

# YWCA Child Enrichment Program

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Parent Handbook 2023-2024



## **YWCA Child Enrichment Program Locations**

### **YWCA Gettysburg Daycare**

909 Fairfield Road, Gettysburg

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 6:30 am – 5:30 pm

(717) 334- 9171 ext. 126

### **YWCA Child Care at Adams Commerce Center**

50 Expedition Trail, Gettysburg

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 6:30 am – 5:30 pm

(717) 334 – 7150 ext. 222

Welcome to the YWCA of Gettysburg & Adams County Child Enrichment Program! We are very pleased that you have chosen the YWCA as your child care provider. The YWCA Child Enrichment Program believes that each child is a unique person and comes from a unique background. Admission is open to all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. The Child Enrichment Program embodies the ideals of the YWCA – peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people. Therefore, we encourage children to communicate peacefully and to embrace diversity and equality.

In our classrooms, you will see a curriculum that is designed to enhance and enrich learning in all developmental areas, including physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and self-help skills. Activities are a balance of child-directed and teacher-directed experiences.

Our staff act as facilitators, structuring the environment to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for exploration and discovery. Interactions and activities are designed to develop the child's self-esteem and a positive feeling toward learning. Our teachers work in partnership with parents, communicating regularly to build a mutual understanding and greater consistency for children.

The YWCA Child Enrichment Program consists of care for:

- Infants
- Young Toddlers
- Older Toddlers
- Preschool
- The Pre-K Counts Program
- Before and After School Care for School Age Children
- Summer Camp for School Age Children

Each classroom is run by a qualified member of our staff, holding at minimum a high school diploma or GED. All staff have a minimum of 2,500 hours working with children. All staff receive annual trainings on topics related to child care. Staff members receive training in the following areas: YWCA Emergency Plan, First Aid, Infant/Child CPR, Water and Fire Safety, Health and Safety, Mandated Reporter, Curriculum, Assessments, and Language Development. Our creative and energetic staff looks forward to working with you and your child!

## **Keystone Stars Participant**

The YWCA Child Enrichment Program is an active participant in the Keystone Stars Program ([www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org)) Keystone Stars is a quality improvement program that recognizes child care providers who exceed state health and safety licensing requirements.

## **Department of Human Services (DHS) Regulations**

The YWCA Child Enrichment Programs offer the highest quality of care at every age group we serve. In doing so, we comply with all DHS regulations. The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook reflect current DHS regulations. Any changes or updates to DHS regulations would supersede our policies, and we would comply at the time of implementation.

## **Infant Care**

We provide quality care for infants from 6 weeks to approximately 12 months of age. The staff provides nurturing care for the changing needs of infants. The staff will coordinate with each family to maintain the child's individual schedule as much as possible. At enrollment, each family will provide the child's schedule, including napping, eating, toileting, likes and dislikes. The YWCA participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and provided generic milk based formula and a variety of infant foods and cereals. Parents must introduce foods at home and will update the child's schedule as needed. The YWCA provides generic diapers, wipes, and crib sheets.

Per DHS regulations, the YWCA follows a Safe Sleep policy, where each child must be placed on his or her back when placed in the crib. If the child is able to roll onto his or her side or belly independently, staff will monitor sleep, but allow the child to remain in the position that he or she finds most comfortable. Regulations forbid any blankets, pillows, toys (including pacifiers with stuffed animals attached) or bottles to be in the crib with a sleeping child.

### **Items to Bring (please label everything with the child's first and last name):**

- Three bottles that will remain at the center for daily use
- Two changes of clothing (seasonally appropriate)
- Diaper cream (permission slip provided in the enrollment packet)
- Formula if not electing to use the generic formula provided
- Breast milk for nursing mothers – All breast milk must be labeled with the child's name and the date it was expressed
- Diapers/wipes if not electing to use the generic products provided
- If utilizing cloth diapers, parents must provide a container that seals for soiled diapers to be kept in and sent home daily
- Sunscreen if the child is over six months (permission slip provided in the enrollment packet)

## **Abusive Head Trauma**

Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may

last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death. As such, we take abusive head trauma very seriously and will follow the following procedure:

- Children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma including irritability and/or high pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from hitting the head.
- If Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma is suspected, staff will:
  - Call 911 immediately upon suspecting Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma and inform the director.
  - Call the parents/guardians.
  - If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.

Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care are reported to Childline by calling 1-800-932-0313 or reporting it electronically at <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>.

### **Parent Resources**

- The American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-23prevention/athome/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/athome/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx)
- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome: <http://dontshake.org/family-resources>
- The Period of Purple Crying: <http://purplecrying.info/>

### **Toddler Care**

We provide quality care for toddlers from approximately 12 months – 3 years of age. In a day, toddlers will experience both large and small group developmentally appropriate activities, including songs, stories, art and sensory activities, opportunities for creative play, indoor and outdoor recreation, and circle time. Staff will work with parents and children on toilet training in this program.

#### **Items to Bring (please label everything with the child's first and last name):**

- A drawstring or small fabric bag for personal item storage (Per DHS regulations, **plastic bags are NOT permitted**)
- Two complete changes of clothing (seasonally appropriate) including a shirt, pants, socks, underwear, and a jacket.
- Sunscreen (permission slip provided in the enrollment packet).

### **Preschool Care**

We provide quality care for preschool children approximately 3-5 years of age. In the preschool school rooms we offer developmentally appropriate activities designed to encourage development in all areas including: cognitive, social & emotional, fine and gross motor skills, and self-help skills. This program offers theme based curriculum designed around the children's interests. Activities include: art, music, circle time, and outdoor/indoor recreation. Our

preschool classrooms offer a more structured environment to prepare your child for elementary school. Lesson plans follow PA Learning Standards and are implemented via our curriculum.

**Items to Bring (please label everything with the child's first and last name):**

- A drawstring or small fabric bag for personal item storage (Per DHS regulations, **plastic bags are NOT permitted**)
- One complete changes of clothing (seasonally appropriate) including a shirt, pants, socks, underwear, and a jacket.
- Sunscreen (permission slip provided in the enrollment packet).

**Pre-K Counts**

The Pre-K Counts program is a grant-based program offered at the YWCA. Families wishing to apply for Pre-K Counts must meet current income requirements and adhere to all policies and procedures outlined in the Pre-K Counts handbook.

**School-Age Before and After Care**

The School Age programs provide care for children completing their first day of kindergarten through 12 years old. We provide all day care when schools are delayed, dismiss early, or are closed. Children MAY NOT attend during a school day when school is in session.

The program provides a variety of activities/experiences for children attending private or public schools. The school age program focused on social and emotional development and enrichment. Activities include: games, learning centers, indoor and outdoor physical recreation, and provide developmentally appropriate quiet time for children to work on homework, not to exceed 20 minutes.

Children riding the bus must be on time. Parents will still need to sign children in to release them into our care. Parents may not, at any time, allow their child to run from a car to a bus and assume we have taken them into our care. This is not a safe practice and teachers may be unaware of the child's attendance. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that the child is on time and properly signed in for our staff to maintain proper supervision and ensure the safety of all children.

**Summer Camp**

Summer Camp is offered for children completing their first day of Kindergarten through 12 years of age. Camp typically begins the Monday following the last day of school in Gettysburg and lasts approximately 12 weeks. Teachers plan a variety of exciting activities and experiences to keep children engaged. These activities include: arts and crafts, science experiments, centers, indoor/outdoor recreation, and field trips.

Summer Camp has its own policies and procedures that are distributed in the Summer Camp Parent Information Packet annually. These policies and procedures exist in tandem with the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

## **Toys**

Children in toddlers and preschool may bring a stuffed animal and personal blanket for naptime. **NO OTHER TOYS FROM HOME WILL BE PERMITTED.** Toys from home are often a source of conflict. Toys from home may also end up lost, stolen or broken. We are not responsible for any lost, stolen, or broken toys/items from home. If children bring toys from home, the teacher will remove them for safe keeping and return to the parent at the end of the day. Certain toys that serve a function may be permitted as an accommodation for children if this agreed upon and documented with the teachers and/or coach/director.

## **Required Paperwork**

DHS regulations require that certain paperwork is kept on file for each child. This paperwork must be updated at regular intervals for the center to be in compliance. The director and teachers will work together to distribute any required paperwork to parents. It is the parents responsibility to fill out any paperwork given in a timely manner and completely. Failure to return required paperwork may result in suspension of care until the paperwork is received.

