



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Building Bright Futures Early Learning Family Handbook



Everyone is welcome. Financial assistance is available. The **YMCA of Greater Seattle** strengthens communities in King and south Snohomish counties through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.



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WELCOME

Dear YMCA Family,

Welcome to Early Learning with the YMCA! We are pleased that you have chosen the YMCA to partner in the care and education of your children. We offer a wide variety of exciting and enriching programs for you and your family. Y Early Learning programs are tons of fun AND instructive for life. Our staff provides activities that have a positive, life-long impact on your child through:

- Developing self-confidence and independence
- Communicating core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility
- Creating lasting friendships and lifelong memories
- Encouraging learning and exploration in a supportive environment
- Infusing fun and good health into activities each day

Positive relationships among children, staff and families are critical for each child's healthy development and social-emotional growth. A small ratio of children to staff enables Y leaders to engage in activities and conversations with each child every day. In our quality programs, staff is engaging and interacts with children using warmth, patience, understanding and equity. In addition they:

- Are responsive to kid's feelings, needs, cultures, abilities and languages
- Encourage leadership skills by letting them offer ideas to expand or enrich an activity and suggest and initiate activities
- Allow children - as a key part of learning - to make and learn from their own mistakes

We also make sure that there are positive relationships among staff. We know the children look to Y staff as role models, watching and learning as they collaborate, communicate and solve problems with each other.

This handbook is provided to help answer any questions regarding policies and procedures for the operation of our child care centers. Your child's safety and well-being is our primary concern. If you should need further explanation or have any questions or concerns, our child care team will be happy to assist you.

We look forward to having you as part of our Y family!

Sincerely,

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PARTNERING WITH YOU

A great program requires a partnership between staff and families. As a partner in your child's success in our program, you have free access at all times, to all areas of the classroom used by your child. We invite you to become familiar with the staff and encourage you to visit and to participate in the program as often as possible. Letting us know you would like to come in will enable us to share schedules and locations to make the most of your time.

Parent/Staff Communication

At the Y we strive to provide you with timely and relevant information about our program that helps engage you as a partner in your child's success from bi-annual satisfaction surveys and parent-teacher conferences to monthly newsletters and from daily informal communication to program learning objectives. Please feel free to provide suggestions for improvement of these communication tools to best support you and your family at our Y.

Tadpoles

Our YMCA Early Learning programs use a communication system called Tadpoles. From Tadpoles, teachers can send photos and videos to allow you to see a glimpse into your child's day! Teachers will also be creating a daily report for each child. This daily report will keep you informed of the daily activities, learning experiences, and care events for your child each day. All photos, videos, and daily reports are emailed to you directly and you can also access them via the free Tadpoles Parent app, available on Apple and Android devices, or online at www.tadpoles.com as well!

To create your account online, please use the following steps:

- Visit www.tadpoles.com and click log in at the top right
- Select Parents on the left
- Choose sign up under "use a tadpoles account"
- Use the email address that is currently on file with our school
 - o If it's a Gmail account, you can sign right in to the account
 - o If it's not a Gmail account, enter your email, choose submit and check your email for the link to establish your password

The same login information will be used to access your account via the free Tadpoles Parent app as well.

Tadpoles will continue to strengthen our home-to-school connection. From your Tadpoles parent account, via the app or web, you will be able to enter in morning drop off notes for your child's teachers, mark your child absent, and/or add any additional notes to be communicated to the school.

Each classroom will be equipped with an iPad mini or iPod touch which will be specifically used for the Tadpoles program. If you see a teacher on what looks like a phone or tablet, rest assured, they are only using the device to input information into Tadpoles. The devices are locked down, giving teachers access to only the Tadpoles software.

We consider all information captured within Tadpoles to be a private communication between our school and our families. No personal information is shared with any external parties and as a parent you will only receive information specifically about your child. The confidentiality of all information is maintained through the security features of the Tadpoles software.

YMCA CORE VALUES

The YMCA of Greater Seattle is committed to a value-based character development curriculum. The teaching of the following core values is incorporated into all youth activities:

Honesty: Fairness of conduct and adherence to facts. Other virtues that relate to this concept include sincerity, truthfulness, honor, tact, forgiveness, moderation, orderliness.

Respect: Special regard for others, including assertiveness, consideration, courtesy, gentleness, unity, tolerance, humility.

Responsibility: Moral, legal and mental accountability, including courage, determination, helpfulness, justice, reliability, loyalty, self-discipline, obedience, cleanliness.

Caring: Interest and Concern, including compassion, friendliness, generosity, kindness, love, mercy.

Values Reports

Through our values based programs, we expect all our participants to uphold the YMCA values of respect, responsibility, caring and honesty. Values Reports are given to children to both recognize demonstration of Y values or to help frame behavior improvements. These are great tools for your family to use to reinforce both good and challenging behaviors observed within our Y program in other aspects of your child's life-at home, in school, etc.

Other behaviors such as being disrespectful to other children or staff, dishonesty or failing to carry out responsibilities are also inappropriate at the YMCA. Families will receive written Values Reports. The Values Reports will be sent home and a copy will be put in your child's records. If a child receives one to three (dependent upon the offense) "Needs Attention Values Reports," the Program Supervisor, child and parents will have a formal conference to determine a plan of action.

We are aware that children sometimes copy the behaviors of other children. Therefore, in order for a child to understand the seriousness of their actions, **any** child engaging in behavior that is inappropriate at the YMCA, will receive disciplinary action. This **No Tolerance Policy** along with the **Values Reports** will enable us to better communicate with our families.

Any problems your child may be having at home may affect his/her behavior in the Y program. Please keep the Center Director informed so that we can be sensitive to your child's needs. Any information of a confidential nature will be shared only with those who need to know.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

YMCA OF GREATER SEATTLE MISSION

We're for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

YMCA child care programs will stimulate a child's physical, social, intellectual and emotional development. We use small group experiences that are developmentally appropriate.

In YMCA child care programs, your child will:

- Develop physically, emotionally and socially through a variety of safe, developmentally appropriate and challenging experiences
- Support learning objectives: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language and Cognitive Development
- Expand awareness and appreciation for the natural world
- Learn and display the four core values of the YMCA: Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Caring
- Increase appreciation for their own family, friends and surrounding community

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

All people are welcome at the YMCA regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, political ideology, or abilities. Children and parents who have limited English language ability can be assisted with the translation of written information or with an interpreter. Contact the Program Supervisor to make necessary arrangements. In our efforts to promote an awareness and understanding of the world around us, lessons about customs and celebrations of other cultures are a part of our curriculum. YMCA child care will reflect and respect the diversity in our community. Religious education is not part of our program.

