



LICENSED CHILDCARE PARENT HANDBOOK

Infant
Toddler
Preschool
School Age Care
Extended Licensed School Age Care (ELSAC)



Building healthy
communities

YMCA of
Eastern Ontario

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Welcome

Welcome and thank you for choosing the YMCA of Eastern Ontario as a partner in the care of your child. We are confident that you will be pleased with your decision and we look forward to sharing in your family's life.

The information in this handbook is intended to provide you with a better understanding of our child care programs, philosophy, policies and procedures. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask any of our staff, they would be happy to assist you.

Mission

The YMCA of Eastern Ontario is a charitable organization committed to strengthening the foundations of the community by providing opportunities for the growth and development of all people in spirit, mind and body.

Our Staff

Our dedicated staff are carefully chosen and specially trained to ensure quality care. Our professional staff members are educated in Early Childhood Education or related fields and receive specific training in YMCA Playing to Learn or Place to Connect curriculum. Our facilities and programs are designed to be inclusive, and endeavor to be community hubs that thrive with participants from diverse cultural backgrounds, 2SLGBTQ2+, socioeconomic positions, gender expressions, religious affiliations as well as various levels of physical, social and cognitive development. The YMCA is committed to ensuring that all participants are protected from discrimination.

Our continuous evaluation of staff and programming ensures the ongoing high quality of care being offered to your child. Staff are required to maintain a current certification in Standard First Aid with CPR level C as well as Epi-pen training.

All staff, students and volunteers must provide a Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Persons Screening prior to hiring and have this renewed every three years, signing an offence declaration in the interim years. Volunteers and placement students must adhere to YMCA policies and procedures as well as Ministry, Health, Fire and Safety regulations. Volunteers and students are never left alone with children and are always under the supervision of a YMCA staff member.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

Our program statement describes how our programs support and foster early learning. It will outline our view of the child, our philosophy and pedagogy as well as the goals and approaches used to ensure healthy child development.

It will also outline how we evaluate our programs to maintain quality and how we support the professionals who work with children. The YMCA Program Statement is reviewed annually to ensure it is aligned with the Minister of Education's Policy statement.

Our View of the Child

Every child is special in the eyes of their parents and those who love them. The children are also special to us. As educators of young children, we know that each child is an individual of great human worth and potential. Every child is different in their looks, their growth patterns, their genetic make-up, their previous experience, the way they think and in every aspect of what makes them human beings. We appreciate each child's uniqueness and view the child's growth and development occurring in a holistic manner.

At the YMCA we understand that children learn through play. Play is enjoyable, spontaneous, active and undertaken without external goals and sanctions.

This means children are self-learners and do not require an adult to choose what or how they should learn. When the children's natural activity of play is supported by caring and responsive professionals in positive, developmentally appropriate learning environments, we believe, a child will flourish. The child's innate competence, capacity, curiosity and potential will be maximized.

YMCA Curriculum

The YMCA has a well-established, research-based approach to early learning. Our curriculum **YMCA Playing to Learn** was launched in 2000 and has been successfully implemented in all of our programs for children 0-6, since 2008.

The YMCA launched its school age curriculum, **A Place to Connect** for children 5-12 in 2009 with a national roll out beginning in January 2016.

The goals and approaches of the YMCA curricula align in philosophy, standards and recommendations with the provincial frameworks for early learning. Further information about the Ministry of Education pedagogy for the early years can be found below.

- **Minister of Education's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy**
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/programCCEYA.pdf>
- **How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years**
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/pedagogy.html>
- **Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)**
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf>

Our Statement on Play

Each child can reach his or her full potential through play. Our intention is to provide the best possible environment that allows the best possible play for all children in our care. We endeavour to meet the play needs of all children and must do whatever possible to support the natural urge to play.

Play ensures involvement, enjoyment and various forms of success. Play can be powerful or profound, but it is always purposeful.

Play is a vehicle that propels learning and development. Play and development are intertwined: neither precedes the other. All domains of development are supported by play, and play has the additional benefit of being self-initiated and therefore a joy rather than a chore. Play makes discovery pleasurable, but it also propels the child into the vast realm of learning. Play provides a way for children to be healthy in body, mind and spirit.

Play fosters skill development. It offers opportunities for gaining new skills as well as refining existing ones.

Play is directly linked to the child's learning. His or her cognitive development and academic success are enhanced by the play experience.

Play is physical and increases activity levels, fitness, balance, gross motor skills and fine motor actions. There are a wide range of scientific, mathematical, perspective-taking and other cognitive processes in discovery and other types of play.

Play is social and aids in language learning while supporting social skills development. Self-concepts and emotions are better understood through play, as is building of emotional intelligence. Important self-regulatory skills may be acquired and reinforced through play.

Play builds resilience and can help children manage stress. There are often therapeutic benefits to play. Typically, children direct their play in ways that address their own socio-emotional issues.

YMCA Curriculum Goals and Approaches

1) Promoting health, safety, nutrition and well-being:

Keeping children healthy and safe is a priority at the YMCA and we understand that the well-being of their child is a parent's #1 concern. Therefore, we have developed comprehensive, research-based procedures to support children.

Some of the procedures in place include:

- Safe supervision of children
- Safeguarding Children procedures and training
- Sanitation and disinfection procedures
- Menu planning following the Canada Food Guide
- Communicable disease prevention
- Emergency procedures
- Standard First Aid and CPR training
- Staff are involved in designing and implementing plans to support children with their individual needs

2) Supporting relationships:

At the YMCA we understand that young children flourish in all areas of development when they are in positive and responsive relationships with adults. YMCA educators build a foundation of trust with children by being available, sensitive, responsive and caring.

