



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

DAY CAMPS

YMCA OF GREATER GRAND RAPIDS
FAMILY HANDBOOK
2026





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WELCOME TO THE YMCA OF GREATER GRAND RAPIDS DAY CAMP PROGRAMS!

Dear families,

Welcome to the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids Day Camp Programs. We are committed to providing your child with a safe, enriching camp experience that incorporates the YMCA Core Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Inclusion.

Camp is a fun and engaging place where your youth can make new friends and learn new skills. At the Y, camp is also about helping youth grow into confident, capable individuals by developing lifelong skills and strong character. Throughout the week, campers participate in a wide variety of activities designed to teach our core character values and are encouraged and recognized for demonstrating these values during their camp experience. Y Character Counts!

Our camps offer hands-on learning opportunities, social and emotional skill development, and plenty of physical activity to support the whole child.

We know that the quality of your youth's camp experience depends on the strength of our staff. That's why we place a strong emphasis on selecting, training, and retaining exceptional Camp Leaders. Our staff members are engaging, energetic, and fun – and they are genuinely excited to spend each day guiding, supporting, and teaching your youth.

You have made a great investment in your child's future!

YMCA Day Camp Leadership



This Family Handbook provides valuable information about your camper's activities, the program's philosophy, policies, and general information about our program. Families should look at this together prior to a youth's admission to the program. Any questions families may have regarding this handbook are to be referred to the Program Director.

YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

Guided by our Christian principles, we strengthen the spirit, mind, and body of all individuals. The YMCA opens its doors to anyone, regardless of race, gender and religion or socioeconomic background, and we are committed to serving everyone who comes in. As a result, we look to meet each person where they are, including providing opportunities for financial assistance.

Our Cause At the Y

Strengthening community is our cause. We believe that positive, lasting personal and social change can only come about when we all work together to invest in our kids, our health and our neighbors. That is why we focus our work on three areas, known as Pillars:

- **Youth Development:** Empowering young people to reach their full potential
- **Healthy Living:** Improving individual and community well-being
- **Social Responsibility:** Providing support and inspiring action in our communities

Our Purpose At the Y

Our purpose is to be the most impactful convener of community resources focused on helping all youth and adults succeed and be their best selves.



OUR PHILOSOPHY

YMCA Day Camp programs are designed to create engaging experiences that help youth learn through play and meaningful peer connections. Day camp participants spend much of their time outdoors playing, engaged in learning activities, and on field trips. These experiences allow youth to explore, learn, and build connections in ways that are personal and meaningful to them.

At the Y, we recognize and respect the individuality of every camper. Through shared experiences and guided activities, campers are encouraged to develop self-awareness, empathy, and positive relationships with others.

All activities are thoughtfully planned and offered in a physically and emotionally safe environment consistent with evidence-based principles of youth development. Each youth is encouraged to develop at his or her own unique rate by encouraging skill development, leadership opportunities, and meaningful participation.

Through the Y's Day Camp program, campers engage in fun and educational activities that support:

- **Achievement** - Learning and mastering skills that help campers discover their passion, talents and potential.
- **Relationships** - Building friendships with peers and staff that contribute to their overall well-being.
- **Belonging** - Creating an environment where campers feel safe, welcome, and free to express their individuality.

The YMCA works in collaboration with organizations dedicated to serving youth and families. These partnerships, combined with a strong focus on youth development and intentional program assessment, allow the Y to deliver consistent, high-quality programs.

The YMCA believes that quality programming is strongest when families are involved, whether directly or indirectly. We offer a variety of opportunities for families to engage and participate in our programs. We view ourselves as partners in your youth's development and are committed to strengthening the family unit by creating opportunities for families and the YMCA to work, play, learn, and thrive together.

ADMISSION

Families may enroll youth on either a full-time or part-time basis, depending on program availability. Accepted ages for Day Camp vary by location. Families are responsible for verifying age eligibility prior to registration. Site-specific age requirements can be found on the registration website.

All Day Camp registrations must be completed online through the YMCA's registration portal. To secure a youth's spot, valid payment information must be entered during registration, along with a non-refundable deposit. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. Full-time enrollment will be prioritized over part-time enrollment.

Before youth can begin attending the program, it is mandatory that the program has:

- Completed online registration
- Completed online enrollment packet
- Additional paperwork as required by YMCA policies and procedures or Licensing Requirements, if applicable

The registration and enrollment packets contain important information related to the needs and interests of your youth, allowing us to ensure we have all necessary details to best support them and confirm that the program aligns with your family's goals for the camp experience.

Enrollment packets are a requirement of the program. If the enrollment packet is not completed at least one (1) week prior to the youth's intended start date, they will be unable to attend the program. Families with questions about the enrollment packet should contact the Program Director at their chosen location.

Waitlist

Day Camps may reach full enrollment and maintain a waitlist. Youth will be placed on the waitlist in the order in which registration is received. Being placed on the waitlist does not guarantee a spot in the camp session.