## **Fees and Enrollment Procedures**

### **Enrollment**

At the time of enrollment, parents are required to complete and return a registration packet prior to the child's first day of care. The following information is contained in the enrollment packet:

- Welcome letter
- Emergency contact form
- IEP/IFSP release
- Tuition agreement
- Meal benefit forms
- Permission to apply diaper cream
- Permission to apply sunscreen
- Permission to apply hand lotion and/or chapstick (must be labeled with your child's name and given to the teacher)
- Civil rights compliance
- Photo release
- Child Health Assessment – must be on file by 30 days or care will be suspended until received
- Handbook Agreement
- Getting to Know You – completed with the child's teacher
  - Complete Ages and Stages Social and Emotional Screening Tool
  - Child/Family Information Sheet
  - Release of Information to Schools (School Age Only)
  - Bullying and Inappropriate Behavior Policy (School Age Only)
  - Infant individual schedule (feeding and napping)
- Medical care plan (if needed)

## **Fees**

Weekly tuition is based on the age group of the class the child is enrolled.

Fees for the following week are due **Friday by noon for service to be rendered**. If payment is not received by close of business on Monday for the week of service, care will be suspended until payment is received.

If care is suspended, you will NOT accrue late fees, however regular weekly charges will be applied during the suspension to hold your child's spot.

If services are suspended and not resolved with the Administrative Coordinator within 3 months, care will be terminated and the YWCA may take legal action to resolve this debt.

In order to help alleviate these issues, childcare at the YWCA will be moving to a CASHLESS system. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT CASH OR CHECK AS PAYMENT. You may choose to pay weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly for automatic withdrawals.

For families on CCW subsidy plans:

- CCW will regularly be notified of delinquent co-pays.
- If your child exceeds the allotted 40 absences, you will default to a prorated full price fee for any additional absences in the year. If your child exceeds 5 consecutive absences, you will be charged full price per day for the additional days that CCW will not cover. This is because a full week's fee is due regardless of closings, absenteeism, vacations, etc. per the fee agreement. This fee will be added to your account at the end of each month and must be paid within 30 days to continue care. Care will be suspended and CCW will be notified if payments are not made.

A late fee of \$20.00 will be charged after 5:35 pm. For every minute after 5:35, and additional \$5.00 per minute will be charged.

If you wish to withdraw your child for an extended period of time, including summer, you will be charged \$50 per month. Extended periods are not to exceed 3 months and your spot will not be held if this time frame is exceeded.

For families on CCW, delinquent co-pays will be reported to CCW.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

Children may be withdrawn from the program at any time. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the director knows when a child will be withdrawn. Failure to notify the director may result in fees continuing to accrue for which you will be held responsible. It is best practice to notify the directors via email.

Any outstanding fees must be resolved. Failure to pay the outstanding balance will result in the inability for all family members to use the YWCA facility and its programs, and may result in legal action to collect the debt.

## **Photographs**

Upon admission to the YWCA Child Enrichment Program, you are asked to sign a photo release. At this time you inform us as to your wishes regarding outside agencies or the YWCA taking photos of your child for publication purposes. It is the parents responsibility to request a form to update, should your wishes change. The YWCA CEP staff reserves the right to take photographs of the children for educational/curriculum purposes without specific consent. Children are identified by first name and age only when these photographs are used within the program.

## **Curriculum**

The YWCA currently used the Creative Curriculum – Teaching Strategies (<https://teachingstrategies.com>) in tandem with the Funnydaffer (funnydaffer.com) curriculum. These are child centered approaches which implements learning through hands-on activities utilizing materials found in their daily lives. Staff provide the materials and engage in the children's play asking open ended questions to extend their learning and encourage creative play. This approach aligns with the PA Early Learning Standards (<https://www.pakeys.org/pa-early-learning-initiatives/early-learning-standards/>).

## **Developmental Screenings**

At enrollment, staff will work with families to complete the Ages and Stages Social and Emotional Developmental screening tool (ASQ-SE). This screening tool will provide insight into the child's social-emotional development.

## **Assessments**

The infant, toddler and pre-school programs will use the state approved assessment tool, Teaching Strategies Gold, to monitor each child's progress and development (<https://teachingstrategies.com/product/gold>). This tool will be utilized three times a year.

The school age classrooms use the Desired Results Developmental Profile to monitor the progress of the children participating in before and after care. This tool will be utilized two time a year.

During each assessment period, parent teacher conferences will be offered to discuss your child's developmental progress. Parents are encouraged to attend these conferences to work with teachers and develop relationships that best support each child.

