



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

PARENT HANDBOOK

Youth Development Programs

YMCA of Delaware



Welcome

Our Youth Development centers are part of a worldwide non-profit organization devoted to excellence in early childhood education, before and after school enrichment (BASE), teen programs, and summer camping opportunities. We believe that every child should be able to grow as individuals and thrive in their environment. Our programs provide opportunities for your child to build self-esteem, try new things, and develop at their own pace all while making new friends and receiving care from compassionate and competent staff.

We encourage your support and partnership with us for the care of your child. This handbook is meant to serve as an introduction to our programs and to extend a warm welcome. We hope you find it informative and refer to it often during your time with the Y. We welcome parents to actively participate in our program and community events, and we encourage your thoughts and suggestions at any time. Please visit our website to learn more about the Y – www.ymcade.org.

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Organizational Information

Our Mission

To empower youth, foster healthy living, and promote strong communities.

Program Philosophy

Youth Development, Healthy Living and Social Responsibility are the key components that we develop and foster in every aspect of your child's day. Learning occurs spontaneously through children's play.

We provide daily activities to encourage physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive development in our Early Childhood Education, Before and After School Enrichment (BASE) programs and Summer Camp. These activities are designed to represent the children's cultures and communities and to help your child develop at his or her own pace. Activities include opportunities to utilize familiar and new materials, pictures, and experiences. Weekly activity plans are prepared in all of our Youth Development programs in accordance with these goals and developmentally appropriate practices. To ensure we provide a comprehensive program, your child will experience:

- Daily opportunities for active physical play such as active games, sports, dancing, running, jumping, climbing, or exploring the environment. When possible, these activities will take place outdoors.
- Daily opportunities for socialization, conversation, relaxation, and quiet activities such as board or card games, reading or studying.
- Weekly opportunities to participate in projects that require an extended time period to complete in science, math, social studies, language arts, cooking, drama, creative arts, or music topics.
- Multiple opportunities to take responsibility consistent with their ages for choosing, planning, completing, and evaluating their own activities. Such activities will include teacher scheduled activity blocks, child's self-led activities and self-interest time.
- Enriched and Diverse activities that reflect the various communities, languages, and cultures of the children in attendance.

Program Goals & Outcomes

Sense of Belonging – Youth are connected to and feel supported by peers and staff.

Sense of Achievement – Youth learn and develop important skills resulting in increased confidence and self-esteem.

Building Relationships – Youth make new friends and are supported by positive adult role models.

Kindergarten Readiness and Elementary School Success- All learners are instilled with a love of learning and set on a path of success for their educational journey.

Inclusion Policy

The Y recognizes the communities in which we serve have a variety of needs and cultural backgrounds. We strive to ensure all members, visitors, and participants are treated with mutual respect and foster a sense of community that continues beyond the front door. Therefore, the Y embraces an inclusion approach that strives to provide opportunities for all children to actively participate in all aspects of our Youth Development programming. We support the inclusion of children who require additional support due to a physical, cognitive, social, or emotional need. While we make every effort to explore reasonable accommodation options, the YMCA cannot guarantee the ability to provide one-to-one or highly individualized support, as staffing levels and program design vary by site.

We respect and value input from parents and encourage them to be part of the decision-making process for their child. The Y requests IFSP/IEP and/or behavioral plans be provided to us during enrollment so we may effectively collaborate with school partners and other professionals to create a plan that will meet the needs of the child. Ultimately, it is the Y's goal to create an environment in which all children are valued and respected, and to support their unique learning and development needs. To accomplish this goal, the Y often consults with early intervention professionals to further support families when possible.

Sharing of Concerns

In a partnership with parents, the YMCA is committed to the well-being of each child in our care. Our policies and procedures reflect that commitment, and we welcome any questions, concerns or comments to ensure that commitment is being achieved. Should you have any questions or concerns, please speak to the Senior Youth Development Director of the program immediately. If you still have questions or concerns after speaking with the Senior Director, you may request to speak with the Branch Executive Director. Although we are confident there will be a mutually agreed upon resolution after consulting with the Branch Executive Director, should you still have concerns, please contact the Vice President of Youth Development at the Association Resource Center.

The YMCA of Delaware has selected Ethics Point to provide parents with simple, risk-free way to anonymously and confidentially report activities that may involve criminal conduct or violations of the [YMCA of Delaware's Code of Conduct](#). All reports submitted through Ethics Point will be handled promptly and discreetly with the objective of correcting the situation being reported. A link to the Ethics Point reporting site can be found on the YMCA of Delaware's website, www.ymcade.org. No retaliatory action will be taken against anyone for reporting or inquiring in good faith about potential breaches of the YMCA of Delaware's policies or for seeking guidance on how to handle suspected breaches.

Governing Body

All YMCA Youth Development sites and programs are governed by the YMCA of Delaware Association. As a non-profit charitable organization, the YMCA is managed by a volunteer board with members from our local community. Additional information for officers and leadership of the YMCA of Delaware is available on the YMCA's webpage.

Our Youth Development Staff Team

The Y's dedicated staff members strive to make a positive difference in the lives of our children and teens. We hire individuals who have experience working with children and teens and are committed to their educational and personal success. Each staff person employed by the Y has unique talents and interests that can be shared with the wide range of youth we serve. Our staff members meet the State of Delaware's requirements for their positions. YMCA Youth Development staff receive nine or more hours of professional and personal development training in topics relevant to best practices in the care of children as well as developmentally appropriate practices in education for their assigned age-group. Additional trainings include First Aid, CPR and AED, Child Abuse Prevention and Mandated Reporting, Sexual Harassment Prevention, Conflict Resolution, Universal Precautions and Blood Borne Pathogen Management. All child care staff must pass a comprehensive background check which includes FBI fingerprints, National Child Abuse Registry, National & State Sex Offender Registry, and personal and professional reference checks.

Equal Opportunity Provider

The YMCA is an equal opportunity provider. Applications for enrollment in all programs are accepted without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, or other protected class. We celebrate and welcome diversity and understand our children benefit through an enriched and inclusive learning environment.

Lost & Found

Should your child lose a personal item, please inquire with the site staff members as soon as possible. All items must be labeled with your child's first and last name. Unclaimed items are stored for approximately one week and then given to community charity. We strongly encourage parents not to send their child with money, jewelry, electronic devices, cell phones, expensive clothing or other perceived valuables that cannot be easily replaced or may be lost, damaged or stolen. The YMCA of Delaware is not responsible in any way for any lost, damaged, or stolen items.

Registration Process & Children's Records

Registration Periods

Each Youth Development program holds an annual registration period for current families, YMCA membership holders, and new participants. As a benefit, our Y membership holders are given early registration opportunities, exclusive discounts and access to all

Y programming. This **early registration opportunity is exclusively for YMCA members only**. Please inquire at your local YMCA branch for more details regarding [YMCA Household Memberships](#).

New program participants are accepted during specific registration periods and throughout the year when space is available. Registrations are accepted on a first come, first served basis. New families are encouraged to tour our facilities and programs before registering. For your convenience, registration for most programs can be done online by visiting [Sign Up for a YMCA Program at the Y | YMCA of Delaware \(ymcade.org\)](#). **Children will not be assigned a spot, be considered enrolled, or allowed to attend the program until all required registration information has been submitted by the parent/guardian, then obtained and verified by a Registrar or Program Director. A valid debit or credit card is required at the time of registration and must remain active during the full duration of the program.** Space is limited so the Y highly encourages you to complete your registration requirements early. Parents/ guardians are solely responsible for the registering and submission of required documents for their children. Families with an outstanding balance will not be able to register without first satisfying the outstanding debt.