YMCA educators create an inclusive and respectful environment to foster positive, equitable and collaborative relationships. When children feel safe, secure, valued and a contributing member of their own world they can explore, discover, try new things, grow, learn and develop.

To support your child's care, growth and development YMCA educators interact and communicate with parents daily sharing observations, documentations and reflections.

3) Encouraging children to interact, communicate and self-regulate:

The YMCA believes that it is the role of the adult in a child's life to support them to learn to interact effectively with the world around them including other children, adults and the environment.

Generally self-regulation involves gaining a degree of control over one's bodily functions and impulses, managing one's emotions, changing one's behaviours and maintaining focus or attention on something or someone.

Some of the approaches implemented by YMCA educators to set the stage for positive interactions among children include:

- Educators provide small group experiences that allow for more individualized adult attention
- Educators role model inclusive, respectful and collaborative interactions with children and other adults
- Educators ensure the learning environment is flexible so they can respond in the moment and build on or scaffold children's interests
- Educators ensure toys, equipment and materials are plentiful and available to children at all times
- Children are given freedom to make choices

- By engaging as a play partner with children, educators can demonstrate pro-social skills including promoting discussion, problem solving when conflict arises and understanding how their actions affect others

4) Fostering exploration, play and inquiry:

Children are born with a natural sense of curiosity and wonder. They play naturally.

As parents and educators, we watch children explore their world through their senses, repetition of tasks, imitation, asking questions and pretending. But what are children really doing? Children are putting together all the pieces of how the world works through exploration, play and inquiry.

YMCA educators understand the importance of play. They foster, expand and scaffold this natural talent called play by being:

- Active participants
- Architects of the playscape
- Keen observers
- Planners
- Reporters
- Collaborators
- Reflective practitioners

Observing a day-in-the-life of a YMCA child care program, you will note that most activities are directed by the children. Their decisions are based on their interests and curiosity. The educator responds by adapting the environment by adding new toys, materials and equipment, posing questions and being a play partner. This sets the stage for further play, inquiry, discovery and learning. The educator's role is to support play so that learning and development flourishes.

5) Providing child-initiated and adult-supported experiences:

Children and parents are warmly greeted upon arrival and after a brief check-in to share news from the evening before, the children get down to the serious business of playing.

The room is set up with a variety of activities that support the observed interests of the children. The children might join some friends at the creative art table to work collaboratively on a collage, or they might work on a Lego structure they safely stored on the counter to complete next day.

There are no expectations imposed by the educator or curriculum on where children play, or whom they play with, or how long they play at one activity. That is for the child to choose based on their interests.

You may hear a small group of children in the dramatic play centre dressed in costumes acting out a scene of being “mama, papa and baby at the doctor”. The educator has been assigned the role of “doctor” by the children and takes this opportunity to ask the children questions that expand their understanding of what happens at a check-up.

Tomorrow the educator supports the children’s interest by adding books about doctors and hospitals to the dramatic play centre hoping to build on the children’s interest and spark more questions and play – resulting in more learning.

6) Planning learning environments to support every child’s learning:

At the YMCA we understand that the parent is the child’s first teacher, the YMCA educator is the second teacher, and the learning environment is the child’s third teacher.

The YMCA’s unique approach to planning and creating learning environments supports children’s play so that early learning and health is maximized. YMCA programs are inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans.

YMCA learning centres are designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the children.

We have created home like environments that include calm colours, soft furnishings, items from nature like plants and pets, family photographs and accessories that are intended to make children feel comfortable and safe.

YMCA educators understand that children learn holistically not in one area of development at a time. We understand that riding a tricycle involves gross motor and fine motor skills but the play children engage in while riding a tricycle involves many more – communication skills, social skills etc.

Therefore, you may find books, paper and crayons in the block area because children are using these items to figure out how to build a bridge from one shelf to another. Or you may find play dough in the dramatic play area where children are making pizza. And on a beautiful day you may see indoor furniture moved outdoors to take advantage of the weather.

7) Incorporating indoor, outdoor, active, rest and quiet activities:

YMCA educators design a daily schedule that meets the needs of the children and provides a balance of activities throughout the day.

Consideration for the care requirements, age, developmental level, energy level and interests of the children are included.

Generous blocks of time for children to explore, play and inquire are included both indoors and outdoors.

The daily schedule is not rigid but operating in small groups is mandated. One small group of children may be on a walk in the community, while the other small group may prefer to stay indoors and bake cookies.

Periods of active and quiet play are interwoven throughout the day both indoors and outdoors.

In very poor weather active play takes place indoors so that children get the physical activity their bodies require.

YMCA educators are trained to keep transitions from activity to activity to a minimum so children get to play more.

However, young children thrive on regular schedules and feel secure when they can predict what will occur throughout the day therefore snacks and meal times are consistent as is the rest period for young children in the afternoon.

8) Fostering engagement and communication with parents:

At the YMCA we understand that a parent is the most important person in a child's life. YMCA educators play a supporting role while parents go to work or school.

YMCA educators and parents communicate daily about children's activities and health. YMCA educators keep a record of each infant, toddler and preschool age child's learning and development in Weemarkable for parents to read each day.

Getting to know family members is critical as an educator and including family members in program helps a child feel a greater sense of belonging.

