



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# Northwest CT YMCA CHILDCARE CENTER POLICY HANDBOOK

Updated: January 2025

Learn  
Grow  
Thrive



Northwestern Connecticut YMCA  
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# Childcare Policy Handbook

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## **Mission Statement**

To build a healthy spirit, mind, and body in children and adults through programs that foster caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

## **Program Philosophy**

The YMCA Childcare Center's philosophy is to develop the whole child, focusing on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. With the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility as our guiding principles, we work with you every day to help your children have fun while realizing their full potential. The Y is and always will be dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected, and secure children, adults, families, and communities. To achieve this, we offer a comprehensive program that fosters the social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and creative needs and growth of our children. We recognize that each child is an individual with unique needs, abilities, and experiences. All activities and materials are geared to the child's developmental level, and we encourage individual abilities to enhance self-esteem.

At the YMCA childcare center, children are encouraged to explore, manipulate, question, discover, and express their ideas through play, group activities, individual activities, and teacher-guided lessons. Children are given choices as they interact with other children, teachers, and the environment.

The YMCA ensures that no child shall be excluded from participation in or discriminated against in any YMCA Program because of their race, creed, color, religion, national origin, or disability.

## **Program Goals and Objectives**

The YMCA Childcare Center's goals are to provide quality childcare with age-appropriate activities, led by trained, caring, and nurturing staff, within its state-licensed program. All staff will understand child and family development and will recognize and meet the learning and developmental needs of the children and families we serve. We will strive to develop our professionalism continually and to:

- Provide a safe, supervised, and structured environment in which children can choose from a variety of activities that help them develop socially, intellectually, physically, and emotionally in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- Development of gross and fine motor skills.
- Develop and foster language skills and literacy.
- Promote a positive value system by encouraging a child's self-worth and emotional development, which will enhance their self-esteem.
- Develop healthy habits, i.e., nutrition, dental care, cleanliness, hygiene, and fitness.
- Nurture potential and allow everyone to learn, grow, and thrive.
- Develop a partnership with parents, offering support and welcoming them into our program in all facets of involvement.
- Give children the chance to discover who they are and what they can achieve.

## **Curriculum**

The YMCA uses The Creative Curriculum as the basis of our curriculum. We believe that early learning is multidimensional, and the developmental domains of personal and social, physical, cognitive, and creative development are interrelated and interconnected. These domains provide our staff with the foundation for our assessment tool and serve as the focus for individualizing planned learning experiences. We plan for individual needs, providing children opportunities to explore their environment through child-initiated and teacher-selected activities. Topics of study emerge from the interests of the children, families, and center staff. Activities are designed to engage children in various content areas, including literacy, language, math, science, creative experiences, motor development, and quiet and active experiences. Children interact with their peers and adults to gain an understanding of the world around them through concrete experiences. Learning opportunities are designed to reflect the classroom, family, and local community.

The daily schedule will include opportunities for problem-solving experiences that help to formulate language development and sensory discrimination.

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### Sample Daily Schedule

6:00-8:45	Arrival- Hand washing, breakfast (until 7:30), open centers & creative experiences
8:45-9:00	Clean up, bathroom break
9:00-9:45	Snack, story, and circle activities.
9:45-10:30	Structured activities (Example: art, sensory, writing) Open Centers
10:30-10:50	Music & Movement
10:50-11:00	Bathroom break
11:00-11:30	Gross Motor activities (outdoor play, gym)
11:30-12:00	Lunchtime
12:00-12:15	Clean up & quiet reading
12:15-2:00	Naptime/quiet time
2:00-2:30	Table/carpet activities & bathroom break
2:30-3:00	Gross Motor (outside/gym)
3:00-3:15	Wash hands & snack time
3:15-3:30	Story and song, music and movement
3:30-4:00	Small group activities
4:00-6:00	Open centers and art.

### **Program Activities – Varies with age group**

Children will have the opportunity to express their own ideas and feelings through creative experiences in all parts of the program, including Arts and media, dramatic play, music, language, fine & gross motor activity, experiences that promote self-reliance, health education practices, exploration, and discovery as well as toileting and clean up. Children will be provided with varied choices in materials and equipment. Child-initiated and staff-initiated experiences will be provided.

**FREE CHOICE** - This time allows children to choose activities in various learning or discovery centers. These centers include science and nature, dramatic play, blocks, art, gross and small motor, language arts, math, and sensory activities. When children are allowed to choose their own activities, they tend to select what is most important to them. They utilize the materials in ways that cater to their own developmental needs. We create an environment that allows each child to choose activities that are developmentally appropriate for their age. When children work on a task they selected, they find it very satisfying, and this is the most effective and engaging way to learn.

**CREATIVE ACTIVITIES** - Activities such as arts and crafts, puppet play, storytelling, dramatization, block building, music, and dance are a great time for children to learn to follow directions, be creative, and work in groups or individually.

**PROCESS AND PRODUCT** - Children continually learn new things. They are learning by discovery. They need the freedom to try things without worrying how it will turn out. Children will focus on the process of doing things. This is why a child may repeatedly do the same puzzle or pour sand from one container to another. The child may be learning to coordinate movements, developing beginning writing skills, or making discoveries about triangles or gravity. Primarily, they are building confidence. Children's artwork will be the end product of their learning process. Be patient. Allow your child the time to grow and learn. This is part of their creative learning process. Your child is highly engaged in what they are doing. It is at these early stages that children learn to be creative and problem-solve.

**QUIET TIME/ NAPS**- Children in the full-day program lie down for a quiet period each day. This time allows children to rest during their busy and long days. Each child will rest on an assigned cot. Parents can provide a blanket and pillow for napping if the child is over a year old. Please label these items with your child's name. Parents are responsible for taking these items home to be washed on the last day of each week and returning them to the center. Infants under twelve (12) months of age are placed on their backs for sleeping. When infants can

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easily turn over on their own, they are put down to sleep on their backs but allowed to adapt to their preferred positions individually. Pillows, quilts, blankets, stuffed toys, and similar items are not permitted to be placed under or with an infant for sleeping and are kept out of the infant's crib. (Sleep sacks are permitted.) An infant's head must remain uncovered while sleeping.

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES** – Active play is important for the healthy growth and development of young children. Moderate to vigorous activity is provided daily. We offer a minimum of 60 minutes of structured physical activity per day for children over three years of age and 30 minutes per day for those under three years of age. Structured physical activities are guided by staff who incorporate music and various forms of movement. We also provide ample opportunity for unstructured physical activity. A period will be allocated twice daily for unstructured activity during a full-day program (60 minutes total) and once daily for half-day programs (30 minutes total) for children over 3 years old. The children may play outdoors (weather permitting) or play group games inside. Toddlers will receive at least 45 minutes of active play each day. (30 minutes for half-day students).

**SWIMMING** - We offer free swim for our School-Age classroom once to twice a week under the supervision and instruction of the YMCA aquatic staff. This time allows for aquatic orientation, exploration, skill development, and safety.

**GROUP TIME** – Children and teachers discuss various topics. Sometimes, it is the calendar or the weather. This time can be used to introduce new topics and reinforce the curriculum's themes. As a cohesive group, they all discuss what they will do for the day. The children are developing their social skills such as listening, taking turns, sharing, and empathizing. The children are discovering how to solve problems, ask questions, and brainstorm as a group. Children develop a sense of ownership when they feel they are part of the planning process for the classroom routine.

**STORY TIME** – This is a quiet time when children will have the opportunity to learn and experience new things by listening to a variety of different stories and books. Our stories often facilitate a deeper understanding of topics discussed during group time. Children are learning to value language.