The YMCA of Greater Seattle is committed to providing developmentally and culturally appropriate programming that respect, reflect, and support children and families; cultivate an understanding among children and staff and incorporate to an anti-bias approach to curriculum. We are committed to a gender-balanced, non-stereotypical curriculum where all children are allowed and encouraged to participate in all activities, free from conflict and congruent with the YMCA values. The YMCA staff respect all cultures and belief systems and encourage children to talk about their thoughts in an open and honest way that promotes interactions. Our program encourages families, extended families and the community to share interests, hobbies and cultural information and activities. The YMCA is committed to inclusion of all people in our community.

Our program follows the City of Seattle Vendor Service Agreement, and complies with Seattle Municipal Code 20.42 which requires that all city contractors not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment or customer because of race, creed, age, color, sex, mental, or physical handicap, unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification.

ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

The YMCA has an open enrollment policy on a first come first serve basis during the initial enrollment period with priority to current participants, facility members and siblings to children currently enrolled. Inquiries and referrals are accepted over the phone and an appointment can be scheduled for a family to visit the center.

Our centers serve a variety of ages of children 6 weeks – 5 years and some programs require children need to be potty trained prior to enrollment. Please contact the center in which you wish to enroll to verify specific ages served.

Registration forms are required as part of the enrollment process and are completed via online forms. If you prefer to complete paper copies of these forms, please contact the branch Child Care Registrar. Registration forms include:

- Youth Program Registration Form
- Certificate of Immunization
- Statement of Understanding Policies & Procedures
- Child Care Policy Checklist

No child will be admitted to a YMCA Early Learning program without these forms on file. Immunization need to be current and recorded on the appropriate form prior to enrollment. Additional forms may need to be completed for children with special needs or for center specific programs.

New registration forms must be completed by parents each year at the beginning of each school year (August), and updated if necessary.

WAITING LIST

The Center Director will place families on the waiting list for enrollment in the program in the order in which inquiries are received. When a space becomes available, a family is offered an opportunity to enroll based on the date on which their child was placed on the waiting list. An available space can be held no longer than 7 days after notification of the opening. A parent wishing to guarantee enrollment is required to cover the cost of tuition from the time the space becomes available or 7 days after notice of the opening is provided, whichever is later, until enrollment begins.

PAYMENTS, CREDITS AND REFUND POLICY

All children who participate in YMCA child care programs must have a current registration package that is renewed annually. The Annual Program Registration fee \$50 will be charged upon registration. Families with a **YMCA Facility Membership** will receive a discount on fee-based programs. For Tuition Rates, please see the center director.

A **fee increase** typically occurs annually in September (due to increases in operating costs). Tuition for our child care program pays for all the direct operating costs. Staff, meals and program supplies must be available for your child whether or not he/she attends. Therefore, days missed cannot be deducted from your fee. Full-time tuition includes two weeks of vacation programmed into the year.

Program Payments

Tuition payments must be received at the YMCA on or before the 1st of each month of care. If payments are not received by the due date, your session may be cancelled and deposit will be forfeited. The YMCA reserves the right to terminate childcare due to lack of payment.

At the time of registration you will be required to fill out a payment authorization form. The YMCA offers several options for payments:

- Monthly Payments
- Bi-weekly Payment
- Recurring Credit Card Payments
- Recurring Checking or Savings Account Transfer (EFTs)

Individualized payment dates can be arranged up until the 25th of each month.

Insufficient Funds: Checks, credit cards or bank drafts returned for insufficient funds or account closure will be assessed a \$30.00 processing fee.

Cancellations/ Withdrawals and Transfers

For cancellations/withdrawals or transfers, we require written notice 14 days prior to the next scheduled draft. A **Change Form** must be completed. Failure to do so will make the subsequent draft non-refundable. Tuition will be adjusted if necessary through a program refund or credit memo. Deposits are non-refundable but can be transferred and used by other family members or for other programs. Any outstanding balances will be due at the time of cancellation. The family is liable for any fees the YMCA may incur in its effort to collect any remaining balance due. Exceptions to this policy will only be made by the Program Director in extreme emergency situations, and documentation **must** be provided to support the request.

Separated/ Divorced Parents

The parent/guardian who registers the child for child care in the YMCA program will be designated the business contact responsible for payment. The YMCA may accept enrollment of a child from any parent/guardian or other adult who will make payment for care.

The YMCA will hold the parent/guardian with the business relationship responsible for full payment for child care services. Separate bills apportioning payment between separated/divorced parents will not be provided.

The YMCA will provide financial information only to the parent who has the business relationship. This information may include scholarship awards, payment records and attendance records. If the YMCA is presented with a valid subpoena or other court order, we will comply with the subpoena or court order and provide the information requested. There may be a fee to cover the costs of providing the requested information.

Subsidized Care

We accept children whose care is subsidized by Washington State Department of Social and Health Services and the City of Seattle. If your child receives subsidized care, a copy of your award letter must be available for the YMCA prior to your child beginning care. We are unable to accept children for care without authorization from the City of Seattle or DSHS. Please contact your caseworker to arrange child care in sufficient time prior to your child starting at the YMCA.

If you have a child care subsidy and fail to pay your co-pay, it is reportable to City of Seattle and DSHS. Failure to pay could have an impact on your child care subsidy. You could be at risk of having your subsidy terminated.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In addition to subsidized assistance above, limited financial assistance and flexible payment plans are available through the YMCA for every program we offer. These funds are made possible through our Annual Campaign. Financial Assistance application needs to be renewed with yearly registration. Please call your local branch for an application.

CUSTODY ISSUES

We realize that custody decisions and parenting plans are very important to both parents. **However, we are not a party to any custody orders and not in a position to enforce parenting plans.** If both parents are listed on the Youth Program Registration form, both parents may pick up regardless of the custody agreement. Any disagreements must be addressed by the parents away from the site. Please make sure you have established clear expectations between the parties. We do honor Restraining orders, Anti-Harassment orders, or other court orders created for the protection of the child. Please provide a copy to the Center Director.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The YMCA considers personal information to be confidential and has policies and procedures in place to protect it against unlawful use and disclosure. By "personal information," we mean information that relates to your child and family. Personal information does not include publicly available information or information that is available or reported in a summarized or aggregate fashion but does not identify you.

All children and family personal information remain confidential and the YMCA is not sharing any of that information with anyone without parent/guardian permission. Any information of a confidential nature will be shared only with those who need to know.

HOURS OF OPERATIONS

YMCA Early Learning is a year round program. Centers are open Monday-Friday and are not opened on weekends or **holidays** listed below. Specific hours can be located on the center information pages on ykids.org.

We expect that children are in care for **no more than 10 hours per day**. This is a Washington State law requirement. If you have questions concerning this policy, please contact the Center Director.

