



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Northwest CT YMCA CHILDCARE CENTER POLICY HANDBOOK

Updated: September 2025



Learn Grow Thrive

Childcare Policy Handbook

CONTENTS	2
MISSION STATEMENT	3
PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY	3
CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	3
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES	4
Physical Activity	5
Assessment ...	5
GENERAL POLICIES	7
Enrollment	7
Absences	7
Arrivals & Departures	9
Legal Custody or Injunctions	9
Closings	9
Clothing	9
Lunches, Snacks, & Non-Food Rewards	11
Healthy Celebrations	11
Infant Feeding & Sleeping	11
Records	11
Complaint Procedures	11
Children with Special Needs	11
Plan for Consultation	11
Transitions	14
Toys, Personal Items, & Electronics	14
WEATHER AND RELATED EMERGENCIES	14
Emergency Evacuation Plan	11
HEALTH POLICIES .	17
Medical Requirements	17
Emergency Numbers	10
Contagious Illness, Rashes, & Parasites	10
Injured Child & Illness Policy	10
Medication Administration, Sunscreen & Insect Repellant	19
Sick Child	14
Parent Responsibility for Sick Child	14
Tooth Brushing	15
Toileting & Changing Procedures	23
Handwashing	23
Animals	16
Water Play	17
PAYMENT POLICY..	19
GUIDANCE	20
SUPERVISION	28
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT	28
CONFIDENTIALITY	29
PARENT CONTACTS AND INVOLVEMENT	22
Parent Advisory	22
Conferences ..	22
Newsletter.....	23
Bulletins.....	28
Open Door.....	24
FAMILY RESOURCES	28
Staffing, Volunteers, & Service Providers	34
SIGNATURE PAGES	37

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 Northwest CT YMCA Childcare Center is committed to supporting the development of the whole child, with a focus on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Guided by the core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility, we partner with families each day to help children have fun while reaching their full potential.

The YMCA is dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected, and secure children, adults, families, and communities. To support this mission, we offer a comprehensive program that promotes social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and creative growth. We recognize that each child is an individual with unique needs, abilities, and experiences. All activities and materials are developmentally appropriate, and we encourage the development of individual skills to support self-esteem.

At the Northwest CT YMCA Childcare Center, children are encouraged to explore, question, discover, and express their ideas through play, group activities, individual work, and teacher-guided lessons. They are given choices as they interact with peers, educators, and their environment.

The YMCA is committed to inclusion and equal opportunity. No child shall be excluded from participation in or discriminated against in any YMCA program based on race, creed, color, religion, national origin, or disability.

Program Goals and Objectives

The YMCA Childcare Center aims to provide high-quality childcare through age-appropriate activities, led by trained, caring, and nurturing staff, within a state-licensed program. All staff members are expected to understand child and family development and to meet the learning and developmental needs of the children and families we serve. We are committed to continually developing our professionalism and strive to:

- Provide a safe, supervised, and structured environment where children can choose from a variety of activities that support social, intellectual, physical, and emotional development in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- Support the development of both gross and fine motor skills.
- Foster language development and early literacy.
- Promote a positive value system by encouraging self-worth and emotional growth, thereby enhancing each child's self-esteem.
- Encourage healthy habits, including nutrition, dental care, hygiene, cleanliness, and physical fitness.
- Nurture each child's potential and provide opportunities for learning, growth, and thriving.
- Build strong partnerships with parents by offering support and welcoming involvement in all aspects of the program.
- Provide children with opportunities to explore their interests, discover their strengths, and realize their potential.

Curriculum

The YMCA uses *The Creative Curriculum* as the foundation of our educational program. We believe early learning is multidimensional and that the developmental domains of personal and social, physical, cognitive, and creative growth are interrelated and interconnected. These domains guide our staff in planning learning experiences and form the basis of our assessment tools.