As spots become available, families will be contacted by the program via email and/or phone. Families will have 3 business days to respond to the waitlist notification email. If the YMCA does not receive a response within this timeframe, the spot will be offered to the next youth on the waitlist. After 3 attempts to contact a family without a response, the youth will be removed from all waitlist spots.

Families who wish to withdraw their youth from the waitlist may do so by emailing the contact listed on the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids Camp website for the location that they registered.

Hours of Operation and Holiday Closures

YMCA day camps are offered in the winter, spring and summer. Depending on the holiday schedule, they are typically offered Monday - Friday. Camp hours vary based on location.

The Day Camp Programs will be closed on the following days:

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Independence Day
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day

Depending on where a holiday falls during the week, the program may also be closed on additional days within that same week.

Inclement Weather Policy

The program will make every attempt to remain open; however, the YMCA reserves the right to close based on licensing recommendations and the safety of the youth in our program. In the event of severe weather or other emergencies, closures will be announced through local news outlets, social media websites and the YMCA website (www.grymca.org). Tuition remains the same, regardless of program closures due to unforeseen circumstances, such as severe weather or power outages, etc.

PAYMENT SCHEDULES AND FEES

Payment Schedule

Tuition

Upon registration, families will be informed of their tuition payment amount. Tuition is due 10 days prior to the Monday of the scheduled camp week, and all funds are expected to be available on the designated draft date. If funds are not available on the scheduled draft date, a \$10 late payment fee will be applied. If a resolution for the missed payment is not reached by the last business day of the week prior to the youth's registered camp week, the youth will not be permitted to attend, and future scheduled camp weeks may be cancelled.

Fees are not reduced for absences or unexpected closures. When you enroll, you are reserving the time, space, staff, and provisions for your youth, whether or not they attend.



Financial Aid

We know that providing the best quality care for your youth represents a financial commitment. Just as our community is full of diversity, this program has a rich diversity of families including economic diversity. The Y offers help through its annual campaign to help reduce tuition. If interested in applying for financial assistance, please see your program director for more information or fill out the application located on the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids website.

The Y also accepts childcare subsidy payments through the Department of Human Services, at qualifying sites. Most subsidies do not cover all tuition costs. Families are responsible for all co-pays that they will incur for the youth's tuition and filling out all necessary paperwork to keep their subsidy current. If for some reason the family loses their subsidy, the family is responsible for full payment of tuition.

Fees

Participation in YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids Day Camp programs requires that all YMCA accounts remain in good standing, with all balances current. Non-payment of program fees and/or membership dues will result in your youth not being permitted to attend the program and may result in further collection activity until the account is brought current.

Registration Deposit

A deposit is required per youth, per week at the time of registration. This deposit is non-refundable. This deposit will be applied toward the cancellation fee if the registration is cancelled, or towards the week's tuition if your camper attends.

Cancellations Fees

Any cancellations or changes to a registration will result in the forfeiture of the deposit.

The Summer Camp cancellation policy includes a 50% cancellation fee of the week's tuition per youth, per week for cancellation made after the date listed on the registration website.

Cancellations are not accepted once tuition has been drafted. Tuition is drafted 10 days prior to the Monday of the scheduled camp week, and once drafted, the full tuition is considered earned by the YMCA.

The YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids reserves the right to modify the cancellation policy at any time, in accordance with applicable regulations and organizational policies.

Failed Payment Fee

A \$10 fee will be applied to any account when a scheduled tuition payment fails to process. Families are encouraged to ensure that funds are available on the scheduled draft date to avoid this fee.

Families are asked to call the program if an emergency will cause a youth to be picked up after the program's scheduled closing time. A \$1.00 per minute, per youth fee will be applied for any pickup occurring after closing.

Late Pick-Up Fee

In the case of late pickups, the staff are trained to handle the circumstance by following the steps detailed below:

- All attempts will be made to contact the parents or guardians by phone.
- After 15 minutes, the emergency contact person(s) will be contacted.
- After 60 minutes, with no contact from parent/guardian or emergency contact, Child Protective Services will be called.

Repeated late pickups may result in the termination of enrollment from the program.

YOUTH DROP OFF AND RELEASE

Sign-in and Out Procedures

All youth must be signed in and out each day by the person dropping off or picking up the youth. Anyone signing a youth in or out must be at least 16 years of age, must accompany the youth to the sign-in/out area, and must record the exact time of arrival or departure and their signature or initials.

Youth Release

Youth will only be released to individuals listed on the enrollment paperwork. Authorized individuals must be at least 16 years of age and be able to present a valid form of identification at the time of pick-up.

If there is an immediate need to authorize an alternative pick-up person, notification must be provided in writing. If written communication is not possible, a phone call to the Youth Director or Site Coordinator will be considered official notification. Written communication must follow as soon as possible. Any individual unknown to staff must show a valid photo ID.

Youth will be released to either parent or guardian unless a court order prohibits release to a particular parent. A copy of the order prohibiting release must be provided to the Youth Director.