All YMCA Early Learning Centers will be closed on the following holidays.* Additional closure dates may apply at individual locations.

- Labor Day
- Veterans Day (Staff Training Day)
- Thanksgiving Day & the Friday following
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day (Staff Training Day)
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

*If the holiday falls on a Saturday, there will be no care on the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, there will be no care the following Monday.

Our monthly tuition is based on annual average days attending. Therefore, we do not prorate for vacations, holidays or in-service days.

Note: Seattle Preschool Program classroom may close additional days for SPP teachers training days.

DAILY SIGN-IN/OUT PROCEDURES

- A sign in/out area will be available when you arrive at the site.
- You must sign in electronically through iPads provided by the center before dropping and picking your child up.
- Your child will only be released to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult listed on the Youth Program Registration Form.
- Identification may be checked daily. While we know it can be inconvenient to show your ID every day, we appreciate you supporting our staff to keep your children safe.
- If your child has not arrived by start of the day, we will assume he/she will not be attending, and will begin our day without him/her.
- Pick up your child on time each day the stated closure time. If an emergency arises and you are unable to reach the site before closing, call the staff to inform them of your progress.

DAILY ATTENDANCE

Children are expected to arrive by 9:00 am except for occasions when alternative arrangements have been made in advance with the Program Director or child's lead teacher. The majority of focused small group and structured activities take place between 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, which are key to the development of each child.

For programming purposes, it is important to call the program if your child will be absent on a regularly scheduled day, so we have an adequate count of children for meals and to determine staffing needs for the day. Refunds will not be made for absences, holidays or weather related/emergency closing of the Preschool. A **doctor's note is required** for a child to return following a communicable disease or surgery.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Children must be picked up by the time the site closes.

If an emergency arises and you are unable to reach the site by close, please let us know when we can expect you to pick up your child(ren). State law requires us to notify CPS or Seattle Police when children are left in a program without notification from families and when no contacts can be reached to pick up the child.

Each Site follows these guidelines in response to a late pick-up:

1. If family is late for pick up, immediately after closing staff will try to call the family to ensure that someone is on the way to pick up the child. If the family is not reachable, staff will notify emergency contacts and ask for pick up.
2. If the family and emergency contacts cannot be reached within 30 minutes, as per State Law, staff notifies the CPS and police.
3. If your child is picked up late on three occasions, your child's participation in the program may be suspended or terminated.

We will follow these steps:

- a. **1st time late:**
 - The program supervisor reinforces the closing time, and will document in child's file late pick up. Staff reinforces late pick up policy, and gives the family a copy of Late Policy.
- b. **2nd time late:**
 - Staff will hand the family written notification about being late listing the 1st and 2nd time being late. The Center Director will notify the Program Director. The Program Director will discuss with family either by phone or in person to problem solve how to ensure that it doesn't happen again.
- c. **3rd time late:**
 - The Program Director will work on progressive discipline (may include suspension or termination).

Late pick up policy will be strictly followed and reinforced.

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00 – 8:30	Arrival, Child-Initiated Activities (dramatic play, blocks, puzzles, table toys) –Time will change to 7:00 am on 9/8/2015
8:30 – 9:00	Breakfast
9:00 – 11:00	Preschool Structured Time / Circle Time, Concepts, Music, Interest Centers
11:00 – 12:30	Gross Motor/Outdoor Play
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 3:00	Naptime/ Rest Time
1:45 – 3:00	Quiet Activity Time for Non-sleepers
2:30 – 3:00	Afternoon Snack
3:00 – 5:15	Structure Time—music, stories, interest centers, large motor activities

5:15 – 5:30 Late Snack
 5:30 – 6:00 Child initiated activities/Combining into one classroom for the end of the day.

Schedules vary depending on the site and needs of the children. Please have your child to the program by 9:00 am so your child can participate in structured developmentally appropriate learning activities.

The program is designed with care to develop each child’s individual skills and personality while encouraging sharing and cooperation. Your child will experience a wide range of ideas and activities to stimulate his/her creativity, self-esteem, and independence. The curriculum is also designed to spark your child’s imagination and encourage lifelong, positive values. With this foundation, learning becomes a more natural process.

MEALS AND SNACKS SERVED

Meal time is a very important part of the daily routine in YMCA Early Learning Programs. Mealtimes are used as educational opportunities and social occasions. Children in every classroom eat family –style meals. Snacks are provided by a YMCA cook, and are either brought from home or provided by a local vendor. All children in full-day care will be offered a healthy and nutritious morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack and late afternoon snack daily for children in care more than 9 hours. Each snack served at our center includes two of the following components: dairy product (milk, butter, yogurt); protein (cheese, meat, beans); bread product (bagel, crackers); fruit, vegetable, or juice. All snacks are pre-washed, pre-cut and pre-prepared. We purchase produce from local farms and incorporate organic food into our menu.

MEALTIME SCHEDULE

Meals meet Child and Adult Care Food Program standards, and the YMCA is part of this program. The YMCA makes a conscious effort to provide low-sugar, colorful, appealing, diverse, and nutritious food. Meals and snack times vary by classroom, and they are served approximately as followed:

Breakfast	8:30 – 9:00
Lunch	11:30 – 12:30
Afternoon Snack	2:30 – 3:00
Late snack	5:00 – 5:15

MEAL PATTERNS

Morning /Afternoon Snack

Two selections from:	½ cup milk (1%)
½ cup milk (1%)	1 ½ oz protein
½ cup protein	½ cup fruit or vegetable
½ cup fruit or vegetable	½ slice bread

Individual snack for morning time brought from home for children will not be accepted.

If you would like your child to have a breakfast in the classrooms, you have to arrive by 8:45 am.

Weekly menus are prepared at least one month in advance and will be posted for your review on the Parent Information Board. We are on a Menu rotation, and we change the Menu on a quarterly basis using seasonal fruits and vegetables. A written list

of foods that your child cannot consume has been provided to us on the registration form. Dietary restrictions and nutritional requirements for particular children are posted for the staff. It is not possible for us to provide nutrient concentrates or supplements except with written permission from your child's health care provider. Vegetarian options are available per request. If your child have some food allergies or food restrictions, please speak with the director to make a plan.

If you would like to bring in a special treat for your child's classroom, please check in advance with the teacher. Just a reminder that it is our policy that **shared treats for the classroom needs to be "store bought"**. Please feel free to discuss any food issues with the Center Director.