Other strategies to engage parents and gain input include:

- Documentations that describe play and its connection to learning
- Celebrations and events
- Parent surveys
- Displays of children's artwork, sculptures and creations
- Photographs of children at play
- Posting planning documents that include observations of children's interests and activities introduced by YMCA educators

9) Involving community partners:

While our range of community partners is broad, the largest and most important is the education system. Our School-Age Care Programs are in schools, so relationships with principals, faculty and staff are critical.

The YMCA works closely with local community agencies and partners to support the children and families in our programs. We view the community as a valuable resource and our staff plan learning opportunities to engage the community in our programs.

The YMCA seeks opportunities to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community through networking, community planning tables and conferences.

10) Supporting educators' continuous professional learning:

The YMCA is committed to the ongoing professional development of our educators. In collaboration with our municipalities full day professional learning conferences have been planned the past three years which have resulted in the programs being closed. Should similar planning continue for 2025-2026, we are committed to keeping parents informed as the dates near. After all, what the educator learns informs practice and the benefit is passed onto the children.

The YMCA provides opportunities for educators to attend external learning events and conferences and keep legislated training requirements like Standard First Aid and Infant and Child CPR up-to-date.

In conjunction with the supervisor, staff are encouraged to self-identify training needs.

On a day-to-day basis the child care centre supervisor is responsible for the leadership, mentorship, coaching and development of educators. Based on the learning needs of the educators the supervisor may meet with staff to suggest strategies, conduct learning sessions to focus on a particular area of the YMCA curriculum, conduct staff meetings to reflect and plan, invite speakers from other departments or community agencies to attend the centre or provide materials to supplement educator's professional learning.

11) Documentation

YMCA educators participate in a continuous cycle of observation:

- Documenting play and its significance
- Determining the children's interests
- Planning activities that support the interests
- Discussion with team members
- Reflection that informs the planning of activities and the learning environment

Links are made between theory, research, YMCA curriculum, the YMCA Program Statement, government pedagogy and children's interests to inform the planning decisions YMCA educators make.

You will see the cycle reflected in the toys, materials and equipment provided in the play areas, the furniture arrangement, the creative work of children, the activities children are engaging in. On the planning documents posted weekly for parents to read and discuss with educators, in individual children's journals and in photographs and written descriptions of activities.

The process of continuous program assessment is called reflective practice. Daily, educators are observing and engaging with children and evaluating the effectiveness of the learning environment to build on children's interests. Regularly they are reviewing planning and discussing with their team to ensure they are supporting children's learning and development and then plan for the future.

Implementing the Program Statement and Policies/Procedures

The YMCA is committed to supporting children to grow to their fullest potential in a safe, caring and nurturing environment. The program statement describes YMCA specific goals for children's learning and development, and the approaches that will be implemented. Each member of the program team holds a role and responsibilities in ensuring the approaches in the program statement are implemented.

Roles and Responsibilities in Implementation and Monitoring

YMCA Management will:

- Conduct a comprehensive annual review of the YMCA Program Statement and Policies/Procedures including the goals and approaches; integrate information gathered through various monitoring practices including curriculum assessments, parent and employee surveys, trends in performance reviews, etcetera. A record will be kept of the review and signed and dated by a senior manager.
- Conduct curriculum assessments at each centre on an annual basis.
- Respond immediately to any concerns or commissions of prohibited practices observed or reported.

Supervisors will:

- Orient all new staff, students and volunteers to the YMCA Policies/Procedures and Individual Plans before they interact with children. A sign off sheet with the staff, student, or volunteer and supervisor signature indicating the date of orientation will be kept.
- Review all policies/procedures and plans with all staff, students, and volunteers on an annual basis or any time there is substantive changes to the program statement. A sign off sheet with the staff, student, or volunteer and supervisor signature indicating the date of orientation will be kept.

- Provide time, coaching and guidance for staff to engage in ongoing reflective practice and collaborative inquiry with the program team.
- Monitor all staff, students and volunteers for compliance and contraventions with all policies/procedures/plans, including the approaches set out in the program statement and the commission of any prohibited practices through a combination of observation, reports from colleagues, parents, and community partners, reviewing documentation. An observation is completed and documented in the record of observation for every staff, student, and volunteer. The results are discussed with the individual and an action plan will be documented where required. A minimum of one observation should be recorded quarterly.
- Performance Management will be conducted annually with each staff.
- Discuss curriculum assessment results with program team and develop a plan of action to be implemented for continuous improvement.
- Immediately report any concerns or commission of any prohibited practices to YMCA management.

Educators will:

- Prepare documentations as prescribed by the YMCA curriculum standards that demonstrate the implementation of the approaches in the program statement.
- Engage in ongoing reflective practice and collaborative inquiry with the program team as a means for reflecting on and discussing documentation.

Prohibited Practices

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach to manage unwanted behavior.

Research from diverse fields of study shows those children who attend programs where they experience warm, supportive relationships are happier, less anxious and more motivated to learn than those who do not. Experiencing positive relationships in early childhood also has significant long term impact on physical and mental health, and success in school and beyond.

The YMCA Program Statement sets out approaches that support positive interactions between children, families, staff and the community.

The following prohibited practices are not permitted:

- Corporal punishment
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the

physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.

- Locking the exits of the child care centre premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- Depriving the child of the basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Measures to Deal with Contraventions of Policies and the Use of Prohibited Practices

Any reports involving breach of the above prohibited practices are taken seriously and will be dealt with by YMCA management. Individuals who violate the prohibited practices and this procedure are subject to disciplinary or corrective action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer assignment.