Intoxicated Parent

If a person arrives at the program site or branch to pick up a youth and appears to be intoxicated, staff must document the incident by recording the person's name, date and time, and report this information to the director. Staff may offer to call an alternative authorized pick-up person to ensure the youth's safety, but they cannot prevent the parent or guardian from leaving. The program director will follow up with the family as appropriate.

Separated Parents

Youth will be released to either parent or guardian unless a court order prohibits release to a particular parent. A copy of the order prohibiting release must be provided to the Youth Director.

Emergency Release

If a parent or guardian is unable to pick up their youth and an individual not listed on the Child Information Record and/or the enrollment paperwork must pick up the youth, notification must be provided in writing. If written communication is not possible, a phone call to the Youth Director or Site Coordinator will be considered official notification. Written communication must follow as soon as possible. Any individual unknown to staff must show a valid photo ID.

Release to an Older Sibling

Parents or guardians may request that their youth be released to an older sibling. The sibling must be at least 16 years old, listed on the registration forms, and able to present a valid photo ID.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Requests to withdraw a youth from Day Camp must be submitted using the Camp Cancellation Form located on the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids website. Withdrawing a youth from the program will incur all applicable cancellation fees. Withdrawal requests submitted after tuition has been drafted will result in forfeiture of that tuition payment and funds will not be refunded.

Involuntary Withdrawal

A family may be asked to withdraw their youth from the program under certain circumstances. Causes for involuntary withdrawal may include:

- Noncompliance with the behavior management policy
- Violence or threats: Any action or threat intended to scare, harm, or intimidate another youth, a staff member, or oneself
- Possession of a weapon of any kind
- Unsafe or high-risk behavior: Any behavior that compromises the safety of other youth, staff, or oneself
- Vandalism of YMCA, community, or personal property
- Disrespectful, bullying, discriminatory, or harassing language or behavior toward youth, staff, or families.

Consequences of Involuntary Withdrawal

Youth who are removed from a YMCA program due to involuntary withdrawal will not be eligible to enroll in future programs (e.g., Winter Break Day Camp, Spring Break Day Camp, Summer Day Camp, Before and After School Programming) for a minimum of six months from the date of disenrollment.

Re-Enrollment

After the six-month period, eligibility for re-enrollment will be determined at the discretion of the Youth Director. Families wishing to re-register must meet with the Youth Director prior to the program starting. The Youth Director may require a trial period and other expectations for youth who are re-enrolled in the program.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

Supervision

The program staff will always provide appropriate care and supervision of youth by both sight and sound.

YMCA Day Camp maintains staff-to-youth ratios in accordance with state licensing requirements, with one staff member for every 10 youth generally maintained across sites.

Clothing and Belongings

Please dress your youth appropriately for the weather in clothing suitable for active play, as they may get dirty throughout the day. Closed-toe shoes are required daily. On days when swimming or water play are scheduled, please send a swim bag with all necessary swim gear. All belongings should be clearly labeled with your youth's first and last name to ensure they are returned to your youth.

What to Bring to Camp

Please send the following labeled items with your youth each day:

- Backpack to carry belongings
- Change of clothes
- Swimsuit
- Plastic bag for wet swimsuit
- Bug Spray
- Sunscreen SPF 30+ and waterproof (spray-on recommended)
- Water bottle
- Lunch in an insulated bag (no food that requires a microwave). Lunch is provided for youth at designated locations.
- Additional attire needed for weather: sun hat, jacket, sweatshirt, snow pants, gloves, boots, etc.

What to Leave at Home

To ensure a safe and focused environment, youth should not bring:

- Electronics including cell phones or smartwatches
- Valuable items such as jewelry, money, etc.
- Toys such as stuffed animals, action figures, etc.
- Unhealthy Food such as candy, soda, chewing gum, etc.

Lost and Found

The YMCA is not responsible for lost items. Lost and Found items will be available for youth and families to view during programming; please check with staff for assistance. Unclaimed items will be held for one week and then donated to local charities.

PROGRAM SUMMARY, SCHEDULE AND CURRICULUM

Program Summary

YMCA Day Camp programs are designed to provide fun, engaging, and meaningful experiences for all participants. A well-organized program balances structure with flexibility, allowing campers to explore new ideas, build relationships, and participate in a variety of activities that promote personal growth, collaboration, and enjoyment. A safe and supportive environment encourages youth to develop self-confidence, independence, and teamwork while challenging their minds and strengthening their bodies. These experiences are delivered by trained staff who understand their role in youth development, possess backgrounds working with children, and are trained in child abuse prevention, safety, and emergency procedures. All programs are conducted in accordance with YMCA policies and state licensing standards to ensure a high-quality, enriching experience for every participant.