The annual registration periods for each program start:

Summer Camp	January
Before & After School Enrichment (BASE)	April
Brandywine Giant Step Preschool	April
Early Childhood Programs/Full Day Preschool Programs	November

Memberships & Discounts

The YMCA encourages its partners and members to actively participate in our mission to empower youth, foster healthy living, and promote strong communities. By purchasing a YMCA membership, you and your family are supporting our work through a variety of different programs and community outreach efforts. As a benefit, our members are given early registration opportunities, exclusive discounts and access to all Y programming, special events, and eight (8) facilities in the state of Delaware. To be eligible for member benefits for youth development programming, an active Household or **Family** Membership must be purchased and be current **prior** to the participant’s registration date in the program. Membership discounts will not be applied to previously purchased program registrations or enrollments. Memberships cannot be placed on hold if a member of your household is registered or enrolled for current or future programming. Any deposits paid at the time of registration will not be available for transfer or refund should a change in membership status occur. Please refer to your program registration and membership contract for more information.

Waiting List

Waiting lists are created and maintained for each program, classroom, or age group that reaches capacity. A complete registration application is needed to place a child on the waiting list. When an opening becomes available, parents/guardians will be contacted. Parents have two business days to accept the opening and enroll their child.

Enrollment into the Program

Enrollment into a YMCA program can only be done by a Registrar or Program Director. This process is done when the child’s registration application has been reviewed and contains all required information and supporting documents, as well as the required payment(s). Once a complete registration application has been verified, the child will be enrolled. This means a spot will be saved and assigned to the child, and they will be allowed to attend the program. Enrollments are processed in the order that they are received. A confirmation email will be sent once all requirements have been satisfied and your child’s spot is secure. An active debit or credit card must remain on file during the full duration of the program. Any changes in your child’s schedule or enrollment must be requested within 2 weeks of the child’s 1st day in the program session by submitting a Change, Cancel or Modify form. This includes Summer Camp. If proper notice is not received, full tuition for those two weeks is due.

To start your child’s program experience, their file must include the following:

- Complete Program Registration application including signed permissions and contracts, and current information
- Current physical exam with up-to-date immunizations, TB screening & lead screening all signed by a physician
- Food Program Enrollment Form (when required)

- First payment with an active credit or debit card that must remain on file
- Current Purchase of Care authorization form/information (when applicable)

Physical Examination

An annual physical with up-to-date immunization record and proof of lead testing and TB screenings are required for all children at the time of enrollment. Children in our Full Day Child Care programs must have proof of a physical every 12 months. Children in our School Age, Teen & Camp programs must submit a current physical at the time of enrollment and are encouraged to submit annual physicals.

Placement in Class or Group

After the Director has verified all the required documents for enrollment have been submitted, your child will join a classroom or group with children of similar age and developmental level. Many factors are taken into consideration when choosing the best classroom or group placement for a child including the child's developmental stage, age, level of maturity and previous experiences in a group setting.

Child to Staff Ratios

YMCA youth programs meet or exceed all child to staff ratios set forth by the State of Delaware's Office of Child Care Licensing and/or the American Camp Association. Ratios may be lower for field trips and routine program outings. The specific ratios and maximum group sizes for each program are as follows:

Licensed Early Childhood and Giant Step Programs

Age Group	Staff to Child Ratio	Maximum Staff to Child Size
Infants (under 12 months)	1:4	2:8
Young Toddler (12-23 months)	1:6	2:12
Older Toddler (23-35 months)	1:8	2:16
Young Preschool Child (36-47 months)	1:10	2:20
Older Preschool Child (48 months or older and not yet attending kindergarten or higher)	1:12	2:24

Licensed Before & After School Enrichment, and Summer Day Camp (primarily indoors)

Age Group	Staff to Child Ratio	Maximum Staff to Child Size
Older Preschool Child (48 months or older and not yet attending kindergarten or higher)	1:12	2:24
School-age child (attending kindergarten or higher)	1:15	2:30

Summer Day Camp (primarily outdoors)

Age Group	Staff to Child Ratio
Grades K – 1	1:6
Grades 2 - 3	1:8
Grades 4 and up	1:10

Account Privacy & Account Changes

The YMCA of Delaware strives to protect the personal information of our program participants. The following information explains how child care accounts are set up in the YMCA system.

- The parent/legal guardian listed first on the registration form will be considered the "primary" YMCA account holder and will be the first line of communication.
- The primary YMCA account holder will be held responsible for all account balances.
- The primary YMCA account holder will be the only person with the ability to make changes to addresses* or other contact info, payment information, schedule of care provided, cancelation of care, etc. unless a Court Order is in place (*Receipts

will print with the primary account holder's name and address information.). If, at any time, your address or any phone numbers change, please **inform the Program Director and Branch Registrar immediately.**

Authorized Pick-up & Emergency Contacts

As part of the required documentation to register your child in a YMCA program, a list of pre-selected adults who have authorization to remove the child(ren) from the premises on behalf of the parent must be provided. In case of an emergency and when a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the YMCA will begin contacting the listed Emergency Contacts then Authorized Pick-ups. Authorized Pick-Up and Emergency Contacts must be able to take possession of child(ren) when contacted and must live within a reasonable distance from the program where the child is registered (approximately an hour's drive). Authorized Pick-Up and Emergency Contacts must be able to provide a state issued form of identification before being allowed to remove a child from the Y Program.

The YMCA of Delaware will follow all child custody court orders for children within our child care programs when they are provided by the parent/legal guardian. Both parents are permitted to authorize the addition and/or removal of emergency contacts and authorized pick-up people under the following conditions:

- There is no active child custody court order on file with the YMCA.

AND

- The parent is listed on the original registration form.

Confidentiality

All children's records are confidential. Staff are not permitted to share your child's records (written, electronic or digital) with anyone without written parental consent or court order except when requested by state, local or other entities with statutory responsibilities for issues relating to the health, safety, and well-being of children. Custodial parents have access to their child's records upon written request and may request additional relevant information be added to the records.

Observation of Child Progress

All children are observed formally and informally to ensure staff members plan their curriculum goals and activities to support individualized learning. Staff observe, record and document children's development, participation and learning throughout the year. This is ongoing, systematic and gathered from natural play activities and realistic setting that reflects children's actual performance. We use a variety of methods such as observations, checklists, rating scales, and individually administered tests. The results are used to benefit children by informing sound decisions about children, teaching, and program improvement. When assessments identify concerns, appropriate follow-up, referrals or other interventions are used to support the child's success.

Program Transitions in Early Childhood

Throughout the year, children in the programs will go through transitions in their care. The Y strives to make these transitions smooth and seamless by planning in advance, collaborating with parents, and preparing children for the changes to come. Parents will be notified in writing prior to the start of a transition.

Termination of Care

Parents are required to provide a minimum of ten business days written notice to the Registrar/Director prior to removing their child from enrollment in any YMCA Youth Development programs. Purchase of Care families are required to provide five days written notice to disenroll. The Cancel, Add or Change form can be found on the Y Program landing page. Tuition for the final two weeks, plus any outstanding balance, is due within five business days. Unpaid balances will be sent to collections and/or reported to Purchase of Care. If your child is absent for more than five consecutive days without notice, parents will be contacted to determine the circumstances. In the event we are unable to reach anyone regarding the extended absence, the Y will consider the child to have voluntarily terminated care without notice.