Additionally, staff may be asked to complete the Ages and Stages developmental screening tool for ages infant – 5 years of age (ASQ-3). This is an additional source of information and assessment that may help us to help your child, as needed. (<https://agesandstages.com>)

## **Transitioning to a New Class**

We will complete a group transition each year when a new school year begins. On occasion, there may be a need to complete an individual transition.



Your child will be transition to different classrooms with the YWCA as your child grows and develops. Several criteria will be considered before a child is transitioned (chronological age, developmental age, potty training, slots available in the next classroom, etc.). Teachers will include activities in their lesson plans that will prepare them for this annual transition.

In the event that an individual transition would need to take place, the follow steps will take place during transitions.

- You will be notified by letter regarding the transition to be made. You may request to meet with the director to address any questions or concerns regarding the transition. The director may also request to meet with you if there are concerns or questions regarding a transition.
- Teachers in both classrooms will plan transition activities to be included on their lesson plans to help prepare your child for the transition. The children will transition over a three day period.
  - Day One – Sign your child into their current classroom and the staff will help them to their new classroom after breakfast. Your child will participate in the morning activities and then return to their current classroom for lunch and the remainder of the day.
  - Day Two – Sign your child into their current classroom and the staff will help them to their new classroom for lunch, nap, and afternoon activities. You will be picking your child up and signing them out from their new classroom.
  - Day Three – Your sign in sheet will move to your new classroom. You will take them to their new classroom for a full day of activities. This will complete the transition and your new fee agreement will begin.

After all transitions, you will be given a 30 day report from your child's new teachers and we will also ask you to answer some questions pertaining to the transition.

## **Child Health Policy**

If a child displays signs and/or symptoms of an illness, that prevents them from participating in daily activities, the parent or guardians will be required to pick up their child.

Conditions and/or symptoms that would require the parents or guardians to pick up their child and keep them out of the center are:

- Fever of 100.4 or greater with signs and/or symptoms of illness or behavior change
- Repeated vomiting accompanied with a fever and/or signs or symptoms of illness or behavior change
- Repeated (2 or more consecutive times) and uncontrolled diarrhea (stool runs out of the diaper or the child can't get to the toilet in time)
- Suspicious rash with fever and/or signs symptoms of illness or behavior change
- Signs and/or symptoms of illness or behavior change

Signs and/or symptoms of illness or behavior of illness are defined as, but not limited to:

- A child that displays unusual drowsiness, persistent fussiness, inexplicable irritability, difficulty breathing, wheezing, and the inability to participate in the classroom's daily activities.

We will follow the Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools reference guide written and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics to determine exclusion for illnesses and/or communicable diseases.

An ill child shall be given appropriate care away from general play, until the parent, guardian, or designated individual arrives. The center will notify the parent/guardian of any suspected exposure to a communicable disease. **PARENTS MUST NOTIFY THE CENTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF YOUR CHILD IS DIAGNOSED WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE.** Parents must sign the sick policy at pick up.

Children may return to their classroom once they have been symptom and/or fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication, or have written release from a licensed physician stating that your child's illness is not contagious and that they may return to the classroom.

Covid policies will be updated as information from the CDC and DOH becomes available and will be posted in the center.

## **Medication**

We strictly adhere to Pennsylvania law regarding Child medication and special diets. Pennsylvania law requires that we make reasonable accommodation in accordance with both federal and state laws to facilitate administration of medication or a special diet that is prescribed by a physician, physician's assistant, or Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner (CRNP) as treatment related to the child's special needs. Facility persons are not required to administer medication or special diets which are requested or required by the parent, a physician, a physician's assistant or a CRNP but are not treatment related to the child's special needs. When medication or special diets are administered, the following requirements apply:

- (1) A prescription or non-prescription medication may be accepted only in an original container. The medication must remain in the container in which it was received.
- (2) A staff person shall administer a prescription medication only if written instructions are provided from the individual who prescribed the medicine. Instructions for administration contained on a prescription label are acceptable.
- (3) The label of a medication container must identify the name of the medication and the name of the child for whom the medication is intended. Medication shall be administered to only the child whose name appears on the container.
- (4) Medication shall be stored in a locked area of the facility or in an area that is out of reach of children.
- (5) Medication shall be stored in accordance with the manufacturer's or health professional's instructions on the original label.
- (6) A parent shall provide written consent for administration.