Communications will occur with all appropriate governing agencies as required throughout the process. (example: Ministry of Education, Employment Standards, Police, College of Early Childhood Educators, College of Teacher's, Children and Family Services.)

Everyone including staff, students, volunteers and parents are expected to comply with the programs stated policies and procedures and the requirements of the Child Care and Early Years Act.

All contraventions will be assessed, and supportive actions will be taken which may include any of the following: peer mentoring, review of policies and procedures with the supervisor formal feedback and or training. Failure to comply could result in:

For Students and Volunteers

1. Discussion regarding contravention with plan for improvement.
2. Termination of placement

For Others including Parents

1. Discussion regarding the contravention with plan for improvement.

2. Other action as deemed appropriate by the Senior Director Association and Child Care Services including but not limited to, removal from program and the person not being permitted on the premises.

For Staff

1. Discussion regarding contravention with plan for improvement. Plan and follow up to be located in Program Statement Monitoring Tool: Record of Contravention/Prohibited Practice
2. A written warning outlining contravention and plan for improvement will be documented on the Program Statement Monitoring Tool: Record of Contravention/Prohibited Practice and the written warning will be stored in the personnel file.
3. Suspension or Dismissal

Disciplinary measures for staff are normally a three step process. The exception is for certain conduct, which because of its seriousness justifies omitting one or more of the steps. When determining which disciplinary measure(s) will be taken, the following criteria will be considered by the Director:

1. The seriousness of the offence
2. The actual or potential risk, or harm to the child
3. The past and recent performance of the employee
4. The frequency of the occurrence
5. The previous disciplinary action taken

Where action is necessary, it will be taken immediately by the Supervisor in the case of staff, students, volunteers, parents and others, by the Director in the case of the Supervisor and by the CEO in the case of the Director.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Ages of Children

Infants	Younger than 18 months
Toddlers	18 months or older but younger than 30 months
Preschool	30 months or older but younger than 6 years
Kindergarten	44 months or older but younger than 7 years
School age	68 months or older but younger than 13 years

Days and Hours of Operation

YMCA child care programs are open Monday-Friday. For a detailed list of the hours of operation at each of our programs please see the chart on page 26.

Some School Age Care Programs operate full day programs called Extended Licensed School Age Care (ELSAC) during school breaks (PA days/Holidays). Please see the chart on page 26 for details.

Fees for Service

The YMCA of Eastern Ontario supports the provinces initiative to make child care affordable. As such, we are participating in the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care System.

Effective January 1, 2025 our base fees are calculated on a per day basis and are as follows:

	Brockville	Kingston	Gananoque
Infant	\$22.00	\$22.00	
Toddler	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$20.83
Preschool	\$20.32	\$22.00	\$19.22
SAC am only (6 years+)	\$10.25	\$10.25	
SAC pm only (6 years+)	\$12.25	\$12.25	
Kinder (under 6) am only	\$8.75	\$9.50	
Kinder (under 6) pm only	\$12.00	\$11.50	
Kinder (under 6) am/pm	\$12.00	\$12.00	
ELSAC Kinder (under 6)	\$20.79	\$21.74	
ELSAC (6 years+)	\$47.00	\$47.00	

As part of the enrollment package parents/guardians enter into an agreement with the YMCA of Eastern Ontario by signing a service delivery agreement and a pre-authorized debit form. These forms have further details about payment dates and practices as well as non-base fees. (late fee and NSF charges). Fee payments occur of the 1st and 15th of the month using preauthorized debit(void cheque or credit card). If the YMCA opts to operate in exceptional circumstances on what would be considered an instructional day (ie: labour dispute) the base fee will be the ELSAC fee.

Fees will not be refunded or credited for sick/absent days or for service interruptions caused by severe weather, utility interruptions, school closures or labour disruptions that impact access to program spaces. Vacation days or enrollment cancellation requested with less than 2 weeks written notice will not be refunded/credited. Refunds will be issued when the YMCA must close a program due to an inability to staff the program adequately to meet the regulatory requirements for operating

Admission and Discharge Policy

A tour is encouraged to be arranged to familiarize yourself and your children with the YMCA's environment and an introduction to our YMCA Playing to Learn curriculum. Completed registration and payment forms, as well as a copy of your child's up-to date immunization record are required prior to admission. As per our wait list policy admission to the child care centre will be offered to families when a space is available and we will follow the waitlist policy when admitting which outlines how we approach filling vacancies. Families are free to withdraw their child at any time from the program by submitting written notice to the centre supervisor at least two weeks prior to the expected last day with the exception of full day SAC summer programming which requires families to make any changes to their registration by June 15, 2025 in order to receive a refund/credit. Failure to give adequate notice will result in the family being billed for this period. **Please note** that part-time care is **NOT** an option for our child care programs. Participants must register for care Monday through Friday. School Age participants must register for Monday-Friday and have the option of selecting a.m., p.m. or both.

The YMCA reserves the option to terminate services for the following reasons:

- Non-payment of program fees
- Chronic late pick up
- Situations that require specialized services that the YMCA is unable to provide
- Parents or children who exhibit abusive behaviour towards staff, volunteers other children and families

Enrollment Wait List Procedures

Parents interested in a space in our licensed child care programs will be directed to our website(eo.ymca.ca) to place their child's name on our wait list. Kingston programs use a centralized system (CCRIS) managed by the city; Brockville and Gananoque maintain manual lists by the supervisor of the program. These wait lists maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on them and allows the position of a child on the list to be ascertained by the affected person/family. At any time, a family may call the center to inquire about their placement on the list.