General Camp Components:

The Day Camp experience may include the following:

COMPONENTS	PURPOSE/EXPERIENCE
Self-Directed Activities	Youth-choice activities are available during arrival, pick-up and throughout the day. These may include manipulatives, board games, puzzles, building materials, and art materials.
Opening Ceremony	Youth and staff gather as a large group to learn camp songs and skits, fostering connections and a sense of community. This time may also be used to share program highlights and recognize achievements.
Group Huddles	Time to prepare youth for the day, review the schedule and daily goals, revisit group agreements, and used between activities to refocus the group.
Activity Blocks	May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and Humanities – encourages creativity, self-expression, and exploring ideas through art, music, storytelling, and performance • STEAM – hands-on activities that let youth explore science, technology, engineering, art, and math in fun ways • Physical Activity – games and activities that promote movement, teamwork, and staying active
Activity Blocks Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy – interactive activities that support reading and writing skills • Character Education – activities that teach and reinforce the YMCA’s core values • Nutrition Education – fun and creative ways for youth to learn about healthy eating
Closing Ceremony	Youth and staff gather as a large group to reflect on the day, celebrate accomplishments, and share favorite moments or new friendships. Staff may highlight youth achievements and lead a final song or activity to end the day on a positive note.



Outdoor Time

Outdoor time is an important part of the Day Camp program, supporting physical activity, motor skill development, and overall health. Youth will spend at least 51% of their day outdoors, and often more, weather and environmental factors permitting. Curriculum components may occur outdoors, alongside games and activities that promote movement, strength, and coordination. Please dress your youth appropriately for the conditions. It is assumed that if a youth is well enough to attend camp, they are well enough to participate in outdoor activities.

Screen Time

The Y is committed to the well-being of youth and follows the Healthy Eating, Physical Activity Standards. Screen time is limited to short videos or G-rated movies related to weekly themes or special events. Program Director approval is required. Families will be notified of screen time through the curriculum calendar or a separate notification if not included.

Swimming

Youth who wish to swim in the deep end must complete a swim test based on their site and licensing requirements. Youth who cannot or choose not to take the test may be required to wear a life jacket and will remain in the closely supervised shallow end. Swimming lessons may be provided for youth who are unable to pass or choose not to attempt the swim test. Staff closely supervise all youth in and around the pool to ensure safety. For more information about swimming requirements at your site, please contact your program director.

All youth with long hair who are swimming must have their hair secured in a ponytail to ensure safety and hygiene. Families are encouraged to have their youth's hair tied up before arriving at camp. If a youth needs assistance putting up their hair, families must provide written permission for staff to help.

The YMCA offers swimming lessons at various times for an additional fee for youth who wish to strengthen their swimming skills. These lessons provide focused instruction in a safe, supportive environment. Please see your Program Director, or the YMCA Membership Desk, for more information.

Field Trips

Field trips provide youth with opportunities to explore new locations and experiences. Trips may be walking excursions or involve transportation arranged by the YMCA. Extra attendance and check-in procedures occur frequently throughout the trip to ensure the safety and accountability of all youth. Health information and any necessary medications will be taken on all trips. Families will be asked to sign permission slips for all field trips and are welcome to join.

Families are responsible for transporting their youth if they arrive after the bus has departed or the group has left on foot.

Transportation

YMCA Day Camp programs use YMCA buses or approved transportation vendors. All vehicles are inspected, drivers undergo background checks, and first aid kits are available for emergencies. Youth will be informed of safety expectations when traveling to and from field trips, which include:

- Load and unload in an orderly and safe manner
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion
- Keep hands, arms, head, and feet inside the bus at all times
- Use appropriate language and maintain a safe noise level
- Hold all possessions to prevent items from rolling or being lost
- Avoid fighting, horseplay, or unsafe behavior
- Weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited
- Youth or their families are responsible for damage to seats or equipment caused by their actions

Failure to follow transportation safety policies may result in suspension or dis-enrollment from the program.

Restrooms

Participants attending our day camp programs are expected to use the restrooms independently. Exceptions are made only after a discussion with program leadership and when additional support or accommodation has been agreed upon.

The YMCA values youth's privacy. Staff will assist in rare situations and minimal needs; for example, helping with a button after the youth has made multiple attempts on their own.

Altering Appearance

Staff members doing youth's hair, adding nail polish, nail trims or other means of altering a youth's appearance can be perceived differently from family to family. Families' verbal and written consent is required to do a youth's hair (comb out, braid, ponytails, etc.), polishing nails, or any other means of altering a youth's appearance. This includes instances such as when a program requires long hair to be in a ponytail for swimming or may have a hair salon in the dramatic play area.

Birthday Celebrations

The YMCA celebrates the milestones of each youth participating in Y programs. All locations strive to acknowledge a youth's birthday in a way which creates equitable experiences and lifelong healthy habits. The Y serves a diverse community with varying access to resources, personal needs, and dietary restrictions. Families are asked to work in coordination with the Youth Director to determine if there are any allergies or dietary restrictions in the program. Any items brought in for birthday celebrations must be store-bought, individually wrapped and appropriate portions for youth. Families are encouraged to bring in items which enhance the curriculum.