**MUSIC** – Songs and fingerplays are especially effective for introducing children to the patterns and rhythms of language. They are learning numbers, shapes, and new vocabulary. They are discovering there is an order and sequence in music. Their attention spans, listening skills, and motor skills all develop and improve when they participate in music activities.

**RECREATIONAL SCREEN TIME:** At the YMCA, we recognize that TV and other electronic media can hinder opportunities for exploration, play, and interaction with others. We restrict screen time to 30 minutes per week for children 2 and older. Screen time is not allowed for children under 2.

### **Assessment-Infant/Toddler & Preschool**

Initial assessments are completed within the first three months of a child's enrollment and continue throughout the program year. During the enrollment process, a family/child questionnaire is completed with a program staff member to discuss the families' needs and goals for their child. Documentation is in the goals and objectives of the Creative Curriculum and is used to support the child's learning. Assessment is conducted within the regular classroom environment using a variety of techniques and resources, including Teaching Strategies Gold, the Connecticut Early Learning & Development Standards, Ages & Stages, anecdotal notes, checklists, and work samples. Through this documentation, children's interests, strengths, and areas of need may be identified. These assessments are completed in September, December, March, and June. Additional assessments are completed if needed.

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Classroom staff meetings are conducted weekly to interpret children's assessment and results are used to align to the Connecticut Early Learning & Development Standards and teaching strategies. All progress is monitored two times a year and results are shared with families and are used to improve curriculum and adapt new teaching. Progress reports are completed every three months for children in the Infant/Toddler and every six months for children in the Preschool & Pre-kindergarten groups. During parent teacher conferences and as needed throughout the year, families meet with teaching staff to review child's progress. The teaching staff and families work together to review assessments and discuss individual plans to support their child's educational outcomes. Assessment is also used to identify children that may require referral to the local public school for diagnostic assessment.

All information is kept confidential and children's records are kept in a file cabinet in a locked office. Information is shared with parents both informally and formally. The children receive a developmental screening by trained staff members, within three months of entering the program, to screen each child's overall development. This data provides information to ensure the effectiveness of our program and may be used to plan for individual educational needs and program improvement. Information regarding children, families, and staff is never shared with non-essential staff or outside agencies without written permission from parents.

### **General Policies**

#### **Enrollment**

Director (or head teacher) meets with each new family during enrollment and conducts a tour of the facility. The teaching staff meets with families upon enrollment to welcome them into the program and to prepare and orient them to their classroom. All required documentation, supplies, and necessary medications must be provided to the program prior to attendance.

The first 30 days will be regarded as a trial period, in which case either party may terminate the contract without notice. After the first 30 days of enrollment, there is a two-week notice required for withdrawal from a program. Failure to provide proper advance notice will result in accounts being charged for two weeks after notification.

ENROLLMENT IN THE YMCA CHILDCARE CENTER PROGRAMS CONSTITUTES AN UNDERSTANDING THAT YOU WILL ABIDE BY THE POLICIES LISTED AS FOLLOWS:

#### **Absences**

Please notify the YMCA as soon as possible, if your child is going to be absent from the childcare program. You may send a Brightwheel message or call your child's classroom. The YMCA phone is 860-489-3133 ext 136 for School-Age Classroom, ext 104 for Preschool and ext 138 for Infant Toddler. Except for prolonged illness, you will still be charged the weekly rate. If your child is out for more than 3 days you will need to get a doctor's note for your child to return.

#### **Arrivals and Departures**

The YMCA Childcare Center operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Childcare staff will welcome children and families into the center each morning. All children entering childcare MUST wash their hands upon arrival.

In complying with state regulations and for the safety of your child, **we require that you escort your child into the Childcare Center** within the YMCA building in the morning and pick them up in the Childcare Center in the evening. **YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE CHILDCARE CENTER WITHOUT PROPER IDENTIFICATION.** Swipe cards are authorized for use through the handicap entrance for the Infant/Toddler and Schoolage programs. (If a child is handicapped we will offer access to the handicap entrance for parents/caregivers.) Cards will only work during the days and times that your child is enrolled. Care giving adults (must be parent or adult at least eighteen years of age) who bring the child to, or remove the child from the facility are required to sign

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children in and out of the facility.

Children must be picked up by their assigned pick-up time. Pick-up times are arranged at registration. If for any reason you feel you will be late, please either try to make other arrangements for the pick-up of your child or call the Y childcare staff to tell them of your situation. A \$15 late fee will be charged if pick up is past closing time/program end time. This is charged at the time the incident occurred regardless of notification of the staff. An additional \$1 per minute will be charged for each minute in excess of 15 minutes past closing. (Ex: fee for 5 minutes past closing equals \$15; fee for 20 minutes past closing equals \$20.) Two staff members 18 years of age or older will remain at the program with the child at all times.

The State of CT has an "Abandon Child Policy". If a child is not picked up within 1 hour of the Center's closing, and all efforts have been made to contact the parents/guardian and emergency authorized alternative adults provided by parents/guardians at time of enrollment, the YMCA Childcare Center is to assume the child has been abandoned. The police will be called after 1 hour if parents and/or other emergency contacts with authorization to pick up cannot be reached. At that time the child may be released to the police. The non-emergency number for Torrington Police Dept is (860) 489-2000.

**School Age arrival/departure to and from school:** The Torrington Public School busses transport our schoolage children to and from school at the designated times.

All regular scheduled public-school busses drop off and pick up at our Mason Street entrance. Children are accompanied by childcare center staff while in our care. Private school, preschool, and special education busses, as well as state transportation also use our Mason Street entrance.

If a student refuses to go to school or get on the bus— all efforts will be made, using positive guidance, to encourage the student to follow their regular schedule. However, if childcare center staff are unable to successfully encourage the child to comply parents, guardians and/or emergency contacts will be called. The student will need to be picked up within 30 minutes. Late fees will occur 30 minutes after contact. (see arrivals/departures p. 7)

School Age children may not attend the center during in-school hours for Torrington public schools.

### **Legal Custody and Injunctions:**

A copy of any court ordered custody decree or injunction must be kept on file at the YMCA.

### **Closings**

The Child Care Program will not operate on certain holidays: New Years Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, and Christmas Day. The center will close at 2:00 PM on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. (In the event that Christmas and New Year's Day occur on Saturday or Sunday the Childcare Center will close either Friday or Monday in observance of the holiday.) \*The center may also close due to inclement weather, or reasons related to attendance and/or staffing.

### **Clothing**

Children should wear comfortable clothing suitable to the season and activities in Child Care. Please be sure to dress your child appropriately during the winter months so that participation in outdoor play is possible. Sneakers need to be worn at all times. Flip-flops or open toed shoes are not permitted. Please be sure to label all clothing with your child's name. All children should have a spare set of clothing in their cubbies. Neither YMCA Childcare Center staff nor the YMCA is responsible for lost, stolen or vandalized items.

We prefer that children wear play clothes. Children participate in a variety of art activities, science projects, and use sensory tables in the classroom which can be very messy work. Children participating in messy work wear smocks. We take precautions to remain clean. However, some things are beyond our control. If you are worried about keeping your child clean, please make sure

that your child has extra clothes. In addition, we ask that during the summer months, girls should wear shorts under their sundresses due to the amount and nature of outdoor play.

### **Lunches and Snacks**

Families must provide lunch for their child if at our center during the lunchtime period. We encourage parents to pack a healthy lunch with at least one fruit or vegetable, and any grain products be made of whole grains. We also request that you do not send lunches containing fried foods, foods with over 8 grams of sugar per serving where sugar is one of the first three ingredients, or foods containing trans fats.

Candy and glass items are prohibited.

We are a **peanut free** facility. Please do not send foods containing peanuts and/or peanut butter. White milk or water will be provided at lunch by the YMCA. All sugar sweetened beverages (such as sodas, juices, sports drinks or energy drinks) are not allowed to be consumed at the Center.