- (7) We are required to establish and maintain a medication log if prescription or non-prescription medication is administered. The log will include:
- (a) The name of the medication;
  - (b) The name of the child receiving the medication;
  - (c) A requirement for refrigeration;
  - (d) The amount of medication administered;
  - (e) The date of administration;
  - (f) The time of administration;
  - (g) The initials of the staff person who administered the medication;
  - (h) Special notes related to problems of administration.
- (8) If a special diet is prescribed for a child and if the diet is administered to a child, written instructions and the parent's written consent shall be retained in the child's file.

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§3270.133, 55 PA ADC §3270.133

55 Pa. Code

### **Care Plans**

Pursuant to federal and state law, the YWCA does not discriminate against children with disabilities in its childcare and summer programs. The YWCA provides reasonable accommodations or reasonable modifications to children with disabilities, unless such accommodations/modifications would constitute a fundamental alteration to the YWCA's childcare or summer programs. If your child has a disability and needs a reasonable accommodation or reasonable modification to participate in the YWCA's childcare or summer programs, please contact your center director: Michelle Stojka (717) 334-7150 ext. 222 or [mstojka@ywcagettysburg.org](mailto:mstojka@ywcagettysburg.org) at Adams Commerce Center or Katie Myers (717) 334 – 9171 ext.126 or [kmyers@ywcagettysburg.org](mailto:kmyers@ywcagettysburg.org) at the 909 Fairfield Road. The YWCA will respond in writing to reasonable accommodation/modification requests within fourteen days with an approval, denial, or narrowly-tailored request for medical documentation.

### **Mandated Reporter Information**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report and suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. In accordance with section 3270.19 of the PA DHS Child Day Care Center code book, child day care center employees are considered mandated reporters under this law. In addition, teachers and child care administrators are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting this matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. This responsibility is taken very seriously and we will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. No one, including center management and/or a child's parents, can interfere with this reporting requirement. As mandated reporters, the staff cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith". The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interests of all children.

## **Emergency Care Procedures**

For your child's safety and protection, staff member are trained in First Aid Infant/Child CPR in accordance with the Pennsylvania DHS regulations. In the event of an accident that creates the need for medical attention, we will proceed as follows:

For minor injuries, the trained YWCA staff member will administer First Aid onsite. The staff will document all incident by completing the incident/accident report and sending this report to parents on our app. Parents and guardians will be able to view the report in the app and a copy will be placed in the child's file.

When immediate emergency medical care is needed for a child, a YWCA staff member will call 911 and request emergency assistance. Parents will be contacted immediately. If parents are unable to be reached, your emergency contacts will be called. If necessary, your child will be transported to the nearest emergency center by the dispatched ambulance and a YWCA staff member will accompany them until a parent or guardian arrives. An accident report will be filled out. The original will be given to a parent and a copy will be maintained and submitted to the DHS within 24 hours.

## **Emergency Contact Information and Keeping Staff Informed**

Emergency contact forms will be completed at enrollment and updated every 6 months or sooner if your information changes. It is the parents' responsibility to notify staff of changes. We rely on this information in the event of an emergency.

## **Health Assessments**

All children will require a health assessment within 30 days of enrollment. In addition, children will be required to have a regularly scheduled physical in accordance with the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Parents will be notified when their child is due for a health assessment by the administrative coordinator. Care will be suspended if health assessments are not completed in a timely manner.

All children enrolled in a child care facility must follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics for vaccines. If a family has a medical or religious exemption, they must provide documentation in writing as such. If there is an outbreak and your child is not vaccinated, we are required to exclude the child until the outbreak has concluded.

Children under the age of 5 years old are required to have the annual flu shot. If a family elects not to have the flu shot for medical reasons or parent choice, you must provide written documentation annually when flu shots become available stating the reasoning for electing not to get the flu shot.

## **Rest Time Policies and Procedures**

Adequate rest and/or quiet time is an important part of a young child's day. The children rest in the afternoon for 2 hours. Children are not required to sleep, but are required to lie quietly for a portion of time to allow those who do nap to do so without interruption. If a child does not nap, they will be offered alternative activities while others sleep. These activities may include puzzles, books, or coloring that can be completed on their nap cot.

All children will be assigned a crib, mat, or cot that will be labeled with his or her name for resting/napping. The Safe Sleep policy for infants is outlined in the "Infants" section of this handbook. Parents of toddlers and preschoolers may provide a small pillow and/or something soft and cuddly to sleep with. All bedding will be provided by the YWCA and laundered at the facility.