Information from the parent for the wait list will include:

- a) the name, address and phone number of the parent
- b) Child's name and date of birth
- c) Details of type of care needed
- d) Start date and the date of intake.

Across the region, placement on the waitlist is prioritized first, by the date and time of inquiry, second, by the requested start date, and then by the following priorities:

- YMCA of Eastern Ontario personnel
- Existing families who require a space for a sibling,
- Emergency placement of children through Family and Children's Services

- New families requesting full-time care
- School-Age Care families returning to the program within four months of the child's/children's last attendance,

Placement of new children may be influenced by several factors such as (but not limited to): the days of the week requested and the age and availability within the program to accommodate needs are considered. When a space becomes available, the first person on the waitlist is contacted. If they cannot be reached on the first attempt, contact will be attempted again on the next business day. If they cannot be reached, or do not return our call within 24 hours after the second call, the next person on the list will be contacted. A family has 24 hours after initial contact has been made to confirm their acceptance of the child care space.

If subsidy monies are spent before year-end, families requiring subsidized care will retain their position on the list until subsidy funds are once again available.

A parent who “no shows” or cancels two subsidy appointments will have their child’s name removed from the waiting list.

Preparing to Start

The YMCA of Eastern Ontario child care programs ask that families bring the following items as needed:

- Items for toileting(diapers, wipes, cream)
- Indoor shoes
- Weather appropriate clothing
- A change of clothes
- Blanket for rest period
- Bathing suit (swim diapers if needed)
- Water bottle

Additionally, in the case of infants bottles, formula, and pacifier (if needed) are required. Please take the time to label your child’s belongings with their first name.

When parents are in the process of determining custody in courts, we are unable to deny access to either parent, until we receive court documentation indicating the permanent arrangements.

Arrival and Dismissal

Young children depend on regular routines for their own sense of security. We recommend that you establish regular arrival and pick up times so that your child becomes familiar with their routine.

When children arrive at YMCA child care programs they must be escorted by a parent/guardian into the program space. Staff are to connect with the parent/guardian and during this transfer of care, staff are responsible for recording the time of arrival on the attendance record.

If a child is expected at program and the staff have not received notification about the absence by 9:00am the YMCA will follow these steps:

- For children in full day programs, a text will be sent by the educator using the Weemarkable app notifying the parent(s)/guardian(s) in the system that their child is not in attendance and requesting they confirm the child absence.
- For SAC participants, program staff will call parents using the information on the enrollment form to confirm the child's safety and well-being. A message will be left if the call is not picked up requesting that the parent confirm the absence.
- For SAC participants enrolled in afternoon program only who do not arrive at program (directly from school or off of the bus), program staff will call the parent/guardian using the information on the enrollment form to notify the child is not in attendance and request that they confirm the child's absence.

Dismissal

When parents/guardians pick up their child staff are responsible for recording the time on the attendance record. Children will only be released to individuals over 18 years of age and who the parent/guardian has provided written authorization. Individuals, until the staff are familiar with them, must show picture ID to staff so they can confirm the individual's identity. Parents/guardians can update the program supervisor with additions or deletions to the pickup contacts in person or by email. Document these updates in the daily log. In the event a child is not picked up before the program closes, staff will call the parents/guardians to confirm pickup and complete a Late Arrival Fee form. Details about charges are explained at the time of enrolment and are on your signed Service Delivery Agreement.

If parent/guardian is not reached, staff will call the emergency contact listed on the enrolment form and ask them to pick up the child. Staff will attempt to reach either the parent or emergency contact for up to 20 minutes after the program closes. During this time, the child will be offered an activity as well as a snack and water. If after that time, no one has been reached, staff are to contact the local Children's Services department (see numbers listed in contacts section of the Safe Arrival/Dismissal policy) and follow next steps as issued by Children's Services.

In the event a parent arrives at one of our program sites under the influence of alcohol or drugs (or suspected of such), staff will take the required appropriate action. This may include, but not be limited to, calling a taxi to take the parent and child home (at the parent's expense) or calling the police.

Sleep Position and Supervision Policy and Procedures

- All children under 12 months of age will be placed on their backs for sleep in accordance with the Joint Statement of Safe Sleep, unless a child's physician recommends otherwise in writing. Parents will be informed of this requirement when their child is enrolled in the centre.

- A copy of the centre's sleep policy is included in the centre's parent handbook which is accessible on the YMCA website.
- Staff will periodically perform a direct visual check of sleeping children by being physically present beside each child and checking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours. Direct visual checks will be performed every 15 minutes for infants and every 30 minutes for toddlers. A Sleep Room Visual Checklist will be maintained which will list the time of each check and the initials of the individual conducting it. Any changes in children's sleeping patterns or behaviours during sleep will be recorded.
- All areas where children are sleeping will have sufficient lighting to conduct direct visual checks.
- Children will be assigned individual cribs (infants) or cots (toddler and preschool)
- At time of enrollment parents will be consulted respecting their child's sleeping arrangements and at any other appropriate times, such as room transitions or upon parent's request. Special instructions by parents can be noted on enrollment form or afterwards through written notice directed to the supervisor.
- Any changes in a child's sleeping patterns or behaviours during sleep will be communicated to parents, will result in adjustments to the manner in which the child is supervised during sleep, and the child will be supervised closely during sleep.