Dismissal from the Program

While we work hard to ensure that each child in our program is successful, we reserve the right to disenroll any child at any time for any reason. Some of the reasons for involuntary dismissal might include:

Failure to adapt - Most children adapt to a new program within a few weeks. If a child fails to adapt to our program, even though an effort has been made by parents and the staff to integrate him/her into the program, the child may be disenrolled so that his or her parents can find alternate care for their child.

Aggressive/disruptive behavior - If a child's behavior is aggressive, hurtful to others, or disruptive to the program, the child may be disenrolled at the discretion of the center. Please refer to specific information on our behavior management procedures.

Failure to pay tuition – Children shall be dismissed from the program should tuition not be paid per program policies. Please refer to specific information on our payment procedures. If you need assistance with tuition, please refer to page 10- **Financial Assistance** for information regarding scholarships and *Y Open Door* opportunities.

Abusive/disruptive behavior by parents – We reserve the right to immediately disenroll any child whose parent behaves in a manner that violates YMCA policies or procedures, or is destructive, disruptive, abusive, or malicious through their statements or actions toward the staff, their own child or other parents/children in the center.

Failure to maintain required paperwork – Parents are responsible for ensuring all information in their child's file is complete and accurate at all times. Failure to keep the program informed of changes or failure to submit required paperwork will result in your child's dismissal from the program.

Excessive late pick-ups – All children must be picked up prior to the program's operating hours. Repeated late pick-ups will result in your child's dismissal from the program, and notification of POC if applicable.

Irreconcilable differences – The YMCA strives to partner with all parents to provide the highest quality care for children. If, at any time, mutually agreed upon expectations cannot be met, we reserve the right to disenroll the child to allow the parents to find an environment that better meets their needs for their child.

Payment Procedures

Program Deposits, Registration, Activity and Fieldtrip Fees

All program deposits and/or registration fees are non-refundable and cannot be applied to other programs, or additional weeks of care. If you need to change, cancel, or modify a week (including a change of membership status: cancel, hold or type), a 2 week notice and a Change, Cancel or Modify form must be submitted. Any deposits paid will not be available for transfer or refund. If proper notice is not received, full tuition for that program session is due; this includes Summer Camp programs. For Purchase of Care families- Please refer to your registration and membership contracts for more details regarding additional allowable fees.

Payment Dates

Payments are due on the dates established for each program. For the Youth Development department, all payments and POC parent co-pays are due on the 1st of each month for that month's care. A Bi-monthly option (1st and 15th of the month) can be made by contacting your branch. Routinely late payments will not be tolerated and will result in late fees and/or dismissal from care. We do not adjust payment due dates.

Billing Options

The YMCA uses an **EFT Easy Payment Plan** to collect payments. EFT (Electronic Fund Transfer) Payments will be automatically deducted on the 1st of the month from your checking, savings, or debit / credit card account. A valid debit or credit card is required at the time of registration and must remain active during the full duration of the program.

Late Payments

Payments are due on the dates established for each program. If a payment is made after the due date, a \$30 late payment fee shall be paid immediately regardless of payment arrangements. Purchase of Care families are excluded from this late payment fee. All continual late payments will result in dismissing the child from the program. If your child is disenrolled from the program for any reason, re-enrollment will be based on availability and is not guaranteed. Additionally, if your child is disenrolled for non-payment, the balance owed must be paid in full prior to re-enrollment. If a POC family leaves owing a balance, the Y will have no choice but to notify DHSS as per our written contract with the State. The YMCA does not offer payment agreements for past due balances. Please refer to your registration and membership contracts for more details.

Financial Assistance (Open Doors)

Our Y memberships and programs are designed to be readily accessible to the public. Our financial assistance policy enables us to assist individuals who would like to participate but cannot afford the entire fee. Please visit the YMCA on the web at www.ymcade.org for more information on our financial assistance programs, how to apply for assistance, and other relative scholarship information.

Purchase of Care

Some YMCA programs are eligible for the State of Delaware Purchase of Care (POC) child care subsidy program. The Dept. of Social Services offices are responsible for a participant's enrollment into the State POC subsidy program, assessing their eligibility, and determining the amount of any co-payment required to be paid to the YMCA. Proof of a current POC Authorization is required prior to enrollment and before the start of each month. Parent co-payments are due on the 1st and 15th of the month. The YMCA is not able to prorate or reduce the State of Delaware's POC assigned parent co-pay, and therefore all monies must be paid according to the child's authorization. Please refer to your POC contract for more information. For information regarding eligible YMCA programs accepting POC, contact your local YMCA branch.

Absences

Parents must notify the Director of any planned absences, vacations or illness. The YMCA does not reduce or credit tuition for vacations, school holidays, sick or quarantine days, or closures and reduced hours for inclement weather, delayed start, early release or snow days. Unreported absences longer than five consecutive days are considered voluntary terminations of enrollment. If your child is disenrolled from the program for any reason, re-enrollment will be based on availability and is not guaranteed. For Purchase of Care families- Please refer to your registration and membership contracts for more details.

Parent Involvement

Family Participation

The Y strives to build positive relationships with our families by being familiar with their unique characteristics, strengths and issues that are important to them. To develop partnerships with our families, we strive to create a welcoming environment and provide many opportunities for involvement. The Y encourages your participation in all of our programs, activities and events. Additionally, the Y has an open-door policy and enrolled parents may visit without prior approval.

We do require parents who volunteer in our programs to complete a background screening and to sign the YMCA's Code of Conduct. Parents who wish to volunteer for more than four days per calendar year will also need to complete a fingerprint check with the state police to satisfy our Licensing requirements.

Some ways for families to be involved include:

- Attend Family Nights and special events hosted by the Y or its partners

- Donations for the program
- Share your culture, talent or job with our program
- Participate in classroom activities
- Contribute to the curriculum or its supplies
- Complete program surveys
- Offer positive growth producing feedback
- Serve on Parent Committees
- Chaperone a field trip (see details on field trips under special events)

Parent/Staff Collaboration

The YMCA strongly believes we are partners in your child’s early development. Completion of an Ages and Stages Questionnaire by the parent is mandatory for our Early Childhood Education programs. Should a concern arise regarding your child’s development, staff will schedule a meeting to discuss questions, concerns, and formulate a plan to meet the child’s needs. Parents are offered the opportunity to meet with program staff at least once per year for a conference to discuss their child’s developmental and educational goals.

Parent Communication

Regular communication concerning your child’s well-being and developmental progress is a priority at the Y. Upon completion of all enrollment processes, parents are required to register in our parent communication system – ProCare. ProCare is an app that can be downloaded on to your phone for convenience. This application allows you to see your child’s activities throughout that day as well as receive program updates, alerts, messages, reports, newsletters, pictures, and videos. This application also allows parents to send messages to program staff. Staff members are able to respond to any questions, comments or concerns through the app.