## **Behavior Management**

The approach of the YWCA in regards to behavior management is one that views behavior as communication and seeks to guide children to increasingly be aware of their emotions and actions and learn over time and with guidance how cope and solve problems with increasing independence.

In addressing behaviors, YWCA staff will take proactive measures to set children up for success in the classroom. These measures will include, having a daily schedule, routines, implementing engaging lessons and activities, including lessons and activities that specifically focus on social and emotional development, and setting clear limits and expectations. When behaviors do arise, staff will employ the Flip-It model of redirection. In this model, staff will help the child to acknowledge and/or name his or her feelings, set specific limits for the behavior, offer inquiries to the child to help guide him or her learn to solve the problem in an acceptable manner, and finally offer prompts to the child to further support redirection, as needed. Any and all consequences for behavior should be logical.

If behavior persists, the following steps will be taken as needed:

- Teachers will conduct observations and track behaviors to look for patterns
- An Ages and Stages questionnaire will be completed by the teacher
- Coaching from the Assistant Director will take place based on the data collected to implement accommodations that may help to curb the behavior
- A meeting with the family will be held to collaborate and develop a plan of action
- Outside support services will be contacted to provide more intensive support

Please note that every situation is different and will be dealt with on an individual basis in the manner that best supports the child. If inappropriate behavior continues after the above steps have been taken, the child may be dismissed from the program. It is our goal to serve and support every child to the best of our ability, however we must also be able to maintain proper supervision of all children per DHS regulations at all times. If a situation occurs that severely jeopardizes the health, safety and well-being of the children and/or staff in the program, we reserve the right to immediately dismiss a child, without advanced warning or notice.

In addition, school age children participating in before and after care and summer camp, have incorporated a Bullying and Inappropriate Behavior policy that must be signed at enrollment.

## **Biting**

Unfortunately, biting occurs in most childcare programs for toddlers. When it happens it can be scary, frustrating and stressful for children, parents, and staff. There are no quick and easy solutions to stop biting. However, we try to reduce biting by:

- Staff model appropriate language communication and actions with the children

- When a child is bitten, staff avoids any immediate response that reinforces biting, including negative attention. The staff employs the FLIP-IT model to narrate the emotions, redirect the behavior, and help the child learn to communicate appropriate ways to communicate his/her needs.

All biting incidents will be documented and an incident/accident report will be sent to families on our app. Staff will track biting to look for any patterns that may occur. Appropriate actions will be taken based on these patterns, including, but not limited to, altering room arrangements, separating children, requesting parent conferences, and/or providing a child accommodations in the daily schedule.

## **Recreation**

### **Playground and Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play is an integral part of our daily schedule and curriculum. Fresh air and exercise are critical to a child's health and development. Additionally, it is a DHS regulation that children are taken outside daily. Children will be taken outside for a fully scheduled outdoor time if the real feel temperatures are above 25 degrees Fahrenheit and below 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Outdoor play will be limited to 15-30 minutes if temperatures are out of this range and the weather is not too extreme. It is the parents/guardians responsibility to ensure that children are dressed properly for the weather. We will make every effort to provide a forgotten item for a child to be dressed appropriately for the weather, however we cannot guarantee that we will have these items to provide. If children do not come in weather appropriate clothing, we are still required to take them outdoors. We strongly encourage parents to keep extra seasonally appropriate clothing in their child's classroom. Boots, snowpants, mittens, hats, etc. should be kept in classrooms in the colder months. Please remember, when dressing your child that they will be running and playing, and therefore should be wearing shoes and clothing that allow them to do so safely. Children should wear or have sneakers in their cubby for outdoor play. **If for medical reasons a child must be kept inside, they will need to be kept home. If for any other reason you do not wish for your child to be taken outside, they should be kept home.**

### **Walking Trips**

Children are taken for walks on the YWCA property and surrounding areas. Again, sneakers are strongly encouraged for safety.

### **Field Trips**

In the event that a class takes a field trip, parents will be notified of the destination, time of departure and return, and method of transportation. Parents MUST sign a permission slip for their child to attend a field trip. In the event that you do not wish for your child to attend a field trip, it will be your responsibility to arrange for alternate care during the hours your child's class is out of the center.

### **Water Play**

In the summer months, children will participate in water play. Parents must provide a bathing suit, water shoes, and a towel, all labeled with the child's name, in order for the child to participate. All teachers are trained on water safety annually.