Activities off the Premises

As part of our program, we regularly use the community assets surrounding our child care programs including but not limited to, trails, parks, library and shopping areas. Parents consent to their child participating in such activities at the time of enrolment on their registration form. In instances where staff take children off of the premises, they are responsible for having each child's emergency contact information with them as well as a first aid kit and a cellular phone to contact emergency services if needed. Child care programs may use public transit to transport children. In the case where the outing requires other transportation, specific field trip forms will be provided for parents to offer permission for their child to participate. The field trip form will outline the safety precautions being taken for that specific trip.

Swim Program

- Children in our programs with access to the pool, as well as Extended Licensed School Age Care may participate in a swim program.
- All lifeguards are certified by the National Lifesaving Society (NLS) and the pool will be staffed according to the current regulations.
- All children 0-6 years of age will wear lifejackets. Children will be directly supervised (in the water within arms reach) by a child care services staff at the approved ratio
- Children in the SAC program, who are over 6 years of age can complete a swim test to determine their level of ability. Children who are able to pass the swim

test must be directly supervised by a SAC staff at the approved ratio. Children who are unable to pass the swim test must wear a lifejacket and be directly supervised (in the water within arms reach) by a SAC staff at the approved ratio.

- A backpack containing the children's emergency records and any emergency medication will be brought with each group to the pool area and kept in a location that is not accessible to the children.
- The pool is equipped with a telephone and first aid kit in case of emergency.
- Lifeguards will visit each group in September and February to explain the safety rules of the pool. Staff will review the pool safety rules before each scheduled pool time.
- At the time of enrollment parents will give consent for their child to participate in the YMCA of Eastern Ontario Child Care swim program.

Supervision of Students and Volunteers

The YMCA of Eastern Ontario adheres to the guidelines set out by the Ministry of Education regulations on Volunteers and Students. These provisions are in place to support the safety and well-being of children attending our center.

1. No child is supervised by a person less than 18 years of age
2. In licensed programs, only employees will have direct, unsupervised access to children
3. Volunteers and students may not be counted in the staffing ratios for licensed Child Care

Emergency Management

The YMCA of Eastern Ontario has procedures in place that support all individuals to manage responses and responsibilities during an emergency, resulting in the safest outcomes possible. Staff, students and volunteers read and sign off on the Emergency Management Policy and Procedures ensuring that children are kept safe, are accounted for and are supervised at all times during an emergency situation. After Emergency Response Procedures have been implemented Parent/Guardians will be notified by telephone, Weemarkable or social media to pick up their child if a centre closure is required. If no closure is required parents/guardians will be notified when picking up their child. When an emergency evacuation site is being used, Parents/Guardians will be notified by phone, Weemarkable or social media of the emergency situation, evacuation and location to pick up their child. Where possible the YMCA will update social media sites as soon as possible to inform the public.

Nutrition

We strive to ensure the nutritional needs of the children while in our care are met. Adequate and appropriate nutrition is vital to children's health, growth, development and well-being. Canada's food guide is used to make informed decisions when creating menus provided by the

YMCA. Children in full day child care will be provided with a morning and afternoon snack as well as a midday meal prepared on site.

School Age Care programs as well as Extended Licensed School Age Care programs will operate with children bringing their own snack and lunch items. Parents of these programs have agreed to comply with the guidelines in the parent handbook at the time of enrolment on their registration form. Parents must ensure that their child's lunch is nut free, nutritious and meets the guidelines of the Canada Food Guide (<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en>). Lunches should include items from each of the food groups plus 1 extra fruit or vegetable. Lunch bags and all containers must be labelled. We suggest that lunches not include foods which are low in nutritional value and/or high in sugar content.

The YMCA will not be responsible for providing food to children who arrive without their lunch. In this case, parents will be called to provide a lunch as soon as possible. We recommend that parents send “extra” items until they are sure of their child’s eating habits.

Parents are required to provide the centre with written instructions for feeding infants under 1 year, as well as for any child with special requirements related to diet/rest/exercise. Parents are also required to provide written instructions when there are any changes to these requirements.

Special dietary needs and allergies will be posted in the food preparation area and will be accessible as a reference to staff at all other times to ensure that children receive the correct food.

Any child requiring a special dietary arrangement must provide written instructions to the center supervisor either at the time of registration or at the time such requirements come into place. If the YMCA can not accommodate the required arrangements, parents may be asked to supply items. If items are supplied, they must be labeled. Items brought in daily are required to have the child’s name. Items stored at the center for future use require the child’s name and the date the item was supplied.

Allergy Awareness

Due to the prevalence of allergies outside food is limited in the Child Care Center with the exception of children who have dietary needs that cannot be met with the YMCA menu, School Age Care and Extended Licensed School Age Care. Staff will monitor snacks and meals to ensure food does not contain Peanut/Tree Nut or have come into contact with these nuts. Parents will be notified when concerns arise regarding the nutritional adequacy and/or presence of allergens. Food allergy lists are posted in programming areas where food consumption takes place and parents are to notify YMCA staff in writing with regards to any

allergies or food intolerances. Lunch bags and containers must be labeled with the child's name. It is recommended to include an ice pack with your child's lunch to conserve temperature.

The following strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents must be followed at all times by employees, students and volunteers at the child care centre.