Childcare Policy Handbook

Our curriculum is individualized to meet each child's needs by offering opportunities to explore their environment through both child-initiated and teacher-guided activities. Topics of study often emerge from the interests of children, their families, and the center staff. Activities are intentionally designed to engage children across various content areas, including literacy, language, math, science, creative expression, motor development, and both quiet and active experiences.

Children learn through interactions with peers and adults, gaining an understanding of the world around them through meaningful, hands-on experiences. Learning opportunities are thoughtfully planned to reflect the classroom environment, incorporate family input, and engage with the local community.

The daily schedule includes opportunities for problem-solving, language development, and sensory exploration, all of which support well-rounded growth and foundational learning.

Sample Daily Schedule

6:00–8:45	Arrival, Hand washing, breakfast (until 7:30), open centers & creative experiences
8:45–9:00	Clean up and bathroom break
9:00–9:45	Snack, story, and circle activities
9:45–10:30	Structured activities (e.g., art, sensory, writing) and open centers
10:30–10:50	Music and movement
10:50–11:00	Bathroom break
11:00–11:30	Gross motor activities (outdoor play, gym)
11:30–12:00	Lunch
12:00–12:15	Clean up and quiet reading
12:15–2:00	Naptime/quiet time
2:00–2:30	Table/carpet activities and bathroom break
2:30–3:00	Gross motor activities (outside/gym)
3:00–3:15	Hand washing and 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

Creative Expression & Learning Through Play: Children will have daily opportunities to express their ideas and feelings through creative experiences that are thoughtfully integrated throughout the program. These include activities in art, dramatic play, music, language, movement, health education, and exploration. Both fine and gross motor development, along with self-help skills, are supported through engaging, hands-on experiences. Daily routines such as toileting and clean-up are also viewed as valuable opportunities for learning and growth.

Play is the foundation of all meaningful learning. It allows children to explore, create, and make sense of the world in a way that feels natural and engaging. Through play, children develop essential skills, including problem-solving, communication, cooperation, and self-regulation. Whether building with blocks, engaging in pretend play, or discovering the outdoors, children are actively learning and growing. At our center, we believe play is not just an activity, it is central to how children learn, connect, and thrive.

Free Choice: During free choice time, children may select activities from a variety of learning and discovery centers. These include science and nature, dramatic play, blocks, art, gross and fine motor activities, language arts, math, and sensory exploration. Allowing children to choose their own activities fosters independence and supports developmental needs. Our environment is

Childcare Policy Handbook

designed to encourage developmentally appropriate choices. When children engage in self-selected tasks, they are more invested and motivated, making learning more effective and meaningful.

Creative Activities: Creative activities such as arts and crafts, puppet play, storytelling, dramatization, block building, music, and dance help children develop important skills. These activities support following directions, working individually and in groups, and expressing creativity in multiple forms.

Process and Product: Children learn best through discovery and hands-on experiences. They benefit from the freedom to try new things without focusing solely on the outcome. Emphasis is placed on the process of doing rather than the product. Repeating tasks such as puzzles or pouring sand supports coordination, early writing skills, and problem-solving. These experiences build confidence and support foundational learning. Children's artwork reflects their learning journey, and it is essential to allow them time and space to grow. Creativity and problem-solving skills begin to develop in these early stages.

Quiet Time / Naps: Children in the full-day program will have a daily quiet period to rest and recharge. Each child will be assigned a cot. Parents may provide a blanket and pillow for children over one year of age; all items must be labeled with the child's name and taken home weekly for washing.

Infants under 12 months will be placed on their backs to sleep, in accordance with safe sleep guidelines. Once an infant can roll over independently, they may sleep in their preferred position. Pillows, quilts, blankets, stuffed toys, and similar items are not allowed in cribs. Sleep sacks are permitted. Infants' heads must remain uncovered during sleep.