Families who do not celebrate birthdays are encouraged to share their customs and preferences to support their youth's beliefs.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The YMCA is committed to maintaining close, positive relationships with the parents of every youth enrolled in our program. We strive to include family culture, language, and experiences as part of our curriculum and daily routines. Staff are required to communicate daily with families in a positive and professional manner.

Special Accommodations Daily Reporting

Information shared with families should focus on the youth's overall experience in the program.

For youth requiring special accommodation, families may request a daily report including:

- Food intake; time, type of food, and amount eaten
- Sleeping patterns, including when and how long the youth slept
- Elimination patterns, including bowel movements, consistency, and frequency; as related by the youth
- Developmental milestones
- Changes in the child's usual behaviors

Staying Connected

We encourage families to stay engaged and informed about their youth's program experience.

Staff are expected to communicate regularly through multiple channels, including:

- Monthly Program Updates: Highlights, news, and program needs (usually shared via newsletter)
- Program-Specific Updates: Information shared via email, flyers, and newsletters
- Volunteer Opportunities: Shared via email, flyers, and newsletters
- Incident Reports: Families are notified the same day an injury or incident occurs
- Behavior Reports: Provided to families when challenging behavior arises
- Field Trip Permission Slips: Sent as needed for youth participation in trips or special activities
- Memos and Notifications: for immediate needs or changes to the program
- Changes to Program Operations: Information such as program closures due to holidays, professional development, or school schedules, shared via email, flyers, and newsletters

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

Photos and videos of children taken by the YMCA or by families cannot be shared on social media without written consent from the families of all youth shown in the photo or video. Staff will remind families that photos or videos cannot be taken if the youth pictured are not approved for photography or videography. Program staff maintains a list of youth approved to be photographed or recorded.

GRANT FUNDING

YMCA programs are occasionally supported through grant funding provided by various communities, state, or federal sources. Each grant has its own specific requirements, which may include collecting program attendance, conducting family or youth surveys, or hosting site visits to ensure program expectations are met. Families and youth may be invited to participate in these feedback opportunities, which help the Grantees and the YMCA evaluate program quality and maintain funding that supports continued access and improvement.



HELLO CARDS

“Hello Cards” or cards with information about staff, are posted at each programming site to help families identify program staff. Each staff member’s photo and relevant information are displayed so anyone visiting can learn more about our team.

GRIEVANCES

We believe that communication is key for a strong camp counselor and family relationship. If a concern arises while your youth is enrolled, we recommend the following suggestions: Talk with the child’s camp counselor or the program director. Try to not “drop in” to talk. Schedule a time that is convenient for both of you so you can give your undivided attention. Be clear on what your question is about. State the nature of the concern and what you would like to see happen. Be sure that when you are finished, you are both clear about what you have discussed and the desired outcomes, including time frames.

YMCA MEMBERSHIP

Each YMCA offers a variety of programs for family members, including youth, individual, and family membership. We encourage families to plan healthy and fun activities for the entire family. The YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids provides a wonderful atmosphere where families can grow as a unit and improve their health by engaging in fitness and wellness activities. If you are interested in a YMCA membership, please contact the Youth Director or visit the membership desk at any YMCA branch.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Self-management skills and positive social interactions among youth and adults are encouraged and help maximize everyone's enjoyment of the program. To encourage positive self-esteem and increased internalization of self-control, YMCA programs use age-appropriate, positive guidance methods including reminders, distraction, logical consequences, and redirection. Consistent rules are clearly stated, and youth are expected to work and play within known limits. The behavior expected of youth is based on age and developmental level.

When assisting youth in managing their behavior, Y staff will:

- Model appropriate behaviors with youth, as well as appropriate expressions of feelings.
- Tailor behavior expectations to the youth's developmental level.
- Anticipate problem situations and intervene by distracting the youth and redirecting them to a positive alternative.
- Engage youth in cooperative problem solving by examining alternatives, identifying consequences, and choosing appropriate action.
- Talk with youth to help them understand why that behavior was inappropriate.
- Protect the safety of the youth and staff by establishing clear expectations and creating a safe environment through staff proximity in the program space.

An atmosphere of trust is established when youth know that they will not be hurt or be allowed to hurt others. Staff members strive to help young people become acquainted with themselves and their feelings. This will help youth learn to cope with their feelings and express them responsibly.

Program staff will work with families to address challenging behavior as needed. Positive behavior support strategies will be utilized to help the youth be successful.

In cases where consistent challenging behaviors continue, the Y will:

- Maintain consistent documentation of the behaviors observed
- Meet with staff to develop a YMCA Student Success Plan for an identified period
- Meet with family to discuss the observed behaviors and review the YMCA Student Success Plan. Attendance at this meeting is mandatory for families to continue to receive uninterrupted care.
- Implement the strategies outlined in the YMCA Student Success Plan, based on the identified period.

After the YMCA Student Success Plan is implemented, the youth director, staff, and family will meet to review, re-evaluate, and continue the plan as needed. The program may recommend other support. Continued challenging behavior, including but not limited to disruptive or dangerous behavior, may result in removal from program services.