- Do not serve foods where its ingredients are not known.
- The caterer or cook will review the known ingredients for all food provided with the supervisor before food is served to children to verify that causative agents are not served to children with anaphylactic allergies.
- In cases where a child has food allergies and the meals and snacks provided by the child care centre cannot meet the child's needs, ask the child's parent to supply snacks/meals for their child. All written instructions for diet provided by a parent will be implemented.
- Ensure that parents label food brought to the child care centre with the child's full name and the date the food arrived at the child care centre, and that parents advise of all ingredients.
- Where food is provided from home for children, ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged.
- Encourage parents who serve foods containing allergens at home to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the child care centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- Do not use craft/sensory materials and toys that have known allergens on the labels.
- Share information about anaphylaxis, strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens and treatment with all families enrolled in the child care centre.
- Make sure each child's individual plan and emergency procedure are kept-up-to-date and that all staff, students, and volunteers are trained on the plans.
- Refer to the allergy list and ensure that it is up to date and implemented.
- Update staff, students, and volunteers when changes to a child's allergies, signs and symptoms, and treatment occur and review all updates to individualized plans and emergency procedures.
- Update families when changes to allergies occur while maintaining the confidentiality of children.

Health and Administration of Medication

The medication policy is in place to ensure that regulations in the governing legislation (Child Care and Early Years Act) are in compliance. It stipulates that prior to admission; each child must be immunized as recommended by the Public Health Department. Parents/guardians must provide proof of their child's immunization. Families who for conscientious reasons, decide not to immunize their child must complete an exemption form, available on the Ministry website and provided it to the centre prior to the child commencing.

Children with medical needs will be required to complete an individualized medical plan in collaboration with any health care practitioner or child care staff they deem necessary. The plan will outline items associated with minimizing risk, administration and location of required medication or medical devices and who to contact in case of emergency. This plan must be complete before the child is admitted to and will be reviewed by the supervisor at least annually or anytime there is a significant change.

Regulations require daily outdoor play for each child. Children who are too ill to play outside are required to stay home. If you are unsure of your child's health, please keep him/her at home. The child care programs are a very fun and exciting place to be, but only if you are feeling well. A slight fever, a drastic change in temperament, a runny nose, and diarrhea can all be early signs of something more serious. Help us to ensure the health and safety of all the children by keeping sick children at home if they have a fever over 38 degrees (100.4 F), have diarrhea or are vomiting. Should your child become ill while attending our program or appears to have symptoms associated with a communicable disease, he/she will be given temporary care, and the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately to pick up the child. If we are unable to contact the parent/guardian, the alternate emergency contact will be called. Should your child be diagnosed as having a contagious disease, we ask that the child be kept at home and that you contact us immediately so that we can inform the other parents.

A child should not return to the program until he/she is ready to participate in all aspects of the program, including outdoor activities without the aid of medications.

Public Health imposes the following exclusions:

- Children may return after being 24 hours fever free
- Children may return to care 48 hours after their last episode of diarrhea or vomiting

If your child is experiencing symptoms of illness, we recommend that you use the online COVID screening tool to determine next steps. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

All of our child care facilities have an accessible first aid kit and manual. All staff are aware of its location. Minor accidents are reported to the parent when the child is picked up. Accident

report forms are completed and filed. A copy(digital or hard) is supplied to the parent for their records. In case of a serious injury, our child care services staff will attempt to reach a parent immediately. If unsuccessful, the alternate adult designated by the parent will be contacted. An ambulance will be called, if necessary. Until the arrival of the parent or ambulance, our centre Supervisor/Head Teacher will be in charge and will make all decisions regarding the care of the child. Please understand that it is essential to keep our staff up to date with regards to emergency telephone contact numbers. Also, please be advised that expenses incurred in responding to an emergency situation, which in our judgement, is in the best interests of the welfare and safety of a child, are the responsibility of the parents, not the YMCA of Eastern Ontario.

In order to ensure the safety of all of our participants, children in our programs are **NOT** allowed to store any type of medication or health product (ie: lotions, sunscreens, bug spray, lip balm etc) in their cubby or backpack. It is our policy that staff members do not administer non-prescription medication.

We are prepared to administer prescription medication to children, in accordance with the Child Care Early Years Act. It requires that parents provide:

1. written instructions
2. completed Medication Authorization Form
3. medication, in original container, clearly labelled with the child's name, dosage, duration and expiry date
4. instructions for storage of medication

Parents of children requiring emergency medication (i.e. inhaler, etc.) must complete and sign an Individualized Medical Plan. A Medication Administration Consent form for each medication that is required must also be completed. Please make sure to include all symptoms/reactions associated with your child's medical plan.

Parents of children with anaphylactic allergies requiring an epi-pen (i.e. Benadryl which requires a physician's note) must complete the Medication Administration Form, as well as an Anaphylactic Action Plan. A child is not permitted to attend the centre without the required emergency medications and the medications must not be expired.

Despite Public Health downgrading Head Lice to a nuisance the YMCA of Eastern Ontario Child Care Centres will continue to implement a no nit policy. Children found to have head lice will be excluded from the program until they have been treated and are clear of lice and nits. Participants in School Age Care programs and Extended Licensed School Age Care that occur in schools will be excluded until treatment has occurred and the child is lice free.

Sun Safety

The YMCA Child Care programs plan activities outdoors daily and want to use these experiences as an opportunity to foster sun safe habits. As part of the enrolment package, each family will give consent for their child to participate. Should a parent choose not to participate they should speak with the centre supervisor so that written instructions can be obtained for the child's file. From April 15-September 30 each year, it is the responsibility of each family to apply sunscreen to their child in the morning before drop off. The YMCA will provide and apply sunscreen to each child 15-30 minutes prior to going outdoor in the afternoon when the UV is higher than 3. A wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and light clothing that cover skin are also encouraged.