Physical Activities: Active play is essential for healthy development. Children over three years old will receive at least 60 minutes of structured physical activity each day, while children under three will receive a minimum of 30 minutes. Structured activities are led by staff and often include music and movement. Additionally, children will have time for unstructured physical activity, with two sessions per day (totaling 60 minutes) for full-day programs and one session (30 minutes) for half-day programs. Toddlers will receive a minimum of 45 minutes of active play per day (30 minutes for half-day toddlers). Activities may take place outdoors (weather permitting) or indoors using group games.

Swimming: Our school-age children participate in free swim once or twice a week, supervised and instructed by YMCA aquatic staff. This provides opportunities for aquatic orientation, skill-building, and water safety.

Group Time: Group time is when children and teachers come together to discuss topics such as the calendar, weather, or classroom themes. This time is used to introduce and reinforce curriculum concepts. Group discussions foster social skills, including listening, turn-taking, empathy, and problem-solving. Children gain a sense of community and ownership as they contribute to daily plans and classroom routines.

Story Time: This is a quiet and engaging time when children listen to a variety of books and stories. These stories often expand on the day's topics and themes, supporting comprehension and vocabulary development. Story time helps children develop a love of language and literacy.

Music: Music activities, including songs and fingerplays, help children recognize patterns, build vocabulary, and improve motor coordination. Music also supports early math and language skills and strengthens attention and listening abilities.

Technology & Screen Time: The YMCA recognizes that screen time can limit opportunities for play, exploration, and social interaction. Therefore, recreational screen time is limited to no more than 30 minutes per week for children ages two and older. Screen time is not permitted for children under 2.

Educational Technology Use:

Technology is used during class time for educational purposes. Educational technology use is intentional, age-appropriate, and designed to support learning goals. Devices such as tablets, computers, calculators, and other appropriate tools may be used in limited ways to:

- Enhance classroom instruction through interactive learning experiences
- Support language, literacy, math, science, or creative expression activities
- Encourage collaboration, problem-solving, and engagement with the curriculum

All educational technology is used under direct teacher supervision and never replaces hands-on learning, physical activity, or meaningful social interactions. The selected content is developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive, and free of violence or bias.

Families will be informed about how technology is used in the classroom and may request alternative activities if preferred.

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 identify the family's needs and goals for their child. Assessment is grounded in The Creative Curriculum's goals and objectives and supports individualized learning.

Assessment is conducted in the natural classroom environment using a variety of tools and techniques, including Teaching Strategies GOLD, the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS), Ages & Stages, anecdotal notes, checklists, and work samples. Additionally, we utilize the Sparkler app, a state-supported mobile platform that offers developmental screening, family engagement resources, and activity ideas. Sparkler helps families and educators work together to support children's growth and identify areas of strength or need.

Through ongoing documentation, staff can identify children's interests, strengths, and developmental needs. Assessments are completed at scheduled intervals and aligned with each child's age. Additional assessments may be conducted as needed to address specific concerns or developmental milestones.

Classroom staff meet weekly to review children's assessments and plan curriculum strategies aligned with the CT ELDS. Assessment results guide classroom instruction and inform teaching practices. Progress is closely monitored and shared with families regularly to support curriculum improvement and individualized planning.

Progress reports are completed:

- Three times per year for children in the Infant/Toddler program
- Twice per year for children in the Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten groups

Parent-teacher conferences are held at scheduled intervals and as needed throughout the year. These conferences provide an opportunity for families and teaching staff to review assessment results and collaboratively plan strategies to support the child's continued growth. Assessments also

Childcare Policy Handbook

help identify children who may benefit from referral to Birth -3, the local public-school system, or other resources for further diagnostic evaluation.

All assessment information is kept confidential. Children's records are stored securely in a locked file cabinet within the administrative office. Information is shared with families both informally and formally, but is never shared with non-essential staff or outside agencies without the written consent of the parent or guardian.

Additionally, each child receives a developmental screening by trained staff within three months of enrollment. This screening provides a baseline for understanding the child's development and helps inform classroom planning and overall program improvement.

How Families Contribute to Child Assessment

We value the knowledge families bring and encourage ongoing collaboration to support each child's growth and development. Family participation plays a crucial role in providing a comprehensive picture of the child's abilities, interests, and needs.