PEANUT AND NUT ALLERGIES

To help the YMCA create a safe environment for children with life-threatening nut allergies, some programs are **nut-free**. Food containing nuts or traces of nuts any kind are not permitted on the premises. If you have any questions please speak with the Center Director.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special time for children and we are happy to help you celebrate their special day! You are welcome to send a treat (store –bought ONLY) on your child's birthday. Due to health and allergy requirements, **no homemade food is allowed to be served to other children**. Please check with your child's teacher to make arrangements and learn about any food allergies. We ask that birthday party invitations not to be passed out directly to children to avoid any hurt feelings unless all children are invited.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM



THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM®

What is a "curriculum"? A curriculum is a plan for our preschool. It helps us understand how children grow and provides practical ideas for organizing classroom and planning activities that will help children develop. It is a framework for what actually happens in a planned environment when children interact with materials, with other children, and with teachers.

The Creative Curriculum system includes curriculum, assessment, implementation and evaluation and professional development. It also has an online component for daily planning and assessment of children's developmental level.

When your child participates in our YMCA early childhood program, your child benefits from a comprehensive, carefully designed, and research-based curriculum called ***The Creative Curriculum®***. The YMCA has woven into *The Creative Curriculum®* the YMCA mission, philosophy, program objectives, and initiatives that make the approach unique to the Y. An overview of *The Creative Curriculum®* is available online at www.creativecurriculum.com.

The *Creative Curriculum*® is content-rich, developmentally appropriate program that support active learning and promote children’s progress in all developmental area that honors creativity and respects the role that teachers play in making learning exciting and relevant for every child.

The *Creative Curriculum*® creates a high-quality learning environment that enables every child to become a creative, confident thinker.

The curriculum is based on:

- Specific needs and interests of the children.
- Talents and abilities of the staff.
- Unique needs of a particular YMCA community.
- Resources within a YMCA and its surrounding community.
- The latest research on how children learn best.

Our Goals for Children

- help children learn about themselves and the world around them
- help children feel good about themselves and capable as learners

The eight core content areas include:

- **Literacy** , which includes seven components, including increased vocabulary and language; phonological awareness; knowledge of print, letters, and words; comprehension; understanding of books and other texts; and literacy as a sense of enjoyment.
- **Mathematics**, which includes numbers concepts; patterns and relationships; geometry and spatial sense; measurement; and data collection, organization, and representation.
- **Science**, which falls under three categories: physical science (physical properties of materials and objects, such as weights, shapes, size, color, and temperatures); life science (learning about living things such as plants and animals); and the earth and environment (the world of nature—the land, sky, and weather).
- **Social Studies**, which includes the study of people and how they relate to spaces and geography, how they live, the environment around them , and past events.
- **Arts**, which includes dance, music, theater or performing arts, and the visual arts.
- **Technology**, which includes the study of tools, machines, materials, techniques, and the source of power that makes work easier and solves problems.
- **Healthy Habits**, which includes healthy nutritional choices, physical activity, and personal safety.
- **Social and Moral Development**

We identify specific goals for each area of development:

- **Socially:** to feel secure and comfortable, trust their environment, make friends, and feel part of the group
- **Emotionally:** to experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self-control, and have a positive attitude toward life
- **Cognitively:** to become confident learners by trying out their own ideas and experiencing success and by acquiring thinking skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings
- **Physically:** to increase their large and small muscles and feel confident about what their bodies can do

The program is designed with care to develop each child’s individual skills and personality while encouraging sharing and

cooperation. Your child will experience a wide range of ideas and activities to stimulate his/her creativity, self-esteem and independence. The curriculum is also designed to spark your child's imagination and encourage lifelong, positive values. With this foundation, learning becomes a more natural process.

Teaching young children requires spontaneity--the ability to see and use everyday opportunities to help children solve problems, explore new materials, and find answers to questions.

TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD®

We believe that authentic, ongoing assessment of children in our program is the key to planning appropriate learning experiences and helping all children succeed.

Our teachers observe children's learning and development by using Teaching Strategies Gold on line assessment tool.

TS Gold Assessment Tool is aligned with the Common Core State Standards, state early learning guidelines, Early Learning Framework and WA Early Achievers Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Findings about your child's developmental level and progress will be shared with parents during parent/teacher conferences at fall and spring. More information about TS Gold can be find at www.TeachingStrategies.com/GOLD

In addition to our curriculum model a CDC Developmental Screening ASQ and ASQ SE-2 may be conducted by the lead teacher in conjunction with parents within 90 days of every child's enrollment date. The results will be shared with the families within 30 days of completion.

THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM® AND PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES

Home and school are a young child's two most important worlds. Children must bridge these two worlds every day. If home and school are connected in positive and respectful ways, children feel secure. However, children suffer when the two worlds are at odds because of apathy, lack of understanding, or an inability to work together. Teachers can build a true partnership when they truly value the family's role in a child's education and recognize how much they can accomplish by working with families.

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool and *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos* provide you with guidance on getting to know families, welcoming and communicating with them regularly, partnering for children's learning, and responding to challenging situations.

WASHINGTON EARLY ACHIEVERS



West Seattle YMCA Early Learning will be participating in Early Achievers, Washington's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) administered by the Department of Early Learning. As an Early Achievers participant, **we are demonstrating our commitment to offering high- quality child care and promoting school readiness.**

You might be wondering – what is a QRIS? A QRIS is a process for supporting and rewarding child care providers for providing high-quality care. More than 25 states have a statewide QRIS and Washington began implementing our system July 2012. Similar to a hotel rating, participating child care facilities are assigned a rating based on observed quality. The Early Achievers quality standards look at what we know is good for children and will help them get ready for school – things like our

activities and curriculum, how we work with families, and how we interact with children. As a participant, we will get resources to help our program including coaching, training, and scholarships.

Family engagement is an important part of Early Achievers. You can help support our participation by asking questions, providing feedback and staying involved. We will share our rating once it has been assigned and provide more information as needed.

Due to recent move, our program will be enrolling to Washington Early Achievers program at the beginning of the school year. If you would like to find more information about Early Achievers, please visit the Department of Early Learning website at www.del.wa.gov/care/qris.

CLASSROOM TRANSITION PLAN

Early Learning is a whole year round program, and children need to be registered annually in September through –August.

Transition to older classroom is done based on child readiness and classroom spots availability. Some individual transitions will happen during the year based on space available. Based on teacher's recommendation and parents input, transition plan is developed by program director.

Parent Communication:

- Parents will have the opportunity to discuss the need for transition with their classroom teacher and program director
- Parents will have the opportunity to meet with new classroom teacher
- Parents will receive a "Classroom Transition Letter" prior to transition date
- Parent Communication book is available in each classroom

PARENT/STAFF COMMUNICATION

We know that through effective communication, trust and respect we can build stronger bonds between our staff and the families we serve. We believe that a high quality program requires open and ongoing communication between parents/guardians and staff, in the best interest of the child. We encourage you to become involved in your child's development and our enrichment programs. A schedule of activities and newsletter will be provided to you to keep you informed of program plans, special events and updates.