## **Food and Nutrition**

The YWCA provides breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP provides federal funding for nutritious food for children in a regulated setting. The CACFP assists us in covering costs for meals provided.

All meals are served at no extra charge regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by this department.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632 – 9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested on the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; by fax to: (202) 690 – 7442; or by email to: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Menus are posted in each classroom and on the parent information board. All breakfast, lunch, and snacks are Federal Department of Agriculture approved. Each classroom eats together in a family-style setting, allowing for uniformity and consistency within the program while teaching and/or enforcing proper table manners and introducing new and healthy foods.

In the event that your child is unable to eat the foods we provide, a doctor's note is required to provide reasonable dietary accommodations. If you are choosing provide a component of your child's meals, these foods must meet the CACFP minimum serving requirements, unless otherwise specified by a doctor.

NO outside food or beverages will be allowed to be consumed in the center without a doctor's note. **Should you wish for your child to have outside food, they must finish it PRIOR to entering the classroom.** Any outside food or beverages brought in will be kept safely and returned to the parent at pickup.

## **Food Allergies**

If your child has food allergies, please bring in written notification from the child's physician and notify the Director. Food allergies will be posted in the kitchen and classrooms for the staff to easily refer to.

We are a nut free facility. Any treats being brought in (for example, to celebrate a child's birthday) must be store bought and nut free. If these items are not nut free, we will be unable to serve them and they will be returned to the parent who brought them in.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are special days at the YWCA, and we enjoy celebrating them with children. All birthday celebrations are held during afternoon snack. Parents are welcome to join us. Parents

may send a special treat for birthday snack, provided it is nut-free. Please arrange for any birthday activity, including bringing snack, with your child's teacher one week ahead of time.

## **Arrival and Pick-Up Procedures**

It is very important that your child arrives before 9:00 am. Most of the structured curriculum takes place beginning around this time and your child will miss out on learning experiences should they arrive late.

Please sign your child in and out daily. A sign in/out sheet is available in your child's classroom, including school age. **Parents are required to accompany their child to the classroom and sign them in and out. Parents additionally, must make sure the child is handed off to/released from a teacher. At no time, should a child be allowed to walk into a classroom or group of children without a parent handing them off to the teacher. At no time should a child be picked up, without ensuring the teacher knows.** Violations of this policy result in improper supervision, in violation of DHS regulations, and repeat offenders may be dismissed from the program.

If you are a family who participates in CCW funding, your child must be present with you in order to sign him/her in or out. Teachers will check these logs and remove any improper sign ins. We will go by classroom attendance to input attendance into CCW reporting. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the teacher sees that you have your child and you are choosing to sign your child in/out to mark them present for attendance. We are not responsible for marked absences in which the parent does not explicitly tell the teacher that the child is being signed in/out with the child present. CCW allows 40 absences per fiscal year.

Children may not be released to anyone not listed on the child's emergency contact form. It is the responsibility of the parent to update the contact form as needed. The parents or guardians shall notify the center in writing when someone other than those names on the emergency contact list will be coming for the child. **Please understand if no one is listed as an emergency contact to whom your child can be released on the emergency contact form, by default, Children and Youth Services will be the only people we are allowed to release your child to if we cannot get in contact with you, per DHS regulations.**

If changes in pick-up arrangements are "last-minute" parents may call and verbally request that their child is released. In either case, a staff member will call to confirm who is picking up the child. A proper picture ID must be presented before a child will be released. For your child's safety, the person picking up will be asked for their ID if the staff in the room has not previously met them.

## **Emergency Closing of the YWCA**

In an attempt to meet the needs of working parents, the YWCA makes every effort to be open when the weather is inclement. You can call the YWCA automated phone system for a recorded message (717)334-9171. You may also check the YWCA website or Facebook. Additional methods to check will be posted in the center. If the weather dictates that we must close early, you will be contacted by YWCA staff and given a time by which you must pick up your child.

## **Family and Custody Issues**



The YWCA Child Enrichment Program staff is not qualified to make decisions on custody issues. We will not act as mediators or counselors with parents. Unless given court documentation by the enrolling parent that denies access to the child by the other parent, staff will allow both parents free access to the child and any and all information pertaining to the child. Staff will follow the current court document on file. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide the most current documentation. Either custodial parent may provide court documentation, regardless of who the enrolling parent is.