Parents ‘Right to Know’ Licensing Information

Under the Delaware Code, parents are entitled to inspect the active record and complaint files of any licensed child care facility. To review a child care facility record contact:

The Administrative Specialist
Office of Child Care Licensing
3411 Silverside Road (Hagley Building)
Wilmington, DE 19810
(302) 892-5800

OR

The Administrative Specialist
Office of Child Care Licensing
821 Silver Lake Boulevard, Suite 103
Dover, DE 19904
(302) 739-5487

Substantiated complaints and compliance review histories may be viewed by visiting the Office of Child Care Licensing’s child care search at <https://kids.delaware.gov/occl/search-for-child-care.shtml>

Parents are encouraged to review current licensing regulations which can be accessed online at kids.delaware.gov or a copy is available in the Program Director’s office.

Evaluation of Program

Our goal at the Y is to provide high quality educational and enrichment programs, support our community’s needs, and ensure every child is set on a path to success. Your input during the school year is welcomed and encouraged. Written program satisfaction surveys will be sent to each family each year via email. We encourage parents to discuss the program with their child and complete the survey so we may continually improve the programs we offer our communities.

Closures & Delays

Hazardous Weather Conditions

In the event the YMCA Branch or YMCA programs have an altered schedule due to snow or other inclement weather, the following methods will be used to communicate with members and program participants.

- ProCare messages are sent to e-mail address on file and through text messages (notifications must be turned on).
- Facebook
- Updates posted on the YMCA of Delaware's website, www.ymcade.org.

The YMCA will only broadcast closures or delays, and we try to do so in a timely manner. Please be aware, some weather conditions occasionally require us to make decisions with our school district partners and therefore are very close to an actual opening or closing time. The YMCA does not reduce or credit tuition for closures or reduced hours for inclement weather, delayed start, early release or snow days. For specific information regarding Early Childhood Education Centers, off-site BASE programming and other Youth Development programs, please visit [Sign Up for a YMCA Program at the Y | YMCA of Delaware \(ymcade.org\)](http://www.ymcade.org)

Holidays & Closures

A list of scheduled holidays and pre-planned program closures is available in the “**Program Information – Parent Handbook Addendum**” for your child's specific program. Although we will make every effort to notify our members and program participants in a timely manner of any closures, we reserve the right to close the program immediately due to unexpected emergencies or other issues.

Program Activities

The Role of Play

Here at the Y, we know children learn best through play and we create activities to build on past experiences as well as create new ones. Children will be encouraged and assisted in verbalizing their experiences, developing ways to express their ideas and feelings, while being given support and encouragement when facing new challenges.

Children in our program are encouraged to participate in all activities. Some activities get messy or require physical activity. Parents are encouraged to dress their children in comfortable, play clothing that helps encourage their participation.

Outdoor Play

The Y follows Nemours Health Prevention Services best practice recommendations and Delaware's Office of Child Care Licensing for weather conditions and temperatures for outdoor time. All children are required to go outside daily unless there is a posted weather advisory. Children should have proper clothing for the forecasted weather conditions and safe shoes for climbing and running.

The Y cannot accommodate requests for children to stay inside during outside activities.

Physical Activity

The YMCA is committed to our children's health, safety and well-being. We recognize the importance of our staff as positive role models for children as they learn to live healthy and productive lives. Therefore, we strive to:

- Role-model positive behaviors by being physically active with the children, both indoors and out.
- Encourage all children to try new physical activities and respond positively when they do.
- Share our own positive experiences with physical activity and facilitate conversations with the children about their experiences.
- Provide fun, engaging physical activity daily in our lesson plans.
- Make safe and age appropriate equipment accessible in the classroom at all times (e.g. soft balls, push-pull toys, low carpeted blocks to climb on, etc.).
- Not use physical activity as punishment.
- Re-direct children to safe physical activities and/or involve them in discussions about best practices for safety issues or other concerns when they arise.
- Limit screen time (except for educational computer use, virtual physical activity and occasional special events) to one hour or less for children age two or older with parental permission. We do not allow screen time for children under two years of age.

Personal Cell Phone & Technology Policy

The Y provides a safe and productive environment for youth and teens that encourage participants to lead with empathy, build healthy relationships, effectively manage emotions, take responsibility for actions, and develop personal skills for success. All programs encourage interactive participation, hands-on learning experiences, character exploration, and active citizenship.

With the Y's commitment to Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards, our programs prohibit the use of personal electronic devices, including cell phones, during all program hours. We strongly encourage parents not to send their child with electronic devices or cell phones that cannot be easily replaced or may be lost, damaged, or stolen. The YMCA of Delaware is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items.

Permission to utilize electronic devices may be granted by program staff and on an individual needs basis to enhance program experience and only when the use of such devices is age-appropriate, educational, and supervised by a staff member. Under these circumstances, all personal electronic devices must remain in backpacks, pockets, or in the possession of Y staff. Y staff will temporarily confiscate the cell phone, or other electronic device, should participants not be able to adhere to our policy.

Field Trips

Both on site and off site field trips are planned as an enhancement to the children's curriculum. At times, we encourage parents to volunteer as chaperones. All field trip chaperones must have a YMCA background check completed before participation and chaperones are never permitted to supervise a group of children without a Y staff member present.

The YMCA is committed to the safety of all children. If the required adult/child ratios cannot be met, the trip will be cancelled. If you are required to accompany your child for any reason on a field trip and cannot, other child care arrangements for the duration of the field trip must be made.

In our Child Development program, field trip permission slips for each trip must also be completed and returned by the due date. Children who do not have all the required documentation by the due date or signed permissions for the trip on file will need to make other child care arrangements. In our School Age BASE and Summer Camp Programs, permission to participate in field trip programs is authorized on the original program registration form. Field trip fees are not included and must be paid by the registration date for the trip.

Transportation

Children in our Child Development programs are transported to field trips, special events, inclement weather, and during emergencies using a chartered bus service. When children are being transported, the child's safety is of utmost importance. Children will be informed of the rules and guidelines to follow while on the bus. During transportation time, the children are under the supervision of the YMCA staff and the bus transportation authority. Child to staff ratios are maintained for the duration of the trip. If there is any kind of incident, the parents will be notified immediately.

Swimming

The Y is proud of our ability and commitment to provide children with water activities in our swimming pools. While swimming in our pools, all children in our programs are supervised by their classroom staff or group staff as well as by certified lifeguards. We ensure children are safe by following all YMCA of Delaware aquatics procedures. Children participating in swim lessons or open swim are required to bring a swimsuit and towel labeled with the child's first and last name. Schedules of swim times and offerings vary by program and ages of children.

Swim Testing Procedures

All children ages fourteen and under are required to take a swim test and wear the appropriate band color associated with their swimming ability while attending the program. The swim test is one length of the pool, swimming on their stomach, followed by a thirty second tread. Swimmers will be accompanied by lifeguards during this test and will not be forced to take the test if they are

uncomfortable. Only one swim test will be performed per day. Children may re-test as needed.

YELLOW or RED- Any swimmer that is able to swim half a length or less of the pool and/or tread water for thirty seconds. These campers will only be permitted to swim in the Red and Yellow sections, must wear a life jacket at all times while on the pool deck, and may use the slide (if available) if they are over 48" tall.

GREEN - Any swimmer able to swim a full length of the pool and tread water for thirty seconds. Green banded campers may swim in any pool section and use the slide (if available).

Your Child's Day

Program Schedules & Daily Activities

Program schedules and daily activities vary by each Youth Development program and site. Please refer to the "[**Program Information – Parent Handbook Addendum**](#)" for your child's specific program for details on what items are needed daily to attend, daily program schedules, activities, drop off and pick-up procedures, where to park and meal information.