Daily Report will be provided electronically via Tadpoles daily after you check your child out. Daily in person communication is available if needed.

Communication Log in each classroom near the sign-in/out book where the parent/guardian may leave notes for their child's teachers. Each classroom teacher will provide lesson plans. A Parent Information Board is located in each classroom, and twill program policies are in the three ring binder posted for your review, as well as other information.

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be scheduled twice per year, usually at fall and spring. More parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled when needed/requested by teacher or parents/guardians.

Parent satisfaction survey will be provided on line for parent/guardian feedback twice per year /fall & spring.

The YMCA respects confidentiality to all sensitive information that is shared with us. Information shared between children and families may be shared with other YMCA staff in order to provide a safe environment for your child. At no times will any information (names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail address or health/behavior conditions) be shared with non YMCA staff.

Licensing Information The child care license is posted in the office and each classroom. Copy of most recent child care checklist for licensing renewal, monitoring checklist and facility licensing compliance agreement for any deficiencies noted are available at the director's office. Please contact Program Director for more information.

WHAT TO SEND WITH YOUR CHILD

Two changes of clothing (including socks), blanket, pillow (optional), water bottle, and warm jacket. The YMCA provides sunscreen lotion for warm days.

Send your child in comfortable clothes, easy to pull down pants with no zipper and buttons especially for children who are mastering their potty training skills. Child needs to wear comfortable shoes, no flip flops or Croc's for safety reason.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Please do not send gum, candy, toys, electronic games, weapons, or other personal belongings with your child. Too often these items of emotional value are lost or broken and not easily replaced. Sharing day or special projects will be posted by the teacher. The YMCA is not responsible for any lost, stolen or broken items.

LOST AND FOUND

Please label all clothing and items brought to the Y Program with your child's First Initial and Last Name. A lost and found box will be located in the classroom. At the end of each month, unclaimed items will be held at the branch for one month and then donated to Goodwill.

STAFF RATIOS AND TRAINING

Infant Staff to child ratio:	1:4	Maximum group size:	8 infants
Toddler Staff to child ratio:	1:7	Maximum group size:	14 children
Preschool Staff to child ratio:	1:10	Maximum group size:	20 children
School-Age Staff to child ratio:	1:15	Maximum group size:	30 children

These ratios are normally maintained to assure individual attention and proper supervision. At no time do we exceed the State Licensing standards. Each center has a Center Director or Program Supervisor who has a degree in education or a related field and experience working with children. He/she is responsible for the overall site operation including staff supervision and program development.

Most of our staff have had previous experience working with children and attend regularly scheduled training events. The YMCA is committed to providing the initial 20 hours and on-going 10 hours state mandated STARS trainings to all employees as well as two Professional Development Days. All staff have a current TB test, maintain current certifications in CPR and

First Aid and are trained in HIV/Aids and Child Abuse Prevention. In addition, staff and volunteers are thoroughly screened (including criminal history checks and drug test) prior to employment. Performance appraisals are conducted on a regular basis to ensure continued high performance.

To protect our staff and volunteers, we request that you **do not** ask a YMCA employee or volunteer to baby sit for your child(ren). Our staff **are not** allowed to attend any functions with your child(ren) outside of YMCA programs, including sleepovers, birthday parties, etc.

BATHROOM POLICY

If a bathroom is not available in the classroom, staff will accompany a group of children to the restroom and schedule bathroom break times when entire group uses facilities. If child needs to go at other times, staff will take a small group– as many children as needed so that other staff is still within ratio. Staff should not go with just one child. Groups of children should not be allowed to go unaccompanied by an adult.

Only one child at a time will be allowed to use restroom UNLESS: More than 1 toilet is available for children's use and staff can auditory and visually supervise the interactions of children.

*Restroom accessible to public (such as school sites) will be checked prior to use by children to ensure safety.

PARENT /GUARDIAN ACCESS

As the parent/guardian of a child in our program, you have free access at all times to all areas of the center used by your child. We invite you to become familiar with the staff and encourage you to visit and participate in the program as often as possible. Preschool parents /guardians are encouraged to join their children for an occasional lunch. If during your visit you wish to discuss an individual matter, please schedule a meeting with the classroom teacher at a time when he/she is not involved with children.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

The YMCA is committed to providing a positive atmosphere that is safe and inclusive to all in our community. In order to ensure this, the YMCA of Greater Seattle has adopted a **Code of Conduct** which govern the actions and behavior of all people while in our facilities and while participating in YMCA programs.

Individuals are expected to:

- Uphold the YMCA core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, and caring.
- Provide an atmosphere free of derogatory or unwelcome comments, conduct or actions of a sexual nature, or actions based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation or any other legally protected statuses.
- Be respectful and cooperative with YMCA staff and others.

Other behaviors that will NOT be tolerated in our child care programs include:

- Improper exposure

- Abusive, harassing and/or obscene language or gestures
- Threats of harm, physical aggression, violent acts, or bullying
- Weapons of any kind
- Damaging or defacing property
- Offensive conduct
- Purposely leaving the area of supervision without permission

The YMCA strives to meet the needs of all children by setting guidelines and boundaries appropriate to each stage of development. If problems arise, we will use the following sequential procedures:

1. The child will be encouraged to use his/her words to try to solve the situation peacefully.
2. The child will be redirected to a new activity.
3. The child will be removed from the situation until he/she is able to rejoin the group.
4. Parents are alerted and encouraged to share ideas.
5. Parent & Staff conference will be held with recommendation for an immediate behavior contract or short-term suspension from care.
6. Complete removal of the child from program.

As a partner in your child's success, we encourage you to share information with us that may affect your child's behavior. We are committed to working with you in the best interest of your child and the rest of the children in our care.

Because there are such a wide variety of behaviors that children display, the YMCA reserves the right to make the decision to suspend or expel a child based on the physical or emotional safety of the child, other children in the program and the staff. In such a situation parents may be called to come immediately to pick-up their child, or the child may be separated from the group for the remainder of the day.

Families will receive written **VALUES REPORTS** for positive behaviors as well as for behaviors needing attention. The Value Reports will be sent home and a copy will be put with your child's records. Through our values based programs, we expect all our participants to uphold the YMCA values of **respect, responsibility, caring, and honesty. Please help us in emphasizing the YMCA values and making this a safe environment for all.**

Individuals who experience or observe inappropriate conduct are encouraged to promptly report their concern to YMCA staff. Every effort will be made to ensure that reports are investigated and resolved promptly and effectively.