Clothing and Possessions

Your child should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate for physical activity, the weather and the season. Full day programs are required to be outside for a minimum of 2 hours per day, weather permitting and School Age Care programs are required to be outside for a minimum of 30 minutes each day. Please ensure that as well as having access to weather appropriate outdoor clothing your child has access to proper indoor clothing (a change of clothes and indoor shoes)

We ask that children keep their personal items at home as they are often a source of conflict, and the YMCA can not be responsible for lost or broken toys/items brought to the program.

Holidays

The YMCA of Eastern Ontario offers Extended Licensed School Age Care on P.A. days and school breaks for children age 3.8-12 years. Specific information concerning Extended Licensed School Age Care is distributed through all of our School-Age Care Programs and information is available on the website. The YMCA of Eastern Ontario Child Care Centre and School-Age Care Programs do not run on New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Children in full day child care programs earn vacation time benefits after being in the program for 90 days. Vacation time is accrued monthly and after 1 year would equal 2 weeks of the child's regular schedule. Vacation time must be requested in writing at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled vacation period. Failure to provide the required notice may result in being billed for the associated fees.

Child Care fees are required for all statutory holidays. School age care is not charged on statutory holidays except for those on non-instructional days.

Service Interruption Procedure

The YMCA will make every effort to remain open. The Child Care Early Years Act regulates a specific standard of health and safety measures that must be met at all times in order to operate. If these measures will not be met because of severe weather or facility/utility failure, we are required by law to send children home and close.

If conditions warrant closing the program, parents will be notified individually where able. Families can also listen to the local radio stations; check our website and other social media sites or call their program directly.

Programs that operate offsite in schools and School Age Care programs have the possibility of being disrupted during school closures or labour negotiations.

In the event of closures due to severe weather, facility/utility disruption, school interruption or professional development days, the YMCA will not refund parent fees.

If the YMCA can not staff appropriately to meet the ministry requirements, a program may need to close temporarily. In this case, families will receive a communication, likely by email to the payer on file or via Weemarkable, informing them of this situation. Fees will be reimbursed for this type of closure. The YMCA will make every effort to open the program as quickly as possible understanding that this is extremely impactful to parents/guardians.

Parent Issues and Concerns

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the YMCA of Eastern Ontario and will be addressed. We view these complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved. Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy

of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children’s Aid Society).

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated from any party. If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Concerns About the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of A Child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [local Children’s Aid Society](#) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to their local Children’s Aid Society as per the Duty to Report requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidd/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room, General, Centre- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, child</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the classroom staff directly or the supervisor or licensee.</p>	<p>Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 2 business days.</p> <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received;

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
Staff, Duty parent, Student/Volunteer, Supervisor, and/or Licensee-Related	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the individual directly or the supervisor or licensee.</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

Escalation of Issues or Concerns:

Where a complaint cannot be easily resolved, it will be escalated to the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team. If this person cannot resolve the complaint, it will be escalated to the CEO of the YMCA of Eastern Ontario. If the complaint is about the CEO it will be handled by the Chair of the Board.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, Fire Department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts

- Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca
- Jill MacDonald, Senior Director, Association and Child Care Services, YMCA of Eastern Ontario:

613-546-2647 X 246 or jill.macdonald@eo.ymca.ca

- College of Early Childhood Educators: discipline@college-ece.ca

Program Locations, Hours of Operation and Direct Contact Numbers

If your child will be absent, please call the program site and leave a message for the staff.

Program	Telephone Number	PA Day	Christmas	March Break	Summer
BROCKVILLE AREA					
Brockville YMCA 345 Park St. 6:45a-5:45p	613-342-7961 X 22 Licensed Home Child Care X 35	X	X	X	X
Merrickville P.S. 306 Drummond St. 6:30a-9:00a, 3:30p-6:00p	613-213-5005				
Vanier P.S. 40 Vanier Dr. 7:15a-9:00a, 2:45p-5:30p	613-802-0392				
KINGSTON AREA					
Archbishop O'Sullivan 974 Pembroke Dr. 7:30a-9:00, 3:15-5:30p	613-561-3244				
Arbour Heights 564 Tanner Dr. 7:30a-5:30p	613-389-3200				
Bayridge P.S. 1066 Hudson Dr. 7:30a-9:00, 3:30-5:30p	613-876-1754				
Ecole Cathedral 306 Johnson St. 2:35p-6:00p	613-453-4552				
Ecole Maple Elementary School 529 St. Martha 7:00a-9:00a, 3:30-6:00p	613-453-2805	X		X	X
Polson Park P.S. 465 Robert Wallace Dr. 7:30a-9:00, 3:35-5:30p	613-561-3219	X			X
Lord Strathcona P.S. 251 McMahon 7:30a-9:00, 3:00-5:30p	SAC 613-561-4285				
St. Marguerite Bourgeoys 355 Waterloo Dr. 7:30a-9:00, 3:30-5:30p	613-561-3217	X		X	X
Sydenham P.S. 5 Clergy St. 7:30a-9:00, 3:30-5:30p	613-561-3216				
Truedell P.S. 641 Truedell 7:30a-9:00, 3:30-5:30p	613-561-4286				
Winston Churchill P.S. 530 Earl St. 7:30a-9:00, 3:30-5:30p	613-929-0792				
Kingston YMCA 100 Wright Cres. 7:30a-5:30p	Child Care Centre 613-546-2647 X 230		X		
GANANOQUE AREA					
YMCA Child Care Centre Gananoque 400 Stone St. N 7:30a-5:30p	613-382-3236				

Thank you for choosing the YMCA of Eastern Ontario for your child care needs.