In situations where the parents are separated or divorce and joint/shared custody has been awarded, the staff will make every effort to provide duplicates of information for both parties.

### **Transfer of Child Records**

In the event that your child relocates to another educational setting, you may request that your child's records also be transferred. In order for your child's records to be sent, you must provide written consent to share the information with your new child care facility.

### **Parent/Family Involvement**

We believe that high quality childcare programs need a partnership between teachers and parents. Frequent, informal communication is encouraged with staff on a daily basis. Parents may also call or visit at any point in the day.

While parent conferences are scheduled regularly after assessments, parents or teachers may request a conference as needed.

In addition, the CEP will offer opportunities throughout the year for parent involvement. These opportunities will be communicated with families as they arise.

The YWCA CEP program recognizes that parents are the most important people in their child's life. Children benefit more from the childcare experience when their parents are involved. Studies support that children do better in school when their parents are involved in their education. We strongly encourage you to participate in events offered to be an active participant. Additionally, teachers and staff welcome your ideas for improving the program.

### **Parking Lot Policies**

Anyone driving on YWCA property must observe all posted policies, including the speed limit and driving directions.

At the Adams Commerce Center Location, parents are NOT permitted to make a U-turn, or cut through the opening in the median. You must circle fully around. This is a safety issue for children and other cars.

### **Volunteers**

Parents are always welcome in your child's classroom. Our staff values your support and assistance. If you choose to volunteer, please arrange this with your child's teacher at least a week ahead of time for the teacher to be able to prepare special activities, knowing that they will have additional help. Additionally, this will ensure appropriate scheduling and timing for

classroom activities. Please call to inform your classroom teacher if you have scheduled a time to volunteer and you cannot make it.

Anyone who volunteers for 5 or more hours in the classroom will be required to do the following:

- Obtain a PA Child Abuse Clearance and a PA Criminal Record Check
- Complete mandated reporter training
- Complete fire safety training
- Complete center emergency plan training

As a volunteer, you may at no time count in ratio, be alone with a child (including your own unless they are signed out to you), or be asked to take responsibility for the care of a child (including diaper changes/toileting).

Volunteers may be asked to:

- Eat at a table with a group of children
- Go outside with children and interact with them
- Sit with children during circle time
- Play with children in the classroom
- Support the teacher in planned activities
- Go on a field trip
- Assist in safety measures
- Assist in cleaning up/preparing for the next activity

Please keep in mind that volunteers should be supporting the teacher's planned activities in the classroom at all times.

Things to remember when volunteering:

- Come dressed for anything. You may be asked to participate in a messy activity.
- Foul language and yelling will not be permitted in the classroom. You will be asked to leave immediately and this may result in termination of care for your child as it is also a violation of our parent code of conduct.
- Hitting, grabbing and slapping will not be permitted in the classroom. You will be asked to leave immediately and may not return to volunteer if this behavior occurs.
- You are a role model for the children
- Follow the teachers' instructions and let them know if you do not understand what they are asking you to do or if you need additional guidance.
- All the child to do things for themselves.
- Enjoy being in the classroom and recognize that you are making a difference in the lives of the children.

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

The YWCA requires that parents of enrolled children shall, at all times, behave in a manner consistent with courtesy and respect. One of the goals of the center is to provide an appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this environment is not only the responsibility of the YWCA employees, but also each and every parent and adult who enters the center. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will have their services terminated immediately and will not be permitted on the property thereafter.

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At no time shall inappropriate language be directed toward a staff member.

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. And shall be reported to appropriate authorities. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the center will not assume the risk of a second chance. Parents must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.

### **CEP Closings 2023 -2024**

Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup> – Labor Day  
Thursday and Friday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving Break  
Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup> - Christmas  
Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup> – New Year's Day  
Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup> – Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup> – Easter Break  
Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup> – Memorial Day  
Thursday, July 4<sup>th</sup> – Independence Day  
August In-Service - TBD

### **Our Mission**

The YWCA Gettysburg & Adams County is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

### **Our Vision**

The YWCA Gettysburg & Adams County will be the center for personal and community growth – a place to learn, to play, and to improve emotional and physical well-being. By connecting cultures, encouraging healthy lifestyles, and empowering all who walk through our doors, we will guide Adams County to positive change.

### **Updates/Changes**

Policies outlined in this handbook are subject to change at any time. A current copy of updated handbooks will be available by request and on our website.