If you have concerns about the behavior of another child in our program, you need to discuss the matter with the classroom teacher or supervisor. It is inappropriate for you to confront the child or his/her parent or guardian.

We do not use or endorse any form of corporal punishment by anyone, including parents/guardians, which includes biting, jerking, shaking, spanking, slapping, hitting, kicking, or verbal threats or any other means of inflicting physical pain. We are committed to working with you in the best interest of your child and the rest of the children in the center.

In order to best serve the needs of your child, it is necessary that you inform the YMCA of existing health and/or behavioral problems. You will need to sign a release of information form so that information may be shared with school personnel and/or other medical professionals. Any information of a confidential nature will be shared only with those who need to know.

The **No Tolerance Policy** along with the **Values Reports** will enable us to have a better communication with our families. This may result having the classroom teacher, program director, and parents having a formal conference to determine a plan of action.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW REQUIREMENTS

As with other child oriented agencies, YMCA staff are mandated by Washington State Law to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services, any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, and child neglect or exploitation. We may not notify parents if this occurs except upon the recommendation of Child Protective Services or the police. Our staff has received training in the recognition and reporting of child abuse.

PERSONAL SAFETY DISCUSSION

The primary concern of the YMCA is the welfare of each child in our care. Our staff members are trained in facilitating conversations with the children to help them understand how they can set their own personal safety and touching limits and become aware of the feelings of others. If you would like to know more about these discussions, please ask the Program Director. The brochure *Protect Your Child From Abuse When Your Child Is Not With You* is available at Y branches and on ykids.org.

STATEMENT FOR PREVENTION OF ABUSE

The following document is given to all employees and volunteers upon hire:

"A principle endeavor of the YMCA is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of youth and children. Thus, the mistreatment or neglect of youth or children and the resulting severe effects are of primary concern to the YMCA. Child abuse is mistreatment or neglect of a child by parent(s) or others resulting in injury or harm. Abuse can lead to severe emotional, physical and behavioral problems. Because of its concern for the welfare of children and youth, the YMCA has developed policies, standards, guidelines and training to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse. In addition, all employees are screened, and background checks are conducted upon hiring or rehiring. Additionally, employees who have contact with children and youth receive training in recognizing, reporting and preventing child abuse, which includes training in recognizing signs that a child is being groomed for abuse. Some of the guidelines employees are expected to follow are:

- Avoid being alone with a single child where you cannot be observed by other staff or adults.
- You may not relate to children who participate in YMCA programs outside of approved YMCA activities. For example, baby sitting, weekend trips; foster care, etc. are not permitted. An exception must be approved in advance by the Director of Risk Management and the Branch Executive or SVP/COO.
- Giving personal gifts to program participant(s) or their parents is not allowed.
- Program rules and boundaries must be followed, including appropriate touch guidelines.
- Children or youth should not be singled out for favored attention.
- Dating a program participant under age 18 is not allowed. Some YMCA programs may have additional restrictions.
- Children may not be disciplined by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
- Verbally, physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing or punishing children or youth is not allowed.
- Children may be informed in a manner that is age appropriate to the group of their right to set their own "touching" limits

for personal safety.

- Children should only be released to authorized persons in programs with controlled pick-up procedures.
- Any information regarding abuse or potential abuse should be documented in writing.
- At the first reasonable cause to believe that any child abuse exists, it should be reported to your supervisor or branch executive so that proper reporting can be initiated.
- At the first reasonable cause to believe that an employee or volunteer abused a child or youth, even if it was not during working hours, his or her conduct should be reported to the program director and the branch executive or another designated branch representative. Additionally, it is the YMCA's protocol to make a report to the appropriate authorities. Appropriate actions will be taken regarding the employee or volunteer, including suspension or termination from YMCA employment or volunteer status.
- Confidentiality of information related to child abuse is crucial and should be limited to the immediate supervisor and/or branch executive and designated Association office staff.
- Employees are required to fully cooperate with an investigation by the YMCA, any law enforcement agency, or any other authorized outside agency, and failure to do so is considered misconduct and will result in termination”.

PRACTICES CONCERNING AN ILL CHILD

The YMCA cannot knowingly accept children for care when they are ill. Center staff will observe each child upon arrival and if your child is experiencing any of the following symptoms, we will call you and ask that other arrangements be made for his/her care. Staff caring for children will use the same guidelines. We will try to separate your child from the other children until you arrive. In the case of a staff member, they will be sent home and a substitute arranged.

Your child needs to stay home 24 hours after the occurrence of any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100 F and one of the following: diarrhea, sore throat, earache, rash and signs of irritability or confusion.
- Vomiting on 2 or more occasions within the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea - 3 or more watery stools in a 24 hour period unless a doctor's note stating that it is not communicable
- Draining rash
- Eye discharge or pink eye
- Too tired or too sick to participate in daily activities
- Lice or nits*
- Communicable diseases

*If your child had lice or nits, he/she must be free of lice and nits to be able to return to the classroom.

A record of illnesses is maintained in a log as required by licensing and we will report communicable diseases as necessary to the local Health Department. We will also notify other parents/guardians in the center so that they can take appropriate action to protect their children.

In order to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases, the staff will take the following precautions:

1. All blood and body fluids are treated as potentially infectious.
2. Staff will wash their hands with soap and water before eating, after cleaning up spills of body fluids, after assisting a child in the bathroom, after changing a diaper, after going to the toilet, after providing first aid to anyone, after wiping a nose or mouth, after using disposable gloves.
3. Staff use disposable gloves when there is a potential of contact with blood or other body fluids.

4. Staff wipe their hands with an antiseptic wipe or cleanser in an emergency, then hands are washed as soon as possible.
5. Staff cleanse all surfaces with a 10% bleach solution or an EPA registered germicide on a regular basis.
6. Each classroom is equipped with first aid and bio-hazard kits.

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

If it is necessary for your child to take medications while he/she is in our care, please give it directly to a staff member when you sign-in your child, rather than giving it to your child or keep it in child's backpack. **Written parental consent is required for us to administer any medication.** Medications are stored in a locked box out of the reach of children and records of the administration are maintained in a medication log. The classroom lead teacher will be responsible for administering medication as per doctor's or parents instructions.

The medication duration, dosage, amount and frequency specified on consent do not exceed label recommendation. Written consent for medications cover only the course of illness or specific episode. Written consent for sunscreen is valid up to 6 months. For life threatening and or chronic illness (i.e. asthma, allergies, diabetes, ADHD) you will be required to fill out a medical plan. This Plan will contain information about the signs of an emergency and steps to take if a child needs daily and/or emergency medication. ADHD medications will be given by a trained office staff where it can be counted a secured safely.