The Y provides care exclusively in a group setting designed to meet the needs of youth within a group care environment. The program does not provide one-on-one or individualized care outside of the normal care and supervision of the group.

Staff and volunteers will avoid the use of competitive situations, comparative remarks, or labeling youth. All the following means of punishment are prohibited:

- Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
- Placing any substances in a youth's mouth, including but not limited to, soap, hot sauce, or vinegar.
- Restricting a youth's movement by binding or tying him or her.
- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a youth.
- Depriving a youth of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Excluding a youth from outdoor play or other gross motor activities.
- Excluding a youth from daily learning experiences.
- Isolating a youth in an adjacent room, closet, locked room, box, hallway, darkened area, play area, or another area where the youth cannot be seen or supervised.

Time out must only be used in combination with instructional approaches that teach youth what to do in place of unwanted behavior. Time out should be used to assist the youth in calming down and will only last as long as it takes for the youth to become calm.

INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

The YMCA values a welcoming and respectful program environment for all participants and families. Our programs are designed to reflect a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Families are encouraged to share traditions, experiences, and interests that are meaningful to them. Program materials, including books, play materials, visual displays, and food experiences, are thoughtfully selected to help participants learn about and appreciate a wide range of cultures and experiences.



Supportive Environment

The YMCA is committed to being inclusive and supporting all youth to have a positive experience. We work with families to provide extra support when needed for developmental, physical, or behavioral growth.

While we welcome collaboration with professionals or specialists that families may be working with, the YMCA does not provide one-on-one or individualized care. At enrollment, we ask families to share important information about their youth's needs so staff can plan accordingly. Youth Directors or Camp Coordinators will review all enrollment information, including the health and behavioral notification form, and share relevant information with staff to help support each youth.

The YMCA believes every youth is unique and valued. Staff use books, visual aids, and special guests to challenge gender roles and encourage youth to explore and express their personal identity in a safe and supportive environment.

Therapy

At times, youth may be scheduled for behavioral, physical, occupational or speech therapy. YMCA programs will make every effort to accommodate therapists and support personnel and to make time and space available for treatments. If a youth receives therapy or support services, families must contact the Youth Director or Camp Coordinator at least two weeks in advance to schedule treatment times that are most appropriate for the youth, as well as the other program participants. A visible space must be used.

Therapists and support personnel are considered supervised volunteers and must complete all required training, documentation, and background checks as required by licensing standards and YMCA policies and procedures. Therapists and support personnel must sign in and out in the volunteer logbook, recording the exact times of arrival and departure along with their signature.

HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Medication

The program will administer prescription and over-the-counter (non-prescription) medication with written permission from a parent/guardian and/or the youth's health care provider, if required.

All medications, including over-the-counter medicine, must be in the original container and clearly labeled with your youth's name. YMCA staff will give or apply medication according to the directions on the container and using the provided dosage device, unless we have written instructions from your youth's physician specifying otherwise.

Prescription medication bottles must have a pharmacy label that lists:

- Youth's first and last name
- Physician's name
- Name and strength of the medication
- Instructions to administer the medication
- Date the prescription was filled
- Medication expiration date

Fever reducing medications will not be administered for fevers due to illness.

All medications will be checked for expiration upon administration. Medications will be returned or destroyed once they have expired, or when you determine it is no longer needed. Over-the-counter medications will only be kept onsite for as long as necessary and cannot be stored for the entire summer.

Sunscreen, antibiotic cream and bug spray will be administered with annual written consent on record.

Communicable Diseases

To support a healthy environment, youth, staff, and volunteers will be sent home, or asked not to come in, if they show any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater*
- Diarrhea: Three instances of abnormal, loose, watery stools
- Vomiting
- Unexplained or new rash
- Red eyes with discharge
- Sores that are open, draining, or appear infected.
- Not feeling well enough to participate in activities
- Uncontrollable cough
- Lice or Nits

*Temperature taken under the arm must have one degree added to the temperature read.

If your youth becomes ill during program hours, they must be picked up within one hour of staff notifying you.

Program leadership reserves the right to determine whether a youth is well enough to participate in programming. Site leaders work closely with YMCA childcare leaders to ensure each situation is carefully considered.

For the safety of all participants, the YMCA also reserves the right to remove youth from programming if there is a concern about exposure to communicable diseases.

Youth, staff, and volunteers may return to programming when:

- Symptom-free for 24 hours without medication or per health department guidance
- Temperatures have been below 100.4 degrees for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Prescribed antibiotics have been taken for at least 24 hours.
- Nasal discharge is not thick, yellow, and/or green.
- Eyes are no longer discharging, or the condition has been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- If applicable, quarantine window has passed.
- Rash has subsided, or a physician has provided written notice stating that the rash is not contagious.

Infestation Procedures

The YMCA takes the health and comfort of all youth seriously. If a youth is found to have lice, nits, bed bugs, etc., families will be notified, and the youth must be picked up promptly.