Here are several ways families are invited to participate in the assessment process:

- **Parent Observation Forms:** Families may be asked to complete short forms sharing observations from home, such as new skills, behaviors, or areas where the child may need extra support. These insights help us connect home experiences with classroom learning.
- **Home Observations:** Teachers may request that parents observe specific behaviors at home (such as language use, social interactions, or motor skills) and share their notes or reflections. This helps staff better understand how the child functions in different settings.
- **Photos and Home Artifacts:** Families are welcome to share photos of their child engaged in everyday or special activities at home, such as playing, creating art, or participating in cultural traditions. These can be included in the child's portfolio or used in classroom displays to celebrate the child's identity and learning journey. Photos may be shared through Brightwheel or directly to the child's teacher.
- **Sharing Child Interests:** Families are encouraged to let us know about their child's evolving interests (e.g., dinosaurs, music, building, nature, etc.). Teachers use this information to plan lessons and activities that spark engagement and support meaningful learning.
- **Sparkler App Participation:** Through the Sparkler app, families can complete screenings, access activity suggestions, and share developmental updates with teachers. This ongoing exchange helps ensure consistency between home and school environments.

By working together, families and educators create a stronger, more personalized approach to supporting each child's development. We appreciate and encourage your involvement every step of the way.

Program assessment: To ensure continuous quality improvement and meet the evolving needs of children, families, and staff, the YMCA Childcare Center conducts ongoing program assessments using validated tools, stakeholder feedback, and other relevant data.

Assessment Tools and Methods

- The Program Administration Scale (PAS) is administered annually to evaluate the leadership and management practices of the program. This tool offers insight into operational areas, including human resources, family engagement, and program evaluation.

Childcare Policy Handbook

- Staff and family feedback are collected through structured surveys, suggestion boxes, and regular discussion forums. These instruments assess satisfaction, communication effectiveness, and perceived program quality.
- Child outcome data, classroom observations, and compliance with licensing and accreditation standards are also considered as part of our comprehensive assessment.

Use of Aggregate Results

- Aggregate data from all assessment sources is reviewed and analyzed by the leadership team to identify strengths, areas for growth, and trends across the program.
- These results are not used to inform program-wide decision-making.

Continuous Improvement and Professional Development

- Findings from assessments directly inform the development of annual professional development plans, ensuring that training is relevant and targeted to identified needs.
- Educational materials and classroom resources are updated or enhanced based on assessment outcomes to support learning and engagement better.
- Assessment data is used to guide partnerships with community agencies, consultants, and early childhood networks that can provide specialized support or expertise.

Transparency and Communication

- Families and staff are informed of key assessment findings and resulting action plans through announcements and family events.
- Feedback is actively solicited after changes are implemented to measure impact and ensure alignment with community needs.

This policy reflects our commitment to data-informed decision-making, collaboration, and a high-quality early childhood experience for all children and families we serve.

General Policies

Enrollment

The Director (or Head Teacher) meets with each new family during the enrollment process and conducts a tour of the facility. Teaching staff also meet with families at the time of enrollment to welcome them to the program and help prepare and orient them to their child's classroom.

All required documentation, supplies, and any necessary medications must be submitted to the program **prior to the child's first day of attendance**.

Trial Period and Withdrawal Policy: The first **30 days** of enrollment are considered a **trial period**, during which either party may terminate the agreement without notice.

After the trial period, a **two-week written notice** is required for withdrawal from the program. Failure to provide appropriate notice will result in the account being charged for two weeks following the date of notification.

Agreement to Policies: Enrollment in the YMCA Childcare Center programs constitutes an agreement to abide by all policies outlined in this handbook.

Absences

Childcare Policy Handbook

Please notify the YMCA as soon as possible if your child will be absent from the childcare program. You may send a message through Brightwheel or call your child's classroom directly.