All medication must be in its original container with dosage properly labeled with your child's full name, date prescription was filled/or medication's **expiration date**, and legible instructions for administration on the prescription label. To give liquid medication, you must also provide a measuring device designed specifically for oral or liquid medications. Any unused medication will be returned to you or properly disposed.

The following non-prescription medications require written parental consent and can be given only at the dosage, duration, and method of administration specified on the manufacturer's label for the age and/or weight of your child:

- Antihistamines
- Non aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers
- Decongestants or non-narcotic cough suppressant
- Anti-itching ointments or lotions, intended specifically to relieve itching or dry skin
- Sunscreen
- Diaper ointment
- Medicated lip balm
- Mouthwash

A physician's written authorization is required for any non-prescription medication that is:

- Not included in the above list
- To be taken differently than indicated on the manufacturer's label
- Lacks labeled instructions

We cannot give aspirin except with a written authorization from a physician. Any unused medication will be returned to you or properly disposed of.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

The registration form you completed to enroll your child in our program included a medical release giving us permission to seek medical attention for your child in case of an emergency. **Please update this form at the front office in writing as necessary with any changes in home, work or medical phone numbers.**

In the case of life threatening emergencies, a member of our staff will immediately call 911, administer first aid and CPR and notify you as quickly as possible. If you cannot be reached, your designated emergency contact will be notified. If transportation to the hospital is needed, a staff member will accompany your child and will stay with him/her until you arrive.

For minor emergencies and injuries, all of our staff are trained in first aid and will administer as needed. A staff member will then contact you to come and care for your child if additional care is needed. For minor injuries that do not require us to notify you immediately, an accident report will be given to you when you pick up your child explaining what happened and how the situation was treated.

Accident reports are completed for our records and recorded in our Injury Log. We are required to notify the Department of Social & Health Services, by phone and in writing, of any serious injuries that require medical treatment, illnesses that require hospitalization, occurrence of food poisoning or communicable disease.

TRANSPORTATION AND FIELD TRIPS

If a YMCA mini bus will be used for field trip transportation, each preschool age child is required to have a car seat and wear a special seatbelt harness when riding on the mini bus, and the capacity of riders never exceeds the number of seat belts available. Some programs may use Metro busses for scheduled field trips (usually during the summer).

Drivers of all of our vehicles are thoroughly screened and authorized by the YMCA insurance company based on experience and good driving records. Each driver must also have a current Washington State driver's license, be currently certified in First Aid, CPR, and participate in an approved YMCA defensive driver's training program. Our vehicles are regularly maintained and undergo daily inspections before being driven.

As part of our program we try to provide annual field trip experiences for children in our preschool programs. We will notify you at least one month prior to a field trip. **Parents/guardians will be required to sign a field trip permission form. Approval over the phone is not acceptable.**

Any fees associated with a field trip will be the responsibility of the YMCA.

INSURANCE

It is the responsibility of every individual, their parent or legal guardian, to provide for their own accident and health coverage while participating in all YMCA activities. The YMCA of Greater Seattle does not provide any accident or health coverage for its participants.

CHILD SAFETY

As a partner in your child's success, the YMCA of Greater Seattle is committed to providing a safe environment for all participants and staff. We work hard to create an environment that is both physically and emotionally safe for children. If at any time you are concerned about the physical or emotional health of your child, please do not hesitate to speak to a staff member or call the Program Supervisor.

Personal Safety Talks

As part of our program, staff engages in discussions designed to increase children's understanding of touching and personal space limits. YMCA staff will model the use of correct words for body parts and functions, and respond to conversations and questions in age appropriate ways.

Child Abuse Reporting

YMCA staff are required to report immediately to Child Protective Services (CPS Intake), licensor or police any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, child neglect or exploitation. We may NOT notify parents if this occurs except upon the recommendation of Child Protective Services or the Police.

Supervision of Children During Transitions

YMCA staff is required to do face and/or name checks when transitions occur. Examples of transitions are moving from the classroom to the playground and back, changing activities, use of transportation, etc. Staff utilizes many different techniques for supervising children during transitions, including the buddy system, roster checks, and additional staff to help with transitions.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All sites practice monthly fire drills and have a posted evacuation plan. We are also practicing quarterly earthquake drills. The YMCA has written emergency policies for a variety of issues are posted in the program. A copy may be obtained from the Program Director.

DISASTER PLAN

In case of a disaster a plan has been designed for response to fire, natural disasters and other emergencies. The plan addresses what we will do if there is a disaster, and parents/guardians are not able to get their children for two or three days.

There will be one designated check point station that will be immediately identified after a major emergency for the release of children. All classrooms doors will be locked. Any person picking up a child must be listed on the child's registration form and bring their photo ID at time of pick-up.

The Program Director is responsible for posting the disaster plan in every classroom and making it accessible to parents/guardians and staff. Monthly fire drills and quarterly emergency disaster drills are practiced with children and staff.

Immediately after an emergency incident, classroom teachers will be responsible for assessing their area, account for each child by referencing the classroom attendance list/rosters, evacuating the classroom, and providing reassurance to children. Each classroom has an emergency backpack with immediate emergency supplies. Teachers take this backpack and Sign In/Out

iPads with emergency contacts with them. A count of children will be conducted by the classroom teacher. If children in the program have special needs, we will address these during and after an emergency by referring to each child's Special Needs Plan.

- We will provide care for children in the program until parents/guardians can pick them up by utilizing the YMCA disaster kits to ensure that the children are nourished and cared for.
- We will be in contact with parents/guardians or other authorized persons to arrange for pick-up of child(ren) via the Site phone or via staff cell phones if necessary.
- If transportation is necessary, we will utilize either the YMCA mini-buses, or public transportation (Metro).
- **It is extremely important that your child's registration form contain current information. To make changes you will need to give the new information in writing to the Program Director.**

Each branch is required by law to develop and implement a disaster plan designed for response to fire, natural disasters, and other emergencies. The plan must address what you are going to do if there is a disaster and parents/guardians are not able to get to their children for two or three days. (WAC 170-295-5030)

Q. How will your branch account for all children and staff during and after the emergency?

A. Roll call; staff assigned to groups; specific meeting places; children and staff files move with children.

Q. How will your branch evacuate the premises?

A. Evacuation routes posted at each site, based on the school or site disaster plan.

Q. At what location will you meet after evacuation?

A. See site-specific plan posted at each site on the Family Board by Exits.

Q. How will you contact parents/guardians or how will parents/guardians be able to contact your child care center?

A. Site cell phone; most staff have cell phones; through emergency workers. Files remain with the children with emergency contact phone numbers. Each child has been asked to supply an out-of-state contact so that someone can be notified when in-state numbers are inaccessible.