What to Wear

All children are required to be dressed in casual, comfortable and safe clothing. Please do not send your child in flip flops or other open-toed shoes that could easily slip off while running, climbing or jumping. We also ask that children come dressed in play clothing that can allow children to explore their surroundings, get dirty and have fun being a kid. As a reminder, some of our developmentally appropriate activities can be messy. The YMCA of Delaware is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items.

What to Leave at Home

The following items should not be brought to the YMCA unless requested for a specific program or activity: dolls or toys, pets, game boys or any other electronic games, iPods/mp3 players, sports equipment, expensive equipment, jewelry, cell phones, skateboards, roller blades, scooters, weapons, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes/vaping devices, and money. Toy guns, knives, swords and other toys that promote aggressive behavior do not promote the type of learning and cooperative play according to the principles of our program, and therefore, are prohibited.

Special Events

Birthdays

Birthday celebrations are held during afternoon snack time. Please refer to our [*Food for Special Events*](#) policy below before planning your child's birthday celebration. We strongly suggest that you check with the classroom or group teacher regarding any food allergies. Balloons, candy, and soda are not permitted. Costumed characters are also not permitted. Individual party bags can be given to take home (if there is one for everyone in the class/group) but are not expected.

Family Events

Several times throughout the year, the Y offers events and activities designed to give you and your family an opportunity to socialize with other families and to learn more about what your child does each day at the Y. Families are encouraged to participate in these events as well as help plan them. We welcome your ideas for our next Family Event and hope you will join us. While most of our family events occur in the evening, a few special events may occur during program hours.

Meals at the Y

Food Program Participation & Mealtimes

Some YMCA programs participate in Federal food programs (Child & Adult Care Feeding Program, Summer Food Service Program and/or At-Risk Feeding Program) which offers opportunities for children to receive nutritious meals throughout their time in care.

The food items provided will always include the recommended daily allowance for children for each meal/snack served. All foods served will meet or exceed USDA recommended guidelines. Children are encouraged to eat but will never be forced. Meals provided by the YMCA are committed to being pork and peanut free. More information on your program's meal service is available in the **"Program Information – Parent Handbook Addendum"** for your child's specific program.

Food for Special Events

We welcome birthday celebrations and occasionally offer group parties. These celebrations can only be scheduled during snack time and must be pre-arranged with the Program Director. Nutritious snacks or small servings of sugary snacks are permitted during these events. Soda is not permitted at any time. The food served by the YMCA, as well as snacks provided by parents, should not contain pork or peanuts, and should be store bought with ingredient label visible.

Menus

Monthly menus are posted at each program site for children ages one year and older. Children under the age of one year will follow an individual menu which can be reviewed and updated by contacting your child's teacher. We only serve foods to children under the age of one year after they have been introduced first to the child at home.

Food Substitutions

Any request for substituting food must be done in writing and may require a doctor's note. Food substitutions are to be stored in the food cabinets in the classrooms. Our centers and some programs do not have the capability and/or are not permitted to re-heat or refrigerate food. For more information and site specific capabilities, please refer to the **"Program Information – Parent Handbook Addendum"** for your child's specific program.

Non-Discrimination in Food Service

As a participant in the USDA food service program, the YMCA is required to share the following information with you on their behalf:

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, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior credible activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

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 responsible agency (state or local) or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or 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 discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint 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.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Behavior Procedures

Behavior Code of Conduct

The YMCA is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and positive environment for all children. We use a positive guidance approach to support children's social and emotional development while promoting respect, responsibility, and healthy peer relationships. We recognize that children are learning to navigate social situations and may make mistakes. Our behavior management strategies are age-appropriate, consistent, and focused on teaching rather than punishing.

Behavior Expectations:

Children in YMCA programs are expected to:

- Show respect to themselves, others, and property
- Use kind and appropriate language
- Follow staff directions and program rules
- Keep hands and feet to themselves
- Stay with their group or in designated areas
- Participate in activities in a safe and respectful way

Behavior Guidance Strategies:

Staff will use proactive and positive strategies, including:

- Redirection
- Conflict resolution guidance
- Problem-solving support
- Modeling appropriate behaviors
- Providing clear expectations and consistent routines
- Positive reinforcement for good behavior

When a child does not follow the **Behavior Expectations**, the following **Behavior Guideline** steps will be used:

1. Staff will redirect the child to a more appropriate behavior.
2. The child will be reminded of the behavior guidelines and program rules, and a discussion will take place.
3. If the behavior persists, a parent will be notified of the problem.
4. The staff will document the situation. This written documentation will include what the behavior problem is, what provoked the problem, and the corrective action taken.
5. Staff may schedule a conference with the parent to determine the appropriate action or strategies to be implemented to mitigate the behavior.
6. Staff may schedule a progress check or a follow-up conference to ensure progress is being made, and if not, the program director will work collaboratively with the family to create a behavior plan to be implemented.
7. If the problem continues, staff will schedule a conference that includes the parent, child, Y staff, and the Child Development Director. The Director will have all documentation and the notes from the previous conferences for review. If subsequent conferences have to be scheduled, a counselor or school support staff may also be present.
8. If a child's behavior at any time threatens the immediate safety of that child, other children, or staff, the parent may be notified and expected to pick up the child immediately. If such a call is placed, an authorized pick up person must pick up the child within one hour.
9. If a problem persists and a child continues to disrupt the program, the YMCA reserves the right to dis-enroll the child from the program. Immediate expulsion from the program will be considered in certain situations. The YMCA reserves the right to terminate enrollment at any time.

The following behaviors are not acceptable and may result in the immediate suspension of a child, or expulsion of a child if on-going:

- Endangering the health and safety of children and/or staff, members, and volunteers
- Stealing or damaging YMCA or personal property
- Leaving the program, group, or YMCA grounds without permission
- Continuing to disrupt the program and other participants in the program.
- Refusing to follow the behavior guidelines or program rules

- Using profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity frequently
- Acting in a lewd manner

Immediate expulsion will occur if a child is in possession of and/or using tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, firecrackers, weapons, or explosives.

Positive Behavior Management Procedures

Here at the Y, we focus on the prevention of unwanted or inappropriate behaviors by using strategies that include structured age-appropriate activities that incorporate educationally valuable materials, creating a stimulating environment, and setting realistic expectations. We focus on praising and encouraging children's positive behavior, while redirecting or guiding inappropriate behavior into more positive actions. Our goal is to eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion, and other exclusionary measures unless we determine that these strategies are in the best interest of the child.

As a last resort, YMCA staff may need to supplement developmentally appropriate, positive methods of behavior management with a reflection break. Reflection breaks shall be limited to brief periods – no more than one minute for each year of a child's age, and will not be used for children under 2 years of age. Before using a reflection break, the staff member will discuss the reason for the break, in language appropriate to the child's level of development and understanding. Reflection breaks provide children with the opportunity to get control of their bodies and emotions, regroup, and focus on a more appropriate choice or behavior. Before returning to the group, staff shall talk to the child about alternatives to the inappropriate behavior in a way that shows faith in the child's ability to make more positive decisions in the future.

