and dressed in appropriate uniforms?
 - e. Are program activities within designated ratios?
 - f. Are staff spread out and actively supervising youth?
 - g. Are you easily viewed by staff? Are youth able to wander off?
 - h. Are youth checked in or signed in according to policy?
 - i. Are there any safety hazards?
5. **Watch activities.**
 - a. Are they planned and organized?
 - b. Are the staff members and volunteers monitoring and supervising effectively? During program activities? During transitions? During free or open play?
 - c. Ask to see the schedule of activities and compare with what is happening?
6. **Observe bathroom and locker room activities.** Observe bathroom and locker room activities to ensure that the staff members and volunteers are complying with the established policies and procedures.
 - a. Are the bathrooms clean?
 - b. Is anyone (adult or youth) loitering in or near the bathrooms?
 - c. Is only one youth allowed per stall?
 - d. When used outside of scheduled breaks do staff follow the rule of three?
7. **Observe Interactions.**
 - a. Are staff actively interacting with youth?
 - b. Are interactions consistent with the abus policies & procedures?
 - c. Do staff greet adults who enter the program space?

V. Responding

Our response to suspicious or inappropriate interactions, policy violations, and incidents or allegations of abuse can dramatically affect the harm to the individuals involved and the damage to the YMCA of Delaware. Once a staff member, volunteer, youth, or parent has expressed a concern or made an allegation about the treatment of a youth, swift and determined action must be taken to reduce any subsequent risk to the youth, to the accused staff member or volunteer, and to the YMCA of Delaware. Therefore, the YMCA of Delaware has established precise, unequivocal requirements for reporting to the authorities and for adhering to a serious-incident response plan.

A. Responding to Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors or Policy Violations

Because the YMCA of Delaware is dedicated to maintaining zero tolerance for abuse, it is imperative that every staff member and volunteer actively participates in the protection of youth. If staff members or volunteers observe any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations on the part of other staff members or volunteers, it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations.

Remember, at the YMCA of Delaware, the policies apply to everyone.

Examples of Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors Between Staff Members/Volunteers and Youth

- Violation of the child protection policies described above
- Seeking private time or one-on-one time with youth
- Buying gifts for individual youth
- Making suggestive comments to youth
- Picking favorites

All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior with youth will be taken seriously. Our procedures will be carefully followed to ensure that the rights of all those involved are protected.

1. Staff and Volunteer Response:

If staff members or volunteers witness suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations from another staff member or volunteer, the staff member or volunteer is instructed to do the following:

Guidelines for Staff Members and Volunteers Responding to Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors and/or Policy Violations

- Interrupt the behavior.
- Report the behavior to a supervisor, director, or other authority.
- If you are not comfortable making the report directly, make it anonymously.
- If the report is about a supervisor or administrator, contact the next level of management.
- Document the report, but do not conduct an investigation.
- Keep reporting until the appropriate action is taken.

2. Supervisor and Administrator Response:

If a supervisor or an administrator receives a report of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations from a staff member or volunteer, the supervisor is instructed to do the following:

Guidelines for Supervisors and Administrators Responding to Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors and/or Policy Violations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report to the next level of administration and determine the appropriate administrator to respond to the concern.• Determine the appropriate response based on the report.• Speak with the staff member or volunteer who has been reported.• Review the file of the staff member or volunteer to determine if similar complaints were reported.• Document the report on an incident report form.• If at any point in gathering information about a report of suspicious or inappropriate behavior, a concern arises about possible abuse, contact the state authorities and file a report.• If appropriate, notify parents and/or guardians.• Advise the person who reported the behavior that the report is being taken seriously.

Based on the information gathered, the following may be required:

- a. Increase monitoring or supervision of the staff member, volunteer, or program.
- b. If policy violations with youth are confirmed, the staff member or volunteer will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and prosecution. Disciplinary action will follow the Progressive Disciplinary Process outlined in the YMCA of Delaware's Employee Handbook.
- c. If more information is needed, interview and/or survey other staff member and volunteers or youth.

3. YMCA of Delaware Response:

After the internal review of the suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations, the YMCA of Delaware will determine what can be done to prevent a reoccurrence, such as:

Guidelines for YMCA of Delaware Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the need for additional supervision.• Review the need for revised policies or procedures.• Review the need for additional training.• Alert others in the YMCA of Delaware.

B. Responding to Suspected Abuse by an Adult

1. Staff Member or Volunteer Response to Abuse:

As required by mandated reporting laws, staff members and volunteers must report any suspected abuse or neglect of a youth—whether on or off YMCA of Delaware property or whether perpetrated by staff members, volunteers, or others—to state authorities. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. A person who mistakenly reports suspected abuse is immune from civil or criminal liability if the report was made in good faith and without malice.

In addition to reporting to state authorities, staff members and volunteers are required to report any suspected or known abuse of youth perpetrated by staff members or volunteers directly to leadership so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims and others who may be at risk. Reports of suspected or known abuse may be made confidentially to immediate supervisors, Directors, or YMCA Administrators, or to Ethics Point's anonymous hotline at 1-866-294-4337.

Guidelines for Staff Members and Volunteers Responding to Incidents or Allegations of Abuse

- If you witness abuse, interrupt the behavior immediately.
- If abuse is disclosed to you, assure the individual disclosing that he or she was correct to tell to you.
- Protect the alleged victim from intimidation, retribution, or further abuse.
- Immediately report the allegation or incident to the proper YMCA of Delaware authorities and the State of Delaware 24 Hour Division of Family Services Child Abuse & Neglect Report Line at 1-800-292-9582.
- Be sure to document the incident, disclosure, or any circumstances causing your suspicion of abuse. State only the facts.
- It is not your job to investigate the incident but it IS your job to report the incident to your supervisor in a timely manner.
- Check back to make sure appropriate steps were taken. If not, report again to your supervisor or the designated YMCA of Delaware authority.