The YMCA provides a healthy snack in the morning and in the afternoon. Our snacks are free of fried foods and beverages with added sugar. We use whole grains if grains are provided. Milk or water is provided at snack time. Water is also available and accessible throughout the day for children.

Staff will model all healthy eating standards, and will sit with the children during snack and meal times.

**Warming Foods:** No food or liquids are warmed in our School age program. Children in the Infant/Toddler & Preschool Program may have their previously cooked and prepared food warmed (if necessary) by a staff member who makes sure the food is only warm to the touch, never steamy or hot.

**Non-Food Rewards:** Food rewards will never be used by staff in any of our classrooms. Non-food rewards are always utilized.

**Healthy Celebrations:** We support your child's healthy food choices by providing healthy foods and non-food treats for all holidays and special occasions. We encourage parents to join us in supporting healthy celebrations in these ways and request that parents do not send in cupcakes and other confections or sweets. Please refrain from sending foods that are fried, pre-fried, and/or high in sugar and saturated fats. (Such as chips, cookies, gummies, chicken nuggets, etc.) If you have questions about alternative options you may ask the childcare director or staff.

### **Breast Milk- Infant/Toddler**

This program supports breastfeeding by accepting, storing, and serving expressed human milk for feedings. We only accept human milk in ready-to-feed sanitary containers labeled with the infant's name and date and store it in a refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or no more than 24 hours if the breast milk was previously frozen) or in a freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for no longer than three months. We ensure that staff gently mix, not shake, the milk before feeding to preserve special infection-fighting and nutritional components in human milk. We provide a comfortable place for breastfeeding and coordinate feedings with the infant's mother.

### **Formula- Infant/Toddler**

Except for human milk, staff serve only formula and infant food that comes to the facility in factory-sealed containers (e.g., ready-to-feed powder or concentrate formulas and baby food jars) prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions. Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. Staff discard after one hour any formula or human milk that is served but not completely consumed or is not refrigerated. If staff warm formula or human milk, the milk is warmed in water at no more than 110 degrees Fahrenheit for no more than five minutes.



**Infant Safe Sleep Policy**

All infants under twelve (12) months of age shall be placed in a supine (back) position for sleeping in a well-constructed, free-standing crib or bed designed for infant sleeping that meets current safety standards, with a snug fitting mattress unless the child has written documentation from a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse specifying a medical reason for an alternative sleep position.

When infants can easily turn over from the supine to the prone position, they shall be put down to sleep on their back but allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer for sleep.

No blankets, pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, soft bumpers, or stuffed toys shall be placed under or with an infant, 12 months or younger, for sleeping and shall be kept out of the infant's crib or bed.

Nothing shall be placed or hung over the side of a crib or other piece of equipment designed for sleeping that obstructs the staff's visibility of the infant.

**Records**

In addition to current health records, the Childcare Program is required to keep accurate personal records for each child in the program. Changes in information indicated on the forms must be reported to the staff immediately. In addition, every parent, guardian or emergency pick up person must "sign in" and "sign out" using their signature. Enrolled siblings require individual signatures.

**Complaint Procedure**

This procedure is for licensed childcare programs in the State of Connecticut. Most problems within childcare are non-life threatening and can be resolved by:

1. Discuss the problem with the classroom teacher.
2. If the problem is not resolved, you may contact the Childcare Director at (860) 489-3133 ext. 125.
3. If the problem is not resolved, please contact the YMCA CEO at (860) 489-3133 ext. 116.
4. If the problem is not resolved, you may contact the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood.

In the case of an emergency, notify the Dept. of Public Health as soon as the emergency is under control.

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood  
450 Columbus Blvd.  
Hartford, CT 06103  
(860) 500-4450  
(800) 282-6063

All inspection reports and compliance letters are available for your inspection at this childcare program or by contacting the CT Office of Early Childhood.

**Children with Special Needs**

The YMCA Childcare Center will provide programs appropriate for children with special needs within the mainstream of the existing programs whenever possible. Referrals to outside agencies will be made with the permission of parents. In conjunction with the public system and/or state agency, an individual educational plan will be designed and implemented with an interdisciplinary approach. Placement and/or programming will be determined at the Planning and Placement Team meeting (PPT). Your child's teacher will represent the childcare center at the PPT meeting and be responsible for providing the PPT information to the staff.

**Plan for Consultation**

The YMCA childcare program has agreements with education, dental, social service, nutrition and health professionals. These professionals are available for the annual review of our policies and

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review of our in-service programs. They are available for advice and consultation regarding the program by telecommunication and in person.

### **Transitions**

Young children need time to become familiar with new situations. Children entering the program for the first time should visit with their family for a short period of time. The child should, contingent upon his/her adjustment and based on the expertise of the classroom staff, stay at the center for gradually longer periods of time to ensure the child will make a successful adjustment/transition in the program. This provides family members to assist their child in developing relationships with the staff members in his/her classroom.

We make every effort to provide your child with a stable, consistent and caring program. Should we need to transition your child to another classroom, this decision will be made with the consent of the family. The following procedures will be implemented to ensure a successful transition.

1. The child will visit the new classroom with a familiar staff person for a short period of time.
2. The time will increase over several days.
3. The child will visit the new classroom by him/herself for a period of time.
4. The child will join the new class for morning activities.
5. The child will join the new class for morning activities and lunch.
6. The child will be enrolled in the new classroom.
7. At all times, the parents will be informed of the change prior to implementation and on a daily basis.

### **Kindergarten Transition**

The YMCA Childcare Center and staff work closely with the Torrington Public School system to offer a smooth transition into Kindergarten. In addition, families may request copies of their child's records for admission to the Public-School System.

### **Weather and Related Emergencies**

**The YMCA reserves the right to close the Childcare Center, and any programs therein, due to inclement weather, other emergencies or the inability to maintain State required Staff to Student ratios.** If severe weather develops during the school day, a Brightwheel message will be sent out. Parents are expected to pick up their children within one hour of notification. If you cannot pick up your child, it is your responsibility to arrange for them to be picked up by someone on the child's authorized pick-up list. We will only call persons on the child's authorized pick-up list if we are unable to contact the parent or guardian.

Childcare may open on a delayed schedule when the weather is inclement. A Brightwheel notification will be sent and the YMCA Information line at (860) 489-3133 option 4 of any delays or cancellations. If severe weather develops during the day, parents will be called to pick up their children within one hour of notification. If the YMCA closes then Childcare will also be closed.

In the event of other serious weather emergencies, such as tornadoes or hurricanes, staff and children will remain indoors away from windows and doors. First aid staff will be on hand to administer first aid, as needed, until emergency personnel can arrive. Parents will be notified after the immediate danger has passed.

Ratios will be maintained at all times and two staff 18 years or older will remain on the premises with the children until all are picked up.

### **Emergency Evacuation Plan**

Emergency notification and parent contact numbers are located in each class room.

Emergency evacuation maps are located in each classroom with two evacuation routes. If the first route is inaccessible, then the second route will be used. Emergency evacuation drills are

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conducted monthly.

The head teacher in each class is responsible for taking attendance before and after an evacuation. They are also responsible for taking along the attendance clipboard and first aid kit. The director will check all classrooms and bathrooms to ensure no one is left in the center.

In the event of a building evacuation, all classrooms will meet across Prospect St. at Trinity Church or the Frontier office building, located next door. Once all of the children are outside the director or designated in-charge person, will do another head count to ensure all children are accounted for.

In the event of a civil emergency evacuation, local police, fire, hospitals, and radio stations will be contacted immediately to inform the public of the evacuation. YMCA officials will be responsible for informing the appropriate authorities. YMCA staff will make every effort to contact parents by telephone as soon as they are physically able to do so, if possible. If the time permits, this will be done prior to the evacuation. As the safety of the children and staff are paramount, notification may occur after any evacuation via cell phone.