Q. What kind of transportation method will you use, if necessary?

A. YMCA vans; parents; emergency worker vehicles. Private staff vehicles may be used only as a last option.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES / INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, we may close without prior notice. When possible, YMCA staff will use available means to contact parents regarding closures in addition to the above mentioned dates. We will also maintain and update information on our weather line, to the extent possible.

The YMCA Early Learning Programs will follow the local public schools schedule.

When the YMCA or schools are closed due to inclement weather, we will be closed. If the YMCA or schools are running two hours late, we will also be running two hours late. When safe and possible, staff will try to open the site on schedule. Please make sure that an authorized staff member is available to supervise the site before leaving your child.

Emergency inclement weather closures will be posted at seattleyymca.org Information will be updated hourly if the situation changes.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The YMCA is committed to providing a positive atmosphere that is safe and inclusive to all in our community. Therefore, the YMCA of Greater Seattle has adopted a code of conduct to govern the actions and behavior of all people while in our facilities and while participating in YMCA programs.

Individuals are expected to:

- Uphold the YMCA core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, & caring
- Provide an atmosphere free of derogatory or unwelcome comments, conduct or actions of a sexual nature, or actions based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, abilities, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected statutes
- Be respectful and cooperative with YMCA staff and others

The following will NOT be tolerated at YMCA facilities and in YMCA programs:

- Abusive, harassing, and/or obscene language or gestures
- Threats of harm, physical aggression, or violent acts
- Weapons of any kind
- Smoking
- Damaging or defacing YMCA property
- Possession, sale, use, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Offensive and unlawful conduct

Individuals who experience or observe inappropriate conduct are encouraged to promptly report their concern to YMCA staff. Every effort will be made to ensure that reports are investigated and resolved promptly and effectively.

PET POLICY

Our classrooms may have a pet. This gives children responsibility for feeding and caring for animals. A designated staff in each classroom will be responsible for the pet's environment and supervision of the learning opportunities.

Reptiles and amphibians will be in a self-contained area except during educational activities. Children five years of age or less will not physically handle reptiles and amphibians. List of Possible Pets: Rabbits, Hamsters, Guinea Pigs, Fish, or Insects. Accommodating arrangements can be made if your child has allergies to any of these pets.

PESTICIDE POLICY

You will be notified at least **48 hours in advance of the application of any pesticides**, as we receive notification from the school district or city. This notification will include the product name of the pesticide being used, intended date and time of application, location where the pesticide will be applied, the pest to be controlled and the name and number of a contact person at the site. Signs and/or markers will be posted following the application of the pesticide. These will state, "This landscape has recently been sprayed or treated with pesticides." They will also state who has treated the landscape and who to call for more information.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT/ANTI-BIAS STATEMENT

The YMCA of Greater Seattle's Family and Child Programs are committed to providing developmentally and culturally appropriate services that, respect, support and reflect children and families in our programs; cultivate understanding and caring among children, families and staff; and incorporate an anti-bias approach to curriculum. The YMCA recruits diverse staff and is committed to providing career development opportunities that include training on culturally relevant, anti-bias practices and building stronger relationships among children, families and YMCA staff.

We are committed to a gender-balanced, non-stereotypical curriculum where all children will be allowed and encouraged to participate in all activities, free from conflict and congruent with the YMCA values. The YMCA staff respect all cultures and belief systems and encourage children to talk about their thoughts in an open and honest way that promotes positive interactions. Our program encourages families, extended families and the community to share interests, hobbies and cultural information and activities.

ADA COMPLIANCE AND SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

The YMCA of Greater Seattle seeks to serve all people. It is our intention to include people of all abilities in our programs in the most integrated setting and wherever it is reasonably possible to do so. This includes individuals with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, individuals with a record of such impairment, or individuals who are regarded as having such impairment. We hope that many of the changes we make to accommodate disabled individuals also will provide us with facilities and services that will better serve all people, not just those with disabilities.

Despite our best efforts, it may not be possible in certain circumstances for the YMCA to accommodate the disability or special needs of a particular child. This occurs in two circumstances:

- The individual's disability or special needs present a significant risk to the health or safety of others and such risk cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level; and
- The required accommodation would require a fundamental change to the YMCA's youth programs or otherwise would present an undue burden for the YMCA.

For some children, special accommodation needs may appear later, or may change over time. The YMCA will make ongoing assessments of your child's needs, and will require the parent or legal guardian's involvement in this process. Failure to share information about your child that identifies special care, accommodations or supervision needs may jeopardize the placement of or continued participation by your child in the program. All children are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct or stated behavior expectations.

YMCA staff members are encouraging, patient, and helpful in paving a pathway for children with mild to moderate disabilities to succeed at YMCA Programs. We are not equipped nor staffed to work with children who need significant assistance with personal care, constant one-on-one support, or have great difficulty in managing their behavior in a group setting.

If your child has a significant health issue or a special need, please contact the Program Supervisor to discuss appropriate accommodations.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

This volunteer parent advisory committee will support program operation and family involvement in our program. Involving families in our program is a top priority. This helps children, parents and our staff to make strong connection between home and school. We are an extension of the family, developing a partnership where sharing support, ideas and genuine love for children is of the utmost importance.

With our commitment to a family centered approach to learning and development, we are always looking for opportunities to improve our program. For that reason, we are creating Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). If you are interested to be involved in this Committee, please contact director.

OTHER PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

At the YMCA we welcome parents or guardians to help throughout the day in your child's programs. We also offer many other volunteer opportunities such as helping with field trips, administrative work, classroom decorations, youth sports, and involvement in our Community Campaign. Please speak with staff or Program Director for more information.

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

Our grievance process is designed to address your concerns, complaints and problems.

Any individual grievance that a family may have regarding the care of their child or with the policies or practices of the YMCA, should be first addresses with the child's teacher, within 5 calendar days of the incident referred to in the grievance.

If the problem is not satisfactorily resolved the family may request a meeting with the Program Director or Assistant Supervisor within 10 days of the original incident.

If the problem is still not satisfactorily resolved, the family may request a meeting with the YMCA Branch Executive Director within 15 days of the original incident. If no resolution is attained at this level, the family may submit the grievance in writing within 30 days of the original incident to the Personnel Committee of the YMCA Board of Directors, with a copy to the Branch Executive Director stating the nature of the grievance and the desired resolution.

Within 10 days after the receipt of the grievance, the Personnel Committee shall establish a date and time for a hearing, which the family may attend.

The Branch Executive shall implement the decision of the Personnel Committee.

Thank you for enrolling your child(ren) in our program.

We hope this handbook has answered any questions you may have about our program. If you need further assistance we will be glad to answer any other questions you may have. We are glad to have you as a part of our Y family!

YMCA of Greater Seattle Website: seattleymca.org