2. Supervisors and Administrators Response to Abuse:

In addition to the above response procedures, supervisors and administrators should ensure the following:

Guidelines for Supervisor and Administrators Responding to Allegations or Incidents of Abuse

- First, determine if the youth is still in danger and if so, take immediate steps to prevent any further harm.
- Gather as much information about the allegation as you can. For example, who made the report, who was allegedly abused, who was the alleged abuser, what was the nature of the alleged abuse, where and when did the alleged abuse occur, etc.
- Accurately record everything you learn in as much detail as you can. Remember your notes may be read by others. Stick to the facts.
- Contact the appropriate local authorities as indicated by your mandatory reporting procedures. Make sure you get a case number and the name and contact information of the person with whom you speak at the reporting agency.
- If the alleged abuse involves a staff member or volunteer, notify the YMCA of Delaware crisis management team and follow the crisis management plan.
- Suspend the accused staff member or volunteer until the investigation is completed.

3. YMCA of Delaware Response:

After the internal review of the suspected abuse by an adult, the YMCA of Delaware will determine what can be done to prevent a reoccurrence, such as:

Guidelines for YMCA of Delaware Response

- Review the need for additional supervision.
- Review the need for revised policies or procedures.
- Review the need for additional training.
- Alert others in the YMCA of Delaware.

C. Responding to Youth-to-Youth Sexual Abuse and Sexualized Behaviors

The thought that one youth may sexually abuse another youth does not occur to many people. Unfortunately, abuse between peers has increased 300% in the past few years. Youth-to-Youth sexual activity and sexualized behaviors often remain unreported in organizations because staff members and volunteers are not comfortable documenting these situations, or may not know how.

1. Youth-to-Youth Interactions:

Most serious incidents of youth-to-youth abuse are preceded by more subtle incidents such as name-calling, taunting, or roughhousing. Interrupting these interactions early and establishing and communicating standards of conduct can keep the program environment safe. The YMCA of Delaware recognizes that the following interactions are high risk and should be prohibited:

Prohibited Youth-to-Youth Interactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hazing• Bullying• Derogatory name-calling• Games of Truth or Dare• Singling out one child for different treatment• Ridicule or humiliation

In order to adequately respond to and track incidents within the YMCA of Delaware, all sexual activity between youth and sexualized behaviors of youth must be consistently documented.

2. Staff Member and Volunteer Response:

Youth-to-youth sexual behaviors can include inappropriate touching, exposing body parts, using sexualized language, making threats of sexual activity, engaging in sexual activity, and similar types of interactions.

If staff members witness youth-to-youth sexual behaviors, they are instructed to follow these guidelines:

Guidelines for Staff Members and Volunteers Responding to Youth-to-Youth Sexual Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you observe sexual activity between youth, you should immediately separate them.• Calmly explain that such interactions are not permitted and separate the youth.• Notify your supervisor.• Complete the necessary paperwork including what you observed and how you responded.• Follow your supervisor's instructions regarding notifying the authorities and informing the parents of the youth involved.• In some cases, if the problem is recurring discipline may be required including not allowing one or both youth to return to the program.

3. Supervisors and Administrators Response:

If a supervisor or administrator receives a report of a youth's sexualized behavior or youth-to youth sexual activity, the supervisor should do the following:

Guidelines for Supervisors and Administrators Responding to Youth-to-Youth Sexual Activity

- Meet with the staff member or volunteer who reported the sexual activity to gather information.
- Confirm that the youth involved have been separated or placed under increased supervision.
- Review the steps taken by the staff members or volunteers on duty.
- Review the incident report to confirm it is accurately and thoroughly completed.
- Meet with parents of the youth involved.
- Determine what actions should be taken to make sure there is no recurrence, including assessing the suitability of the program for the children involved.
- Notify the proper authorities.
- Develop a written corrective action or follow-up plan in response to the incident

Based on the information gathered, the following may be required:

- d. Review the need for additional supervision
- e. Review the need for revised policies or procedures
- f. Review the need for additional training
- g. Alert others in the YMCA of Delaware

4. YMCA of Delaware Response:

After the internal review of the sexualized behavior or youth-to-youth sexual activity, the YMCA of Delaware will determine what can be done to prevent a reoccurrence, such as:

Guidelines for YMCA of Delaware Response

- Review the need for additional supervision.
- Review the need for revised policies or procedures.
- Review the need for additional training.
- Alert others in the YMCA of Delaware.

Acknowledgement Form

I have received a copy of the YMCA of Delaware's Child Protection Policies & Procedures. I have read and agree to comply with the YMCA of Delaware's policies regarding child protection.

I am aware that if, at any time, I have questions regarding the policies of the YMCA of Delaware, I should direct them to my Supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

I understand and agree to comply with the policies and information contained in the YMCA of Delaware's Child Protection Policies & Procedures and that my continued employment is contingent on my following all policies of the YMCA of Delaware.

Employee's Name (please print) _____

Employee's Signature _____

Date _____ Branch _____

Note: You must complete this acknowledgement form electronically via the link below so that Human Resources is made aware you have received a copy of the YMCA of Delaware's Child Protection Policies & Procedures and agreed to comply with these policies. An electronic version of the handbook is also stored on UltiPro. If you have difficulty with the electronic submission process, please contact your supervisor and/or office manager.