### **FIRE:**

In the event of a fire, evacuation from the building will be through the closest fire exit. Staff will be responsible for supervising the children under their care and leading them to the fire exit. Immediately, the group will walk to their designated meeting area safely away from the building, and line up to take attendance. Director or person in charge will be responsible for taking rosters, portable first aid kit, cell phone and emergency files with them. Should it not be possible to return to the building, staff will walk the children to an alternate place of shelter. Parents will be notified.

### **Provision for Shelter**

In the event that we cannot evacuate and need to stay in the building, all children will be kept in their assigned classroom or a safe place in the YMCA facility. Once children are safe and secure, the Director and/or designated staff will gather the appropriate supplies. Bins will be used to transport food, water, blankets, and emergency health supplies. Extra batteries, flashlights and a portable radio will also be taken into the main childcare classroom. The maintenance crew of the YMCA will provide all sanitation and paper supplies needed.

## **Health Policies**

### **Medical Requirements**

The State Department of Health requires that each child enrolled in the childcare program have an up-to-date ED 191 medical form signed and dated by a physician or licensed health care provider (PLHCP), with the date of the last exam. This is to be kept on file at the YMCA Childcare Center. A new form will be required each year on the date of the last physical for children 5 years old and under. The Y cannot accept a child without the proper medical forms. If the child does not have a physician or health insurance, the Y staff at intake will help you locate those services.

### **Emergency Numbers**

Emergency numbers must be kept up to date. This is to ensure that we can contact you at any time in case of an emergency. (Please let your teacher know when there is a change so we may update our files.) All students must have a signed "Medical Emergency Permission" form in their file to participate in the program that gives staff trained in first aid permission to administer aid or obtain care from or by a physician or licensed health care provider (PLHCP), if an emergency should arise. This form also gives permission to the staff to have a child transported to a medical facility by police or ambulance. Attempts will be made to consult with the child's physician/dentist. If neither is available, the program's medical consultants will be contacted. For extreme emergencies, 911 will be called.

### **Contagious Illness, Rashes, and Parasites**

Parents are required to notify the Center whenever a child has been exposed to a contagious disease. This includes but may not be limited to: strep throat, pink eye, fifth's disease, meningitis, hepatitis, ringworm, impetigo, lice, etc. If an outbreak occurs, the Center will notify the parents by newsletter in the children's cubbies as well as a posting on your child's classroom door. Information will be given so that you are aware of the symptoms of these diseases. Any child contracting a contagious illness must have a doctor's note stating when the child may return to the Center. If a child is absent due to an illness, he/she cannot return to the Center until free from any of the following symptoms or infections:

<u>Symptom/Condition</u>	<u>Excluded From the Center Until</u>
Temperature over 100° F	One full school day with no fever (un-medicated)
Vomiting	No Vomiting for one full school day
Diarrhea	Child returns to normal
Off color nasal secretions	Nasal drainage is gone
Rash of unknown origin	Rash is gone, or diagnosed & treated
Strep Throat	24 hours (or 3 doses) of antibiotic treatment and there has been no fever for 24 hours.
Purulent Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)	No drainage from eye. Eye & lid no longer inflamed & on medication for 24 hours
Impetigo	24 hours (or 3 doses) of antibiotic treatment
Head Lice	Nit free
Chickenpox	6 days after onset of rash, or until all lesions are dried and crusted

### **Injured Child**

If a child is injured during the program hours, the following steps will be taken:

1. The child will be made comfortable and a staff member certified in first aid will treat, if the injury is minor.
2. If injury is of a serious nature and emergency medical care may be/is needed, parents will be contacted immediately, as well as the Childcare Director, the CEO or other YMCA personnel if appropriate.
3. In the event that a parent cannot be reached, other emergency contact individuals will be called. The YMCA Childcare Center will take the necessary steps to obtain an ambulance and emergency treatment at a hospital, if required. The staff will accompany the child in the ambulance.
4. An emergency treatment authorization, previously signed by the parents or guardians, will be kept on file. This authorization lists the child's physician and authorizes the YMCA to seek emergency treatment at once, including transport by ambulance to the nearest hospital.
5. A staff member will remain with the child until his/her parent or guardian arrives.
6. The YMCA health consultant will be contacted if the child required medical attention, within one business day of becoming aware of the incident.
7. The YMCA will require a doctor's note as a result of any child injury (occurring on or off site) requiring medical attention, before the child can return to the Center. This doctor's note should contain the diagnosis and any activity limitations the child may require while in our care. The note must be shared with teachers and Childcare Director and filed in the child's file.

### **Illness Policy**

Parents must advise staff of any physical or emotional conditions for which their child is being treated, particularly when the child is using behavior-altering medications. Staff should be aware of any chronic physical conditions such including (but not limited to) allergies, asthma, and any restriction of activities. Parent should notify staff of any medications taken at home prior to arriving at the center.

The Northwest YMCA may require a doctor's note as a result of any child illness or concern, before the child can return to care. The health consultant will be notified when such a request is made. This

## Childcare Policy Handbook

doctor's note should contain the diagnosis, recommended treatments and any activity limitations the child may require while in our care.

### **Medication Administration Policy**

In compliance with Public Act 02-84, child day care centers may not deny services to a child who has an allergy or a prescription for an automatic pre-filled cartridge injector (such as an Epi-pen). The YMCA childcare center will provide staff trained in the administration of medications, including the use of automatic prefilled cartridge injectors with a written order from a physician and signed by the parent or guardian. A parent/guardian has the option and is welcome to come to the center to administer medication personally.

We request, however, that whenever possible, medication be administered to your child outside the hours your child attends the center. Only those prescription medications that are critical for your child's well being should be administered during program hours.

### **Requirements for Administering Medication (Prescription and non-prescription)**

An Authorization for the Administration of Medication by Child Care Personnel for all types of medication (prescription and non-prescription) to be administered must be filled out and signed by the physician and by the parent. One form is required per medication. This form should include the name of the medication, dose, method of administration, time of administration, reason for medication, dates of administration, expiration of medication, relevant side effects, potential allergies, prescriber's name, and verification statement of prior use without adverse side effects. Non-prescription medications include all types of over the counter medications (e.g. Tylenol, Advil, lozenges, cough drops, antibiotic creams, peroxide, etc.)

1. The medication must have the original bottle or packaging and prescription label including:
  - a. child's name
  - b. dosage/ route of administration (mouth, inhalation)
  - c. specific time/intervals to be given
  - d. current date of order
  - e. physician's name and telephone number
  - f. individual measuring spoon as may be required with medication
2. At least one dose (two doses if antibiotic), must have been administered outside the center without adverse side effects. Even if taken before for another illness.
3. Trained staff will document medication administration on the Medication Administration Record form maintained in the Medications book and to be filed in the child's file upon completion of the medication treatment order.

Any unused and/or expired medication shall be returned to the parent/guardian or disposed of if it is not picked up within one week following termination of the order, in the presence of at least one witness. The center shall keep a written record of the medications destroyed and/or returned. Both parties shall sign the returned medications.

No controlled substances will be administered.

### **Requirements for Administering Non-Prescription Topical Ointments**

The YMCA will encourage children to administer sunscreen and insect repellent with a completed Authorization for Non-Prescription Topical Ointment form signed by the parent or guardian. The center will not provide sunscreen or insect repellent. YMCA personnel, with permission, will only be applied to places not usually covered by a bathing suit

### **Sunscreen Policy:**

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The YMCA wishes to protect children from the dangers of overexposure to the sun. One way of doing this is to use sunscreen at the appropriate time. If a student is to use sunscreen while at the center, parents are asked to provide the sunscreen product for center use. The sunscreen must be clearly marked with the child's name.