Contact numbers:

- School-Age Classroom: 860-489-3133 ext. 136
- Preschool: 860-489-3133 ext. 104
- Infant/Toddler: 860-489-3133 ext. 138

Except in cases of prolonged illness, families are still responsible for the full weekly tuition rate during absences.

If your child is absent for more than three days, a doctor's note will be required for your child to return to the program.

Arrivals and Departures

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

In compliance 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 each morning and pick them up inside the center each evening.

You will not be allowed to enter the Childcare Center for pick-up without proper identification. Swipe cards are authorized for use through the handicap entrance for the Infant/Toddler area. (If a child has a disability, parents or caregivers will be granted access to the handicap entrance.) Swipe cards will only function during the Center's operating hours.

Caregivers (parents or adults at least 18 years of age) are required to sign children in and out of the facility when dropping off or picking up.

Children must be picked up by their assigned pick-up time, which is arranged at registration. If you anticipate being late, please try to make alternate arrangements for your child's pick-up or call the YMCA Childcare staff to inform them of your situation.

School-Age Arrival & Departure (Additional Information)

The Torrington Public School buses transport school-age children to and from the YMCA Childcare Center at designated times. All regularly scheduled public school buses drop off and pick up at the Mason Street entrance. Children are accompanied by YMCA Childcare staff while in our care.

Private schools, preschools, and special education buses also use the Mason Street entrance. State transportation uses Mason Street for drop-off, and must come into the center for pick-up.

If a school-age student refuses to board the school bus, staff will use positive guidance strategies to encourage the child to follow their regular schedule. If those efforts are unsuccessful, parents, guardians, or emergency contacts will be notified, and the child must be picked up within 30 minutes. Late fees will begin 30 minutes after contact (see Arrivals/Departures, p. 7).

Childcare Policy Handbook

School Attendance Requirement: School-age children may not attend the Childcare Center during in-school hours for Torrington Public Schools.

Anti-Idling Policy

Vehicle exhaust contains pollutants that can negatively affect air quality and respiratory health, especially for young children. This policy is designed to minimize children's exposure to vehicle emissions and support environmental responsibility.

In alignment with our commitment to promoting a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and staff, the NW YMCA Childcare Center enforces the following anti-idling policy for all vehicles on or near program property:

- All vehicles must be turned off when parked on YMCA Childcare Center property, including during child drop-off and pick-up.
- Idling is not permitted in front of the building, near playground areas, or outside any windows or air intake systems. The only exception is when extreme weather conditions necessitate idling to ensure the safe operation of the vehicle and the well-being of occupants, but only for the shortest duration possible.
- Buses and vans transporting children must also follow this policy and turn off engines while waiting on site, unless required for safe temperature control during extreme weather, and only if children are actively boarding or disembarking.
- This policy applies to parents, guardians, staff, transportation providers, contractors, and visitors.
- Staff will monitor compliance with this policy and provide reminders as needed. Continued non-compliance may result in further action, including dismissal from the program.

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 the following holidays:

New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day (July 4th), Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, and Christmas Day.

The center will close at 2:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

If Christmas Day or New Year's Day falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the Child Care Center will close on the preceding Friday or the following Monday in observance of the holiday.

Please note: The center may also close due to inclement weather or for reasons related to attendance or staffing.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable, seasonally appropriate clothing suitable for all Child Care activities. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately during the winter months to allow for outdoor play.

Closed-toed shoes must be worn at all times. Flip-flops and open-toed shoes are not permitted for safety reasons.

Childcare Policy Handbook

All clothing and personal items should be labeled with your child's name. Each child should have a spare set of clothing kept in their cubby.

The YMCA Childcare Center staff and the YMCA are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

We recommend that children wear play clothes to accommodate messy activities such as art projects, science experiments, and sensory table play. While children wear smocks during messy activities and we take precautions to remain clean, some messes are unavoidable. If cleanliness is a concern, please ensure your child has extra clothing available.

We kindly request that girls wear shorts under their dresses due to the nature and frequency of outdoor play.