When a problem arises, which threatens the safety or health of a child, other children or staff, the staff will take immediate action to stop the behavior and inform the child of the disciplinary action that will be taken. Depending upon the severity of the inappropriate behavior or if the child cannot be managed in the area, it may be necessary to temporarily remove the child from the situation. The Parent/Guardian will be notified and together we will work with the child to correct the behavior. A conference between the Director and the Parent/Guardian may be scheduled. During these conferences we will try to assess the function of the behavior, and work with families and/or professionals to develop plan that will include positive support strategies. Please see the **Behavior Guidelines** for more details.

Prohibited Discipline Practices

Corporal punishment inflicted in any way on a child's body is prohibited in all YMCA programs. Children are not yelled at, humiliated, frightened, or abused in any way. Disparaging comments about the child's appearance, ability, ethnicity, family, financial status, or other personal characteristics is prohibited. Children are not deprived of food or toilet use because of inappropriate behavior. Children are not reprimanded for failure to sleep, toileting accidents, failure to eat all or part of their food, lack of participant, or for failure to complete a prescribed activity.

Safety Practices

Accidents and Injuries

The Y has created policies and procedures for our program offerings and facilities to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all participants. Therefore, any hot beverage or liquid brought into any child care area must be in a spill proof and sealed container. Paper cups with plastic lids (Starbucks, Wawa, Dunkin', etc.) are not acceptable and will not be allowed into rooms where children are being cared for or housed. Additionally, the hot beverage or liquid must be stored inaccessible to children at all times.

In the case of minor injury, staff certified in first aid procedures will administer first aid. The staff person supervising the child at the time of the accident will complete the appropriate report and notify parents.

In the event of an emergency, staff trained in first aid and CPR will care for the child as needed. 911 (if applicable) and parents will be immediately notified. In case the parents and/or the listed emergency contact person(s) cannot be reached, a staff member will

accompany the child to the hospital. The YMCA does not provide health insurance and requires the child's current insurance information be provided at the time of registration and in our files in case of an emergency.

Child Abuse & Neglect Mandated Reporting

According to Delaware state law, "any person, agency, organization, or entity who knows or in good faith suspects child abuse or neglect shall make a report." This means that every person (adult) in Delaware is mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect. In addition, agencies, organizations, and entities will be held accountable when individuals suspect abuse but fail to report. Therefore, the YMCA of Delaware and all its staff are required by law to report all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect to Delaware's Division of Child Protective Services. In preparation for this, our staff have been extensively trained in Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Prevention strategies before the start of employment, and annually thereafter. Supervisors, program directors, and senior leadership are required to complete additional training to further promote a child-safe environment.

Child Protection Information for Parents

Parents place their trust in the Y to help their children thrive. Our core values-caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are part of everything we do. Because of this, we place great value on creating the most child-safe environment possible. We believe when parents are well informed about safety protocols, it assists our constant vigilance of all who have potential access to children. The following are zero-tolerance YMCA **Code of Conduct** policies. Parents are encouraged to report any deviation from these policies immediately to the Senior Child Care Director or Branch Executive Director.

- A child should never be alone with a staff member (maybe separate, but in full view of others).
- Children should not be contacted by YMCA staff except for issues relating directly to currently active YMCA activities (i.e., no letters, email, telephone calls, texts, Facebook, visits, non-YMCA excursions, etc.).
- Children should never receive gifts of any kind from individual Y staff members.
- Children should always be transported in a YMCA contracted vendor-operated vehicles. Children should never be transported in a staff member's personal vehicle, and never alone.
- Y staff members shall not babysit for Y members or program participants.
- Children attending a Y Early Childhood Program, BASE, Camp or other Youth Development program must sign in and out of the program each day and will only be released to pre-authorized individuals with a state issued ID that are listed in their file.
- Parents who become aware of hazing, bullying, or similar inappropriate behavior should report the incident to the Senior Child Care Director or Branch Executive. Such behavior is often the precursor of peer-to-peer abuse and must be addressed immediately. The YMCA of Delaware has a zero tolerance for bullying and the like.
- Children should be encouraged to discuss their experiences with their parents and identify any behavior or activity that made them uncomfortable. Parents need to be aware that programs like gymnastics and aquatics require some physical contact between adult and child to provide the necessary instruction, coaching, and spotting. A single touch in a normally inappropriate place may not be an inappropriate touch if it occurred while trying to prevent an accident, injury, etc. Parents are encouraged to speak to a Senior Child Care Director or Branch Executive should they have concerns.
- Parents should be provided with the names of at least two separate Y individuals whom they may contact if they believe there is an issue of any kind that needs to be addressed.
- Delaware law requires ALL ADULTS to report cases of suspected abuse and neglect to the state authorities. Therefore, all YMCA members are mandated to report any suspected child abuse.

The Y of Delaware employs hundreds of staff members and volunteers to work with youth in the various programs we offer. To keep children in our programs safe, we intensively screen potential employees and volunteers by using a detailed application form, comprehensive interview process, reference checks, and criminal / abuse registry background checks.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding a YMCA staff person or program, please inform the Program Director or Executive Director at your location.

Parents are encouraged help prevent child abuse. Here are some suggestions:

- Talk to your child about his or her experiences in Y programs, at school, sports, and other activities.
- Drop in on your child's programs unannounced.
- Trust your instincts. Don't wait to tell if something seems "strange." Speak up!
- Occasionally, ask your child these questions:
 - Is anyone scaring or threatening you?
 - Is anyone asking you to keep secrets?
 - Has anyone said anything to you that made you feel bad?
 - Is anyone touching you in a way that you don't like?
- Encourage your child to tell you or another trusted adult if anything happens to him or her.
- Watch for warning signs of abuse:
 - Unexplainable bruising or other physical markings
 - Disturbed sleeping or eating patterns
 - Abrupt changes in behavior-anxiety, clinging, aggressiveness, withdrawal, depression, anger
 - Fear of a certain person or place
 - Discomfort with physical contact
 - A child who abuses other children
 - Listen and watch for signs of your child receiving special attention that other children or teens are not receiving, including favors, treats, gifts, rides, increasing affection or time alone, particularly outside the activities of school, child care, or other activities.

YMCA Security

All YMCA facilities have security systems as required by the individual needs of the building. There shall be a minimum of two staff readily available at the facility at all times while children are in care.

Prohibited Items

Our programs occur in a drug, alcohol, tobacco, and weapon free environment. Any parent or child who brings drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons to a YMCA program or on YMCA property will be expelled from the program. No refunds or credits will be issued for a violation of this code.

Emergency Preparedness Training & Drills

Our program conducts safety drills to ensure our staff are prepared for emergencies that may occur. These drills include fire drills, lockdowns, missing child scenarios, vigilance awareness testing in our pools and other safety drills. Should a parent arrive during the execution of one of these drills, no one will be permitted to enter or leave the program until the exercise is completed.

In the event that we have to evacuate for an extended period of time, each program has a specific meeting place designated for this type of situation. In the event of an actual emergency, YMCA staff will contact parents as soon as it is safe to do so to let them know the status of the program and their child.

Drop Off Procedures

Drop-off procedures vary by program and location. Information is available in the **"Program Information – Parent Handbook Addendum"** for your child's specific program. Please visit your program's website for details on drop off times and sign in procedure for their program. **Parents must place the child under direct supervision of YMCA staff by signing the child in at the beginning of the day on the program tablet.** This is a mandatory procedure and an important safety precaution that ensures each staff member knows which children are in attendance.