Youth may return to programming once they have been treated and are free of lice, nits, bed bugs, etc.

Families are encouraged to follow recommended treatment and cleaning guidelines at home to ensure a safe and healthy environment for the entire family.

Staff will complete a lice check before the youth will be permitted to stay at the program.

Pest Management

Each program will have a pest management plan for when pesticide applications should occur in the building (to be done by the school district). The plan will include the following:

- An annual notification will be provided to the parents, informing them that they will receive advance notice of pesticide applications.
- The notifications shall specify two methods by which the advance notice of pesticide application will be given (e-mail, newsletter, sign, etc.).
- For a school, parents and guardians may review the school's integrated pest management program, if any, and records on any pesticide application procedures.
- Families may request the name, telephone number, and, if applicable, e-mail address of the person at the school building responsible for pesticide application procedures from the Youth Director.
- The advance notice shall contain information about the pesticide, including the target pest or purpose, approximate location, date of the application, contact information at the program, and a toll-free number for a national pesticide information center recognized by the Michigan Department of Agriculture.
- Liquid spray or aerosol insecticide applications may not be performed in a youth program unless the room will be unoccupied by youth for no less than 4 hours or longer, if required by the pesticide label use directions.

Meals and Nutrition

Mealtime allows children the chance to make healthy choices, develop relationships, and practice self-help skills. It is also a time for socializing, using table etiquette and learning about nutrition and new foods.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

Some of our programs receive funding to provide nutritious meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) grant. All youth at participating locations will be provided breakfast, lunch, and snack(s) as part of SFSP. All youth must be served every element of the meal, but they do not have to eat it.

Families may choose not to participate in SFSP and may send a Family -Provided Lunch with their camper. All Family-Provided Lunch guidelines apply.

Information regarding participation in SFSP will be shared at least one week prior to the first day of camp. If families want this information sooner, they should contact the Program Director at their preferred location to determine whether that site participates in SFSP.

Family Provided Lunches

Some YMCA camp locations do not participate in SFSP. Families at these locations are responsible for providing a daily lunch for their camper. Information regarding SFSP participation will be shared at least one week prior to the first day of camp. Families may also contact the Program Director at their preferred location for confirmation.

At locations where SFSP is not offered, the YMCA will provide a light breakfast or morning snack and an afternoon snack that meet licensing requirements. Water will be the primary beverage served. Sugar-sweetened beverages will not be served.

Due to limited refrigeration availability, campers must bring lunches packed with a freezer pack to help maintain safe food temperatures until mealtime. Microwavable foods are not permitted, as cooking equipment is not available for camper use. Families are encouraged to pack nutrient-dense foods. Families are asked to refrain from bringing sugar-sweetened beverages and to limit other non-nutritious items.

All lunches must be peanut and tree nut free.

If a camper arrives without a Family-Provided Lunch, YMCA staff will contact the parent, guardian, or emergency contacts listed on the camper's emergency card. Families will be required to provide a meal for their camper. The YMCA does not provide replacement meals at locations that do not participate in SFSP.

Nutrition

All meals and snacks served in our program follow nutritional guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Foods served are primarily low in sugar and fat. Youth are offered a variety of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Low-fat (1%) or nonfat milk and 100% juice are provided in appropriate portions. Menus are planned to provide balanced nutrition and will be posted or shared for families' reference. Water is available to youth throughout the day and at every meal and snack. USDA meal requirements, including serving portions, are available upon request.

Dietary Restrictions

Children with special dietary needs, including allergies or medically prescribed diet restrictions, will work with the Program Director to accommodate those needs. All food allergies or restrictions must be documented on licensing approved forms and include a written statement from a doctor or family on file.

Child Nutrition Programs are open to all eligible children and adults regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap. Any person who believes he/she has been discriminated against, in any USDA-related activity, should write to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington DC 20250.



Sun Protection

Families are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their youth prior to arrival at camp. Staff will remind campers to reapply sunscreen throughout the day and may assist younger campers or those who request assistance. Except in these cases, youth are expected to apply sunscreen independently. Gloves will be worn when staff assist with sunscreen application.

Families are responsible for providing and labeling sunscreen with their youth's first and last name. Each youth must have their own sunscreen, which should not be shared with siblings, as campers may be in different locations when reapplication is needed. Sunscreen should have a minimum SPF of 30 and waterproof formulas are preferred. Spray-on sunscreen is recommended for ease of application.

The YMCA maintains a limited reserve supply of sunscreen. If a youth does not have sunscreen available at camp, staff will notify parents via note, phone call, or email to ensure sunscreen is sent with the camper. If families need assistance in obtaining sunscreen, they should contact their program director.

The YMCA is not responsible for sun-related incidents, including sunburn or other reactions, even when reminders are provided or assistance is given. Families assume responsibility for ensuring their child has appropriate sunscreen and for any consequences related to sun exposure.