- Sunscreen to be replenished by the parent as needed.
- The sunscreen product will be stored in a location designated by the teacher.
- Parents are asked to apply sunscreen at home before arrival. If the day is extended for your child (i.e.- past noon) sunscreen will be applied by staff.
- Authorization form needs to be completed and current.

### **Insect Repellent:**

Parents must provide repellent and only repellants containing DEET are allowable. The same application policies are in place as for Sunscreen.

### **Storage and Handling Procedures**

All medications will be stored in a locked medications box. All staff handling medications of any kind will observe proper hand washing procedures both before and after application of medications and avoid direct contact. Gloves should be worn when administering medications. All application devices should be thoroughly washed after use or disposed of according to package or application directions. Child's privacy should be respected at all times when administering medications.

### **Anaphylaxis**

Definition – Anaphylaxis is an immune response to an agent to which an individual has become hypersensitive by prior exposure. An anaphylactic reaction can occur several minutes to several hours after a bee sting or food reaction. A variety of symptoms may occur. Initially, there may be a diffuse erythema of the skin followed by a sense of warmth and then generalized urticaria (hives). Severe and rapidly progressive respiratory distress due to bronchospasm and/or angioedema of the larynx may follow. Gastrointestinal symptoms may include vomiting, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea (occasionally bloody). Vascular collapse, with or without other symptoms, can occur (anaphylactic shock).

### **Signs & Symptoms of Anaphylactic Reaction**

1. Hives
2. Red patches of skin
3. Itching
4. Swelling of face, tongue, throat (tickling, gagging, difficulty swallowing or voice change)
5. Difficulty breathing
6. Fainting
7. Dizziness

### **Treatment**

Any child suspected of having an allergic reaction should be observed immediately and for several hours later. Remember that urticaria alone does not indicate anaphylactic shock but may be a warning of it. If a person is having an anaphylactic reaction, place the person in a recumbent position and elevate the lower extremities and have another staff person other than the person assisting the child, dial "911". Establish and maintain airways.

Use an **EPIPEN** if prescribed and available for that child, according to package instructions, or if not otherwise reflected, application is to the outside of the leg, ½ way between the knee and hip. Inject with black tip to skin or clothing surface and record time of application. Monitor respirations, color and pulse signs frequently. When paramedics arrive, treatment should continue as directed by their protocol under radio supervision of an emergency room physician. Parents should be notified immediately after "911" has been contacted, followed by contacting the YMCA officials.

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Any prescribed **EPIPEN** for known allergies to bees should be taken on playground or field trips or wherever child may potentially come in contact with bees. **EPIPEN** should be stored out of reach of children but easily accessible to staff, properly labeled with child's information.

### **Staff Certification/Training – Administration of Medication**

The Northwest YMCA Child Care Program requires that at least one staff person in the center at all times be certified in the Administration of Medication as mandated by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (Section 19a-79-9).

### **Sick Child**

If a child is ill with a temperature, diarrhea or vomiting during the program hours, the following steps will be taken:

1. The child will be immediately removed from the group and brought to the Director's office. In the event the Director is not available the child will be placed in his classroom but removed from the other children and in sight of the teacher.
2. A staff member will make the child comfortable.
3. A staff member will call a parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached the staff will call people on the emergency list to pick up the child. The child must be picked up from the center within one half hour of parent notification.

Other conditions warranting the child leaving the center include, but are not restricted to: rash or other skin irritation, lice, severe pain in any body part, pink eye or other signs of a contagious disease. This is for your child's protection, as well as, the protection of other children in the center.

### **Parent Responsibility for Sick Child**

A child that has had a temperature of 100 or higher, vomiting, diarrhea or is on an antibiotic less than 24 hours must be cleared of symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to the Center (one full school day). If your child is out for 3 or more days, a doctor's note or a copy of the child's prescription will be needed to return to the Center.

Parents must advise staff of any physical or emotional conditions for which their child is being treated, particularly when the child is using mood-altering medications. Other physical conditions that staff should be made aware of would be, but is not limited to, allergies, asthma, or any restriction of activities. Parent should notify staff of any medications taken at home prior to arriving at center so that in case of an emergency the staff is aware of any medication.

### **Signs and symptoms of concussions:**

For your information in regards to concussion awareness the following link provides information on signs and symptoms of concussions:

<http://www.casciac.org/pdfs/ConcussionInfoForStudentsAndParents.pdf>

### **Tooth brushing**

Children may brush their teeth, upon parent's request, after lunch. The children will use water to clean their teeth under the supervision of their teachers. If you choose to have your child brush his or her teeth, you must provide a new toothbrush for your child. The toothbrush must be replaced every three months. Each brush must be clearly labeled with your child's name and the date it was brought to the center. The toothbrush is stored in a place designated by the teacher in a plastic bag. All sinks used for brushing teeth will be cleaned and sanitized after the children have completed brushing.

### **Toileting and Changing Procedures**

- 1) Children will be encouraged to change themselves as they are capable.
- 2) Staff will not leave children unattended, but will provide verbal instructions and follow appropriate toileting and changing procedures.

### **Self help skills and toileting**

Children are expected to toilet independently under the supervision of the staff.

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While it is not uncommon for the children to have accidents, the staff must make sure to address these incidents calmly. Children will be encouraged to change themselves independently according to developmental capability. When a child needs assistance, or is unable to use the toilet consistently, the staff and family will set up a plan to address these concerns.

### **Diaper types- Infant/Toddler**

Diapers are provided by the Infant/Toddlers parents. For children who require **cloth diapers**, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit. **Cloth diapers** and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a resealable bag provided by the parent (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.

If you are out of diapers and/or wipes staff may provide them for the remainder of the day at a rate of \$1 per diaper and \$0.50 per use of wipes. Fee will be added to your next draft.

### **Frequency of checking diapers-Infant/Toddler**

Staff checks children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours when children are awake and when children awaken. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.

### **Changing diapers-Infant/Toddler**

Staff changes children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility. Each changing area is separated by a partial wall or is located at least three feet from other areas that children use and is used exclusively for one designated group of children. At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child when the child is being changed on an elevated surface.

- 1) If assistance is required or the child needs to lie down, the staff will:
  - a) Organize needed supplies
  - b) Wash their hands
  - c) Cover the changing surface with disposable paper
  - d) Put on gloves
  - e) Never leave the child unattended
  - f) Remove soiled articles and avoid contact with soiled items
  - g) Soiled items will be placed in a plastic bag to be sent home
  - h) Clean the area with disposable wipes, wiping from front to back
  - i) Remove gloves
  - j) Assist the child to redress as required
  - k) Remove the child from changing table
  - l) Wash the child's hands
  - m) Remove paper and discard
  - n) Sanitize changing table
  - o) Staff will wash hands

### **Cloth Diapers:**

- 1) Staff will wash their hands.
- 2) Staff will put on protective gloves.
- 3) Child will be placed on disposable changing paper.
- 4) Soiled diaper will be removed and child will be cleaned with wipes.
- 5) Soiled clothing and diapers (unrinsed) shall be placed in a Ziplock bag and an airtight sealed bag labeled with the child's name (Supplies provided by the parent).
- 6) Gloves will be removed, and a new, clean diaper will be applied.
- 7) If needed, diaper cream or ointment will be applied using new gloves.
- 8) Staff will wash their hands and the child's hands.
- 9) Diaper area will be washed and disinfected after each use.
- 10) Changing paper will be replaced.
- 11) Staff will again wash their hands.
- 12) Parents must remove the soiled clothing, bags, and diapers daily.