Pick Up Procedures

Pick-up procedures vary by program and location. Information is available in the **"Program Information – Parent Handbook Addendum"** for your child's specific program. **Parents must sign the child out each day on the program tablet.** During registration, parents must designate a list of people who are authorized to pick up their child under normal or emergency situations. **These "authorized pick-ups" and "emergency contacts" must be at least 16 years of age (with state issued photo id) and may not be**

listed in any “Megan’s Law” or sex offender databases and cannot be otherwise denied access to a YMCA of Delaware branch.

Written consent from the parent in advance is required for an authorized pick-up to remove a child from the program. This written consent can be provided via a ProCare message or in an e-mail. State issued photo identification will be requested of all people picking up your child. Current phone numbers and updated emergency contact information must be on file at all times.

School age children may be permitted to walk to/from home or to/from the school bus stop with written parent or guardian permission.

If someone is listed in your child’s file as “Unauthorized to Pick-Up” and attempts to do so, staff members will use the following guidelines (not necessarily in this order):

- Ask person to speak with administrator on duty.
- Call parent(s).
- Call 911.

If a person attempting to pick-up is a legal parent or guardian, we are required to release the child to them unless we have a copy of a court order stating otherwise.

The safety of your child is our highest priority. If our staff identify a parent or authorized pick-up is in a physically unsafe condition to drive or take responsibility for a child (such as under the influence of drugs or alcohol), the YMCA will not release the child. Staff will call another person on the authorization list or 911 for assistance and to report the incident.

If a child is not picked up by the Center’s closing time, the Y will make every attempt to reach the parent and/or other emergency contacts listed on the child’s registration form. If the Center is unable to make contact with anyone on the list, or the child is still present one hour after closing time, the Director will call the police and/or child protective services so that the child can be placed in their care.

If a parent arrives after the program’s operating closing time, there will be a flat fee of \$15 for each 15-minute interval, per child due at the time of pick-up (this fee does not apply to families utilizing POC). The fee will not be prorated per minute. Parents or guardians who arrive late will be asked to sign a late pick-up form and pay the late pick up fee to the YMCA at the time of the incident. Repeated late pick-ups may result in a child being removed from the program, and notification to the appropriate state agency including POC.

Photographs, Videotapes and/or Voice Recordings

As part of their participation in program activities, children may be photographed, videotaped, and/or voice recorded. Such items may be used to post inside the classroom/ center/ program, for recording developmental milestones as part of our assessment processes, or for other program related activities. YMCA staff members may not take photographs, videotapes, or voice recordings for personal use and may not share any of these items except as necessary for work related reasons. Additionally, children may be photographed, videotaped, and/or voice recorded for Y promotional purposes. Parental permission to use photographs, videotapes, and/or voice recordings for this purpose is located on the child’s enrollment form.

Health & Sanitation Practices

Hand Washing

The Y is committed to helping children, volunteers, and staff members reduce illness in our programs. As part of that commitment, all staff, volunteers, and children wash their hands frequently throughout the day. Certain daily transitions require that staff, volunteers, and children wash their hands with soap and running water. These include:

- Upon arrival for the day and when moving from one group / room to another
- Before and After:
 - Eating, handling food, or feeding a child (including bottles)
 - Giving medication and/or applying sunscreen

- Playing in water that is used by more than one person
- After:
 - Diapering
 - Removing gloves
 - Using the toilet or helping a child use the toilet
 - Handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood, vomit) from sneezing, wiping and blowing noses, from mouths, or from sores
 - Handling soiled clothes
 - Handling uncooked food
 - Handling pets, cages, and other animals
 - Playing in sand
 - Cleaning or handling the garbage, touching trash cans, or lids;
 - Outside or messy play.

To encourage this practice at home, have the child wash their hands using the same methods used in our Y programs. While in our programs, children, staff and volunteers wash their hands using the following method:

- Turn on warm water
- Wet hands (water activates soap)
- Apply liquid soap
- Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears
- Rub between fingers, fronts and backs of hands, for at least 10 seconds **out of the water**
- Rinse hands under running water until they are free of dirt and soap
- Dry hands with air dryer, a clean disposable paper towel or single use cloth
- Turn off water **with paper towel**
- Throw paper towel away into a lined trash container
- (**Note:** Using gloves, wipes, or hand sanitizer are **NOT** acceptable substitutes for hand washing)

Sanitation Practices

The Y is committed to maintaining safe and clean facilities. We clean and sanitize equipment items and surfaces according to the requirements set by the State of Delaware's Office of Child Care Licensing and the Delaware Quality Improvement Program.

Illness Policy

As a partner in the care of your child, should a parent observe any of the signs of illness listed below, children must be kept home. Countermeasures to mask symptoms will not be tolerated and children will be removed from the program.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, parents or emergency contacts will be notified and must pick up the child within a half hour. While waiting, children will be supervised in an area away from other children and kept comfortable until parents arrive.

If a child exhibits symptoms of illness specified below, they will not be allowed to remain at the center. ***If a child is sent home, they must stay home for one full day of care (not counting the day they are sent home) or until written documentation from a doctor or doctor's office is received stating the child has been diagnosed and poses no serious health risk to the other children.*** School Age children who are sent home from school must follow the same restrictions. If a child suffers from a chronic condition, a doctor's note must be submitted with a health care plan that is reviewed by the Registrar/ Program Director and placed in the file.

The symptoms for exclusion include but are not limited to the following:

- Temperature equivalent to 101 degrees or greater
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (such as tiredness, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, wheezing or other unusual signs)
- Uncontrolled diarrhea (two extremely loose diarrhea incidents in a potty-trained child or one episode of explosive diarrhea leaking from a diaper)

- Blood in stools
- Vomiting or excessive amounts of spit up
- Ongoing stomach pain or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms
- Mouth & cold sores with/without drooling
- Any unidentified rash or open oozing sores
- Eye drainage with redness or discomfort
- Any unspecified illness that limits the child's comfortable participation in activities or results in greater care than can be provided without compromising the health and safety to the child or other children.

Certain illnesses have specific exclusion requirements. If a child is diagnosed with one of these illnesses, the center must be contacted immediately. Children will not be allowed back until the exclusion period has passed. These illnesses and exclusion periods are:

- Pink eye until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Scabies until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Head lice until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until a health care provider confirms the administration of the treatment
- Evidence of bed bugs on child and/or belongings until 24 hours after last sighting of bed bug(s) on child and/or belongings
- Tuberculosis until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend care
- Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and sores are dry
- Strep throat or other streptococcal infection until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- Chicken Pox until all sores have dried and crusted
- Shingles if sores cannot be covered by clothing or bandage until the sores have crusted & are dry
- Pertussis until five days after antibiotic treatment
- Mumps until five days after onset of gland swelling
- Hepatitis A virus until one week after onset of illness, jaundice or as directed by the health department
- Measles until four days after the onset of rash
- Rubella until seven days after the onset of rash
- COVID-19 must be symptom free

Notification of Possible Communicable Illness

If a child has been diagnosed with a communicable illness, the Director must be informed immediately. Information on the symptoms and treatment of the illness will then be distributed to parents as technical assistance. Specific information about the ill child is never shared with other parents.

Health Care Consultation

The YMCA has made specific arrangements with a health care provider who has agreed to provide us with consultation for both routine and emergency health care for children. If we are unable to reach the parent or child's physician, we may contact this provider for general medical advice regarding the child's specific needs.