EMERGENCY AND PREPAREDNESS

YMCA staff will adhere to guidelines, recommendations, and instructions from emergency personnel in all emergency situations, including proper evacuation procedures and safety protocols. Staff members are trained in basic emergency procedures for the following emergencies:

- Fires
- Tornadoes
- Floods
- Power outages
- Extreme weather conditions
- Bomb threats
- Other natural or human-made emergencies, such as gas leaks, chemical spills, and sewer back-ups
- Serious threats or accidents
- Intruders or active shooters

Drills

Each program space maintains posted emergency plans, routes, and procedures. Staff and participants practice fire and tornado drills on a regular basis to ensure preparedness and safety.

Evacuation and Relocation

YMCA Day Camp programs maintain a shelter-in-place and lockdown plan to keep youth and staff safe inside the building, as well as an on-site evacuation plan, and an off-site evacuation. Off-site evacuations will be carried out if directed by a government agency in response to a natural or human-made threat. Families will be informed of the relocation and reunification process by the Youth Director, Camp Coordinator, or their designee. A plan for how youth with chronic medical conditions or those who require additional support will be accommodated during an emergency will be implemented as needed.

First Aid Kits

Each group is equipped with first aid materials, and a full first aid kit is available as needed. First aid kits are taken by groups whenever they leave the program site.

Staff follow universal safety precautions when handling bodily fluids, including the use of gloves to protect the health and safety of all participants.

Accident, Injury, Incidents

For minor accidents (e.g., bump, scrapes) families will be notified no later than the end of the day. In the event of a serious injury (e.g., head injury, excessive bleeding, broken limbs, seizure) families will be notified immediately. If a youth requires transportation to the hospital via ambulance before a parent or guardian arrives, a staff member will accompany the youth to the hospital and stay with them until a parent or guardian arrives. Families will be verbally notified within one hour if an incident should occur while their youth is in care of the program. Incidents include, but are not limited to:

- A youth is lost or left unsupervised
- Alleged sexual contact between youth or a youth and a staff member or volunteer
- Physical discipline of a youth by a staff member or volunteer

STAFF/ VOLUNTEERS

Staff

In all staffing decisions, the YMCA strives to hire the most competent and qualified individuals to work with youth. Thorough screening and interviewing procedures are consistently followed. Hiring and promotion decisions are based on staff education and experience working with youth. All program staff are required to:

- Submit to a criminal background check prior to employment, including in- and out-of-state felony and misdemeanor checks, sex offender clearance, and reference checks.
- Complete the following training:
 - Bloodborne pathogens training
 - The prevention of abusive head trauma and child maltreatment
 - Recognition, reporting and prevention of child abuse and neglect
 - The prevention and control of infectious diseases, including immunizations
 - Administration of Medication
 - Prevention and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions
 - Youth development and age-appropriate expectations
 - Pediatric first aid and pediatric, infant, child, and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation training*

*At a minimum, at least one staff member in the program will be certified in CPR and First Aid.

Volunteers

Volunteers, including parents, are always welcome in YMCA programs. Volunteers are a vital part of the Day Camp Program, and their help is greatly appreciated.

All volunteers are required to:

- Submit a criminal background check
- Obtain clearance through the Michigan State Police Sex Offender Registry clearance
- Complete all required training and documentation as required by licensing standards and YMCA policies and procedures.
- Sign in and out in the volunteer logbook

MiLEAP Compliance & Regulation Management

The YMCA provides youth programs that are regulated by the State of Michigan, and we work closely with the state to provide high-quality care. Our programs are specifically licensed through the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP). This includes interim visits, which review day-to-day operations to ensure compliance, and renewal visits that confirm our ongoing eligibility to maintain licensing. If an incident occurs, or a complaint is received, our sites may be subject to a special investigation visit.

Whenever an incident occurs during program hours, we are required to self-report the information to maintain our commitment to transparency and partnership with the state licensing office. Reportable incidents range in severity from minor situations, such as evacuating a false fire alarm, to more serious or severe injuries or occurrences, such as an injury that requires medical attention. The MiLEAP Licensing Representative determines whether further investigation is necessary. Such investigations are conducted to review the program's role in the incident and may include contacting families for more information.

Staff Relationship with Families Outside of the YMCA Programming

Staff may not be alone with youth they meet in YMCA programs. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, transporting youth to or from programming, attending birthday parties, going to a youth's home, or inviting youth to a staff member's home.



Confidentiality Statement

The YMCA respects families' right to privacy and keeps all information confidential. Information will only be shared with staff, consultants, or agencies when necessary for the youth's safety, or if required by law. Parental consent is needed to share records beyond these individuals, except in cases of suspected youth abuse or neglect.

Child Protection Laws

In accordance with Michigan's Child Protection Law, the YMCA is required to report any suspected cases of abuse, neglect, child sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation to the Department of Human Services. Program staff and volunteers are mandated reporters and must report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

More information on the MiLEAP can be found at
<https://www.michigan.gov/mileap>