### **Hand Washing Policy and Procedure**

Hand washing is critical to maintaining a healthy environment. All children are required to wash their hands upon entering the program. Parents will escort their child to the restrooms and assist in cleaning. Hands-washing procedural signs are posted at each sink.

#### **Staff and children are required to wash their hands at the following times:**

1. Upon arrival for the day
2. Before and after handling food
3. Before and after giving medication
4. Before and after playing in water/sand
5. After toileting
6. After handling bodily fluids
7. After cleaning
8. After handling pets
9. Before and after participating in water play

#### **Procedure:**

1. Scrub hands with soap and water. Include between fingers and under and around nail beds and backs of hands.
2. Rinse hands well under running water with fingers down so water flows from wrist to finger tips. Leave water running.
3. Dry hands with a paper towel. Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet.

### **Animals**

Limited pets are allowed in the classroom due to allergies. Parents will be notified 48 hours prior of an animal visit.

### **Water Play**

Water play is an important activity for young children. They learn many skills about their world during this activity. To ensure that our environment is healthy for all, the children wash their hands prior to and after playing in water. Children with open sores on their hands will be redirected to other activities until they heal. Fresh potable water is used to fill each water table. The water is emptied daily by draining the table and all equipment is cleaned and sanitized. If a new group of children comes to participate in the water play activity, potable water is used.

### **Payment Policy**

Childcare payments are drafted each Monday. Parents will be drafted an amount due based on registration. Accounts must be kept current. There will be a \$25 per occurrence NSF charge for any payments returned for nonsufficient funds. ***Accounts delinquent by more than 2 weeks will force the dismissal of the child from the program.***

### **Registration and Membership Fee**

A fee of \$48 is due at time of registration and annually for renewal. This includes registration and child's program membership fee. Families with more than one child enrolled may opt to do a family program membership at \$87.50 per year. Families with an active facility membership do not need to pay this fee.

Families with three children enrolled will receive a 10% discount for the third child. (Discount will apply to the lowest rate.)

### **Y Financial Assistance & CARE 4 KIDS**

1. The parent or guardian is responsible for the childcare fee as determined upon the intake enrollment form, or qualifying Care 4 Kids eligibility form.
2. The financial aid share is calculated on a sliding scale fee utilizing the Y's income and family

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size table. The parent or guardian is responsible to let the Childcare Director/and Childcare Billing Administrator know if there has been any household income or employment changes.

3. The parent or guardian of any child receiving Y Financial Assistance (F/A) is required to apply for the Care4Kids Assistance Program. If the F/A participant is eligible for a Care 4 Kids subsidy, the childcare fee will be determined by the business office after receiving the Care 4 Kids eligibility letter.

### **Payment Conditions**

**Weekly Fees-** Program fees are based upon the set number of program days throughout the year and full payment is expected regardless of childcare center closings, school closings, inclement weather, school snow days, scheduled holidays or absences. There will be no adjustments made for these occasions.

1. There will be no refunds or adjustments for medical-related absences or quarantine periods. Infant, toddler, and preschool programs allow two "tuition-free" weeks that may be granted for these occasions or vacations taken.
2. Two weeks' notice is required for withdrawal from the program. Failure to provide proper advance notice will result in accounts being charged for two weeks after notification.
3. **Draft-** At the time of enrollment, each responsible party must complete a childcare draft form. (No cash or checks will be accepted for weekly payment.) A voided check must accompany the childcare draft when using a checking account. If parents share payment responsibility, both parents must provide draft information simultaneously. These forms need to be stapled together and both initialed. The childcare bank draft form will allow parents to state a specific agreed-upon payment percentage in this circumstance.
4. **DCF-** If a child is a ward of the State, the caregiver must have a letter from the State of CT stating that the child's care will be financially covered.
5. An NSF fee of \$25 will be charged for any charge that is rejected for, including but not limited to a closed account or insufficient funds.
6. Any parent/guardian having difficulties in making payments should consult the childcare billing administrator at x143
7. No child will be allowed to register for a Y program at any of the Northwest CT YMCA branches if there is an unpaid balance.
8. **Dismissal for Non-payment:** Failure to pay a family share of tuition for two consecutive weeks may result in dismissal from the childcare program. Any failure to pay a balance must be paid prior to the child returning to the program and will incur the NSF fee of \$25. The Childcare Billing Administrator will contact you if an issue arises regarding your draft information.
9. If your child is in the Infant/ Toddler or Preschool programs, you are granted 2 "tuition-free" weeks during the term from September through August each year. "Tuition-free" time must be requested two weeks prior to the week your child will be absent to prevent being drafted while the child is currently enrolled BUT not attending. Tuition Free request forms will be available for **only** Infant/ Toddler or Preschool families. If using tuition-free time, you will not be drafted for that week and may not be in attendance.
10. If your child is in the School Age Program and is enrolled in AM care and needs emergency PM care (on the same day they are registered for) the charge will be \$25. The same charge will apply for last-minute same-day AM Care.

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11. If your child is in AM Care only or is not registered for a specific day and there is an early dismissal (inclement weather) the charge will be an additional \$27 per day if your child attends. This will be drafted the following week to your account.
12. If your child is in the School-Age Before and/or After Program your draft will be based on the school calendar. This means that you will not be drafted for holidays or school vacations. You will be charged for unplanned schedule changes. (i.e. snow days, early dismissals due to weather)
  - If parents need care on non-school days, please see the information describing snow days and extra care days (see below).
  - **The last day of the draft will be 6/9/2025, per the scheduled school calendar.**

### **Payments for Snow Days, Extra Care Days, Half Days, and Early Dismissals** (School Age)

1. All payments for Snow Days & Extra Care Days must be made at the Y membership service desk or online in your NWCTY.org account. The YMCA Childcare Center is not responsible for payments given to children or childcare staff.
2. Parents are responsible for their weekly draft plus the additional fee for any extra care days.
3. The current rate for a full day of care when school is not in session is \$44 per day.
4. Snow days may be paid at the membership services desk prior to attendance.
5. Registration for no school days closes on or before the Thursday of the prior week. We encourage you to register early to ensure space is available.
6. Half-day add-ons if not enrolled in pm care is \$30 each. The same fee applies to a delayed opening if not enrolled in am care.
7. Emergency early dismissals/delayed openings are \$14 per occurrence if enrolled to attend the regular session on that day. (Early dismissals scheduled per the school calendar are included when enrolled for pm care on the same day.)

### **Guidance**

The goal of discipline is to help the child develop self-control and move toward appropriate social behavior. All staff members receive training in guidance and discipline issues upon hiring and on a continuing basis. Examples of developmentally appropriate methods utilized for resolving conflict are:

**Positive guidance:** The YMCA Childcare policy is that only positive guidance techniques are used when disciplining the children in our care. The staff utilizes discipline methods based on the Conscious Discipline model when disciplining children. Teachers use these techniques to assist the children in mastering skills in anger management, helpfulness, assertiveness, composure/impulse control, cooperation, empathy, and problem solving. The staff will help children develop self-discipline.

When disputes arise among children or between a child and staff, the staff will encourage a communication process where the goal is to acknowledge feelings and find solutions using the children's ideas wherever possible.

**Setting clear limits:** Staff will encourage and model positive behavior, positive reinforcement, the use of peer support and clearly defined rules.

**Redirection:** A child who may be aggressive or who is disruptive or destructive of other children's work may be asked to make an activity choice in another area.

Staff will continuously supervise children during disciplinary actions. Staff shall not be abusive, neglectful, or use corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child will be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety or health of the child or others, using least restrictive methods, as appropriate.