Dispensing Medication

For our staff to administer medication, a signed parent permission form must be filled out indicating the name of the child, date of birth, allergies, doctor's name and phone number, pharmacy phone number, name of medication, time when given, route of administering, expiration date, start date, end date and reason for medication. For routine maintenance medications, this form must be completed each month. This form and all medication must be given to your child's teacher to securely store. All medications are dispensed by certified staff and recorded on the medication administration form. The Y will make reasonable accommodations to meet the medication needs for children with disabilities. Additional information may be required to determine the necessary accommodation.

For the safety of all children, please do not leave any medication in the children's bags or cubbies. Topical creams, bug spray and sunscreen are considered medication and cannot be applied by a child or left in their cubby. Never send in bottles or food with medication in it. Children's medications will be stored in a locked cabinet, closet or other secure location.

All prescription medicines must be in the original container with a current prescription label stating the child's name, dosage, times, and type of medication. Certain non-prescription medication (Tylenol, Triaminic, etc.) will be given when they are provided by the parent in their original container, are unexpired, or accompanied by a physician's note listing days, times, and amounts of dosage.

Food Allergies

Parents must provide a complete medical history, including any food allergies or intolerances, at the time of enrollment. Each staff person working with a child with known food allergies or intolerances is given a copy of the information. Additionally, if a child's doctor has created a food allergy action plan, the parent must provide a copy to the center. Children with food allergies or intolerances will need to provide a food substitution form completed by the parent and child's medical provider.

Community Partnerships

At the Y, we strive to provide the highest quality care for your child. As part of this commitment, we work with other community agencies to supplement or enhance our programs. We maintain active partnerships as described here.

American Camp Association

The American Camp Association is a community of camp professionals who, for over 100 years, have joined together to share our knowledge and experience and to ensure the quality of camp programs. As an organization, we value the world, the people who live in it, and the contribution each individual can make. The YMCA of Delaware is committed to achieving the standards provided by the American Camp Association.

Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH)

CATCH is a health program designed to help children and their families adopt healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. The students engage in a number of stimulating and non-competitive games and exercises that are developmentally appropriate and FUN as well as learn healthy eating habits and behaviors.

Delaware Stars for Early Success

Delaware Stars for Early Success is a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), which is a method used to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care and education and school-age settings. It establishes quality standards for programs and provides technical assistance and limited financial support to programs involved in Stars as they engage in quality improvement efforts. Delaware Stars is designed as a voluntary system that expects programs to work on improving quality by moving up the Star Levels.

The Food Bank of Delaware

The Food Bank of Delaware provides nutritious foods to Delawareans in need and facilitates long-term solutions to the problems of hunger and poverty through community education and advocacy.

Foster Grandparent Program

The Foster Grandparent Program strives to provide opportunities for older adults to connect with the youth in their community, providing individualized and supportive service, helping the children grow physically, emotionally, socially, and mentally. This program recruits, trains, and involves low-income persons, aged 55 and over, in giving supportive one-on-one attention to youth. Foster Grandparents work with children, and their families, who could benefit from their experience. They are guided by an individualized plan directed to meet the specific needs of the child and/or their family.

Nemours Bright Start Early Literacy Program

Nemours Bright Start Early Literacy Program is a unique, interactive and fun program that is specifically designed for teaching early literacy skills to at-risk children. At-risk children are those that do not meet a certain mastery of early literacy skills such as being able to identify letters and letter sounds. In the fall, children in our Pre-Kindergarten classrooms will be assessed to determine their early literacy skills. Those children who are identified to be at risk will participate in lessons designed specifically to target their literacy skills. The 20 lesson program puts teachers on the cutting edge of early literacy best practices with a hands-on approach to building reading readiness skills in struggling learners. The program includes proven instructional strategies for developing oral language, print awareness, alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, emergent writing, and comprehension.

PNC Financial Literacy

The PNC Grow Up Great financial education initiative leverages the experience of PNC and Sesame Workshop, its partner in early childhood education, along with funding provided by the PNC Foundation. The initiative will serve children, their parents, caregivers and teachers to enhance financial education for families.

Read Aloud Delaware

Read Aloud Delaware is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to the promotion of reading in Delaware. Read Aloud Delaware promotes reading aloud to children in order to encourage a love of books and a desire to become a reader. They also help parents prepare their children to learn once they enter school. Volunteers of all ages read one on one to children in child care centers, clinics, and shelters serving low income families.

School District Partnerships

We coordinate our Before & After School Program with local schools to ensure that children in our care arrive safely to our buses in the school pick-up lines and, when possible, maintain communication with the school regarding changes in a child's schedule. A current list of schools that we serve is available on the YMCA's website.

State of Delaware – Division of Child Mental Health Services

The State of Delaware's Division of Social Services, DCMHS, provides Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Services at no cost to Delaware early childhood education programs across the state. Contracted, licensed mental health professionals with experience in working in pre-school settings and with training in evidence-based mental health practices are now partnering with early child care provider staff, providing child-specific mental health consultations at the request of the programs and working together to decrease problem behaviors while increasing positive, prosocial behaviors to promote the child's social and emotional wellbeing. Research shows that social-emotional wellbeing is most important when predicting success as children move from preschool settings to enter first grade.

Walmart Foundation

In 1982, the Walmart Foundation was created to help support the communities Walmart serves. Together, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation generally provide more than \$1 billion in cash and in-kind annual giving. The Walmart Foundation supports the meal programs at many of our locations.

Parent Resources

General

Delaware Helpline	1-800-464-4357	www.delawarehelpline.org
Division of State Service Centers	302-255-9675	www.dhss.delaware.gov

Medical

Healthy Children's Program	1-800-996-9969	
Division of Medical Assistance	302-255-9500	www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dmma
Division of Public Health	302-744-4700	
Delaware Oral Health Program	302-741-2960	www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/hsm/ohpoverview.html

Mental Health

Div. of Substance Abuse & Mental Health	302-255-9399	
Community Mental Health Clinics	302-453-4101	www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsamh
Child Mental Health Services	302-633-2600	

Family Support

Children & Families First	302-658-5177	www.cffde.org
Parents as Teachers	302-454-5955	
DART First State	1-800-553-3278	www.dartfirststate.com
Disabilities Law Program	302-575-0660	
Delaware Volunteer Legal Services	302-478-8850	
Legal Services of Delaware Inc.	302-575-0408	
The Office of the Public Defender	302-577-5200	
Low Income Energy Assistance Program	302-674-1782	www.neada.org

Children with Special Needs

Child Development Watch Program	302-995-8632	www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/chs/chscdw
Parent Information Center of Delaware	302-764-3252	www.picodel.org

Food & Nutrition

Delaware WIC Program	1-800-262-3030	
Food Bank of Delaware	302-292-1305	www.fbd.org

Financial Assistance in Child Care

Division of Social Services	302-255-9500	www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dss
Earned Income Tax Credit	302-678-2784	www.irs.gov

Emergency/Crisis Information

CONTACT Crisis Helpline	302-761-9800	www.contactdelaware.org
Domestic Violence Coordinating Council	302-255-0405	www.dvcc.state.de.us
24-Hour Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline	1-800-292-9582	
Preventive Action Telephone Hotline	302-654-1102	
Safe Arms for Babies	1-800-262-9800	
American Assoc. of Poison Control	1-800-222-1222	