Disrespect toward staff or property or repeatedly injuring other children or staff will not be

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tolerated. If a child breaks toys or equipment, it will be the parent/guardians' responsibility to replace the items. If a child is out of control and is unable to listen to staff, this creates an unsafe environment for all the children including the misbehaving child. The staff must inform the Director or in-charge person of this behavior, and if deemed unsafe behavior, a parent or guardian will be called to remove the child from the center. To ensure safety the parents must remove the child from the center within one half hour of notification. The staff and parents together will develop a plan to prevent future harmful behavior. If the behavior continues the child may be suspended from the center for a determined amount of time or expelled entirely.

1. The child will be given a verbal warning and **redirected** to another activity.
2. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child will be removed from the group for a determined period of time.
3. Whenever there is a serious concern about a behavior or discipline problem, the staff verbally and in writing informs the parents. The staff and family meet to develop plans to resolve the problem, and daily reports are given to the family.
4. The method and a schedule for continual monitoring of the child's growth and development will be determined by the Childcare Director and teaching staff.
5. If the problem persists, a consultant, with parental consent, will be brought in to assess the situation and an additional plan of action may be put into place. The child will be placed on an individual probation period for two weeks. Parents will be advised of the recommendations of the consultant.
6. In the event that a recommendation is made for the child to receive an assessment from local health education or mental health services, the parent agrees to provide the results of these assessments to the center. (Any costs relating to these services are the responsibility of the parent.)
7. If the above actions have not resulted in improved behavior from the child, written notice will be given to the parent/guardian to remove the child from the program for a determined period of time. During this time period, the YMCA staff will continue to work with the parent/guardian and child on behavior modifications.
8. Upon parental notification and after repeated warnings, the childcare center reserves the right to remove any child who may pose a danger to themselves or other children in our setting. Efforts will be made to recommend an appropriate placement for the child.

Parents must advise staff of any physical or emotional conditions for which their child is being treated. Any changes in a child's normal behavior (sudden aggressiveness or withdrawal) noted by the staff will be brought to the attention of the parents. Parents should make the staff aware of any problems that their child may be experiencing, in order that the staff may better understand and assist the child.

No staff member may physically or verbally abuse a child, nor may a child be physically restrained except when it might be necessary to protect the safety and health of the child or others. Staff members are prohibited to use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating, or frightening punishment. Spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking and/or striking children are prohibited.

### **Supervision**

Children are under staff supervision at all times. Childcare staff will supervise the safe arrival and departure of all children. No child is allowed outside of the childcare center without childcare staff supervision. Staff-child ratios are a maximum of:

- Infants and toddlers: 1 adult to 4 children.
- Children ages 2 to 2 years and 9 months: 1 adult to 5 children.
- Children ages 2 years and 9 months to preschool age: 1 adult to 10 children
- School-aged children: 1 adult to 15 children

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These ratios will be maintained at all times and children will be in groups not to exceed 8 for infant/toddlers, 20 for children in preschool, and 30 for Schoolage. Group size shall be observed in the classroom, gym, bathrooms, and outside. **Infants and toddler/twos are supervised by sight and sound at all times including nap.** Children over 3 are supervised primarily by sight at all times including nap time and during transportation. Staff shall position themselves to see as many children as possible. When there is a mixed age group, the lower required ratio and group size for the age of the youngest child shall prevail. **NO CHILD/CHILDREN SHOULD BE LEFT ALONE FOR ANY PERIOD OF TIME.**

Staff must supervise children while they are using the bathroom and will reinforce good personal hygiene measures by encouraging the children to wash their hands thoroughly.

Childcare staff will also inspect all program facility space including outdoor play areas for hazardous surroundings, including playscapes, furniture, and equipment to ensure that all program space is in good, safe, and operable condition.

Any area that a class is exiting will be inspected for children and attendance will be taken to insure all children are accounted for.

Any classroom or area that is being closed for the day will also be inspected for children. Roster will be checked at closing to ensure that all children have been accounted for.

Field Trips - Staff/child ratios will be maintained while outside of the building. All children must have parental permission prior to leaving the building. Staff will bring each child's emergency contact information and the first aid kit on the field trip.

Transportation to/from school - All children will be supervised while getting on and off any mode of transportation.

SAFETY – Childcare staff will continually remind children of safety rules and regulations. Activities may be planned to develop safety awareness in the center, home and community.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

The Northwest CT YMCA has a responsibility to prevent any child enrolled in the center from being abused or neglected. To help ensure the safety and well being of children, and in compliance with Connecticut General Statutes, the YMCA Childcare Center, shall make a report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Public Health (DPH), when we learn of a situation where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused, neglected or in imminent risk of abuse. All YMCA staff shall be trained in the knowledge of mandated reporter responsibilities and reporting requirements, childcare abuse and neglect prevention techniques and detection methods, as well as the definitions of child abuse and neglect as defined below. All staff members are mandated to read and sign a comprehensive code of conduct to which they are expected to adhere. No staff member is allowed to have any contact, including, but not limited to, babysitting, phone, or email, with any YMCA participants under 18 outside of YMCA programs and activities. Parents who have any concerns or questions with respect to these issues may contact the Director of Childcare.

### **Administrative Responsibilities**

The YMCA will make timely reporting to all administrative agencies as detailed below and may notify parents or legal guardians of any incidents and actions taken as a result of any suspicious act or concern of abuse or neglect. The YMCA will also cooperate fully with DCF, and DPH with their investigations for the safety and welfare of all children enrolled in the childcare programs.

The YMCA will offer referral services to families of any child suspected of being abused or neglected. Further, the YMCA will seek medical attention if of imminent concern. The YMCA will also reinforce

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policies and procedures with staff and consult with a physician and social worker consultants for advice and counseling as needed for staff and children.

### **Definitions**

**CHILD ABUSE:** defined as any child under the age of eighteen who has had a physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him by a person responsible for his health, welfare or care or by a person given access to the child by the responsible person other than by accidental means, or has injuries which are at variance with the history given to them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to malnutrition, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment or has been neglected.

**CHILD NEGLECT:** defined as any child under the age of eighteen who has been abandoned, is being denied proper care or attention, physically, emotionally, or morally or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being or has been abused.

**CHILD AT RISK:** reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is in danger of being abused as opposed to believing that the abuse has actually occurred.

### **Reporting Requirements**

1. All childcare employees are considered mandated reporters and shall make a report to DCF when a situation arises where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused, neglected or in imminent risk of abuse.
2. All staff persons and volunteers making a report in good faith are immune from any criminal or civil liability. A person required to report who fails to do so shall be fined not more than \$500.
3. A staff person must report a situation directly to the childcare director. In the absence of the childcare director the staff member will go directly to the CEO. A mandated reporter must make an oral report **within 12 (twelve) hours** of suspected abuse or neglect to the DCF HOTLINE at 1-800-842-2288.
4. Within 24 hours of an oral report the mandated reporter must submit a written report to the DCF and DPH notifying them of the incident.
5. Requirements of oral and written reports:
  - The names and addresses of the child and his parents or guardians.
  - The age and gender of the child.
  - The nature of the child's injuries, maltreatment or neglect.
  - The approximate date and time of injuries, maltreatment or neglect.
  - Any information concerning any previous injuries or neglect.
  - The circumstances in which the injury, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter.
  - The name of the person suspected of abuse, maltreatment or neglect.
  - Whatever action, if any was taken to treat and assist the child.

### **Administrative**

In cases involving an allegation that a staff member is suspected of abuse or neglect the following action will take place.

1. The incident will be investigated by the Childcare Director and the CEO.
2. DCF/DPH will be notified.
3. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that the staff member is being abusive or neglectful, the staff member will be suspended immediately, and a plan of action will be devised for that staff member.
4. If allegations are confirmed, the staff member's employment will be terminated.
5. If DCF investigates a claim and feels that the staff person does not pose a risk to the health, safety, and welfare of the children and the staff member's name should not be included on the central registry, then the staff member's employment may be continued.

**\*ALL STAFF ARE PROTECTED BY LAW FROM DISCRIMINATION OR RETALIATION FOR REPORTING**

ABUSE OR NEGLECT, IF THEY MAKE A REPORT IN GOOD FAITH.

### **Abuse and Neglect Prevention**

1. All staff is required at hiring and on a yearly basis to complete training on child abuse, neglect and mandated reporting procedures.
2. Parent and Employee Handbooks will include Policies and Procedures on Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect.
3. DCF phone numbers will be posted on emergency phone list.
4. Resource materials will be kept on file.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is practiced all times. Information about children in the classroom will not be discussed among staff or other parents or in the classroom in front of child/children. We hold any information you share with us to enable us to better meet your child/children's needs in the strictest confidence. This applies to information you share in writing or verbally.

Staff and volunteers must be professional and protect the rights and privacy of the children and families in regards to confidential matters.

A child's individual screening and/or assessment results may be shared with professionals with permission from the child's parent or guardian to be used for referral of services if appropriate.

All financial information will be kept confidential between the childcare administration and the families. Information verifying your eligibility for this program may be released to funding sources upon their request.

All medical, behavioral or emotional information will be confidential between the child's teacher and the director. The Center's nurse consultant has access to the children's medical information.

### **Parent Involvement and Contact**

The YMCA offers parent meetings two times a year per teacher, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. This will enable parents to meet with teachers, plan events and help evaluate the program. A strong home/center connection is important to building a good environment for young children. Parent participation will enhance the program and provide balance in the lives of each child.

### **Parent Advisory Committee**

The YMCA has a Childcare Committee that consists of a parent representative for each classroom, the Childcare Director, and childcare staff. The committee meets monthly and is charged with facilitating program evaluations, accreditation standards, special events, as well as, communicating information to the other parents. If a parent vacates a spot on the committee during the year, the Childcare Director will recruit a parent to fill the position. The YMCA will seek professionals from the community to sit on the monthly committee meetings to educate families about various topics.

### **Conferences** (School Age program exempt)

Parent-teacher conferences, are offered two times per year or on an as-needed basis, to discuss each child's development, academic progress, and behavior while at our program. However, a parent, teacher or director may request a meeting at any time throughout the year. These are scheduled at a mutually convenient time for all parties. You are encouraged to call upon the knowledge and expertise of our educational staff in child development and the additional parent resource materials available. These include books, videos, articles, and reference materials. The YMCA employs a diverse staff and can provide translations as needed to interpret communications. Parents are invited to attend workshops or round table discussions as they become available.

### **Communication**

Daily communication with parents is vital to the success of the children's experience in the program. Parents may speak to the teachers at drop-off and/or pick-up. If you need to call your child's classroom, please dial (860) 489-3133 and dial the appropriate extension or dial 0 to direct your call properly.

### **Newsletter**

Monthly newsletters will be sent home informing parents of daily and monthly activities and special events. Any parent who wants to add to our newsletter is encouraged to speak to your child's teacher or the childcare director. Kindergarten parents will receive a weekly newsletter.

### **Bulletins**

Notices will be posted on the Parents' Bulletin Board. Special notices and letters regarding children and/or parents will be placed in your child's mailbox as needed. Parents need to check their child's cubby and mailbox daily. There is a special bulletin board specifically for State Licensing Information.

### **Other Ways / Open Door**

The YMCA Childcare Program encourages parents to participate in activities with their child and welcomes them to visit the Center during the day. Come eat lunch with us, drop by and tell a story, share something special, or just take a break and chat with the children when your schedule permits. Parents are also encouraged to participate and chaperone on field trips.

In addition, we strive to incorporate a multicultural learning experience. In the event that the YMCA Childcare center is not parallel with your family's values and practices, please feel free to speak to your child's teachers or any executive staff member at any time.

### **Family Resources**

As part of our Intake procedure, you will be required to fill out a family survey. The family survey is used to help families find services and training in the area. The YMCA Childcare staff is familiar with and utilizes family support services. There is a Family Service Binder available in each classroom with resources listed for your convenience. Feel free to use these at any time. If you have questions that can not be answered by the binder, please feel free to ask your child's teachers for assistance. They have the following consultants available by phone and to do on-site evaluations and meetings.

- Education consultant
- Social Service Consultant
- Nurse Consultant
- Dental Consultant
- Nutritionist

### **Staffing**

The YMCA selects personnel who meet the necessary standards of educational and occupational qualifications who can effectively advance the objectives of the YMCA, who have the capacity for personal and professional growth, and who can become a viable part of the organization.

The YMCA childcare goal is to hire a diverse and dedicated staff. It is valuable for the children to have the opportunity to interact with adult caregivers of both sexes and from many different age groups and who have diverse cultural and racial backgrounds. Our childcare program encourages ongoing staff education and emphasizes professionalism.

Our Head Teachers have a minimum of a Child Development Associate and 12 credits in Early Childhood Education. Many of our teachers and assistants exceed the minimum qualifications that the State and NAEYC require. All child development center staff members have professional development plans in which continuing education and training in the early childhood field are provided yearly. It is the goal of the Northwest CT YMCA that all staff participate in professional development training that addresses racial and cultural backgrounds. Staff members also receive extensive training in YMCA policies and procedures as well as training specific to the Childcare Center. These trainings include one hour of Childcare employee policy and procedure training, two hours of health policy and procedure training relating to incidents, accidents, illnesses, and injuries relating to children, and three hours of training in using positive guidance in the classroom.



## Northwest CT YMCA

### Childcare Center Policy Handbook

#### Acknowledgement

This policy handbook describes important information about the Northwest CT YMCA Childcare Center. I understand that I should review it carefully and consult with the YMCA's Childcare Director if I have any questions about the manual or anything not covered in it.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are necessarily subject to change, I acknowledge, understand, and agree that revisions to the manual may occur which may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

My signature below signifies that I have received a copy of the Childcare Center Handbook (available online at [www.nwcty.org](http://www.nwcty.org)) and understand it is my responsibility to read and conform to its provisions or any revisions to it.

Parent/ Guardian Name: (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Once signed, please tear signed copy out of the Handbook and submit to the Childcare Director prior to the child's first day.

Thank you.

Northwest CT YMCA  
Childcare Center Behavior Management Policy  
Acknowledgement

My signature below signifies that a representative of the Childcare Center has discussed the Childcare Center's behavior management technique with me on this date.

Parent/ Guardian Name: (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Northwest CT YMCA**  
**Childcare Payment Policy**

**Childcare payments are drafted every Monday for the current week.**

Infant/toddler, preschool, and summer programs are drafted per the weekly tuition amount. School-age before/after school programs are drafted an amount due per the number of scheduled school days for that week in accordance with the Torrington school calendar. All payments for snow days and extra care days will incur an additional fee.

Program fees are based upon the set number of program days throughout the year and full payment is expected regardless of childcare center closings, school closings, inclement weather, school snow days, scheduled holidays or absences. **There will be no adjustments made for these occasions.**

Parent or guardian is responsible for the childcare fee as determined upon intake enrollment form. Loss of financial aid or Care 4 Kids assistance will result in remaining balance being charged to child's account.

There will be a **\$25 per occurrence NSF fee** for any charge that is rejected including, but not limited to, a closed account or insufficient funds.

**Accounts delinquent by more than 2 weeks will force the dismissal of the child from the program.**

There is a **two-week notice** required for withdrawal from a program. Failure to provide proper advance notice will result in accounts being charged for two weeks after notification.

\*Additional payment information may be found on page 17 of this handbook.

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I hereby agree to terms of payment policy and to be responsible to pay my child's tuition. I understand a two-week withdrawal notice must be given.

Child(s) name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_