Lunches and Snacks

Families must provide a packed lunch for their child if they are at the center during the lunchtime period. We encourage families to pack a healthy, balanced meal that includes at least one fruit or vegetable, and we request that grain products be made with whole grains whenever possible.

Please do not send lunches that contain:

- Fried foods
- Foods with more than 8 grams of sugar per serving where sugar is listed among the first three ingredients
- Foods containing trans fats
- Candy or glass containers

We are a **peanut-free facility**. Please do not send any food containing peanuts or peanut butter.

The YMCA will provide white milk or water during lunch and snacks. Sugar-sweetened beverages (including sodas, fruit juices, sports drinks, and energy drinks) are not permitted at the center.

The YMCA also provides a healthy snack in the morning and afternoon. All snacks are free of fried foods and sugary beverages, contain whole grains (when served), and align with our commitment to healthy eating standards. All fruits and vegetables are thoroughly washed before preparation and serving.

Staff members will model healthy eating behaviors and will sit with children during snack and meal times to promote a positive, family-style dining experience.

Warming Foods: Food or liquids are not heated in the Preschool or School-Age programs. Children in the Infant/Toddler Program may have previously cooked and prepared food warmed, if necessary, by a staff member. The food will be heated only to the touch and never to a steamy or hot temperature.

Food & beverages will not be microwaved in plastic or Styrofoam containers.

Lunch Delivery: To ensure the safety, well-being, and smooth operation of our childcare center, we do not accept food deliveries from third-party services such as Uber Eats, DoorDash, Grubhub, or restaurant delivery services for any child enrolled in our program.

All lunches must be sent in with the child at drop-off, or dropped off in person by a parent or designated emergency contact listed on the child's authorized pick-up list.

Childcare Policy Handbook

This policy is in place to maintain security and control over who accesses the facility, ensure meals are age-appropriate and meet any allergy or dietary restrictions, and avoid disruptions during the school day.

If a child forgets their lunch, we will contact the parent or emergency contact directly to arrange an appropriate drop-off. We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining a safe and structured environment for all children.

Non-Food Rewards: Staff in our classrooms never use food rewards. Non-food rewards are always utilized to reinforce positive behavior and engagement.

Healthy Celebrations: We support your child's healthy food choices by providing nutritious foods and non-food treats for holidays and special occasions. We encourage families to join us in promoting healthy celebrations.

Please refrain from sending cupcakes, candy, or other sweets to the program. Refrain from sending foods that are fried, pre-fried, high in sugar, or high in saturated fats (such as chips, cookies, gummies, chicken nuggets, and similar items).

If you have questions about acceptable options, please speak with the Childcare Director or a member of the teaching staff.

Breast Milk – Infant/Toddler

This program supports breastfeeding by accepting, storing, and serving expressed human milk for feedings. Human milk must be provided in ready-to-feed, sanitary containers labeled with the infant's full name and the date expressed. It will be stored in a refrigerator for no more than 48 hours (or no more than 24 hours if the milk was previously frozen), or in a freezer at 0°F or below for no more than 3 months. (Unrefrigerated breast milk will be discarded after 2 hours). The oldest milk will be used first. Staff gently mix, rather than shake, the milk before feeding to preserve its infection-fighting and nutritional properties. A comfortable space is provided for breastfeeding, and staff coordinate feedings with the infant's mother.

Formula – Infant/Toddler

In addition to human milk, staff only serve formula and infant food that arrive at the facility in factory-sealed containers (such as ready-to-feed formula, powdered or concentrated formula, and baby food jars). All products are prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions. Bottle feedings will not include solid foods unless the child's health care provider provides written instructions and a medical reason. Any formula or human milk that is served but not completely consumed, or is not refrigerated, will be discarded after one hour. If formula or milk is warmed, staff use water at no more than 110 degrees Fahrenheit for no longer than five minutes.

Infant Safe Sleep Policy

All infants under twelve months of age shall be placed on their backs (supine position) for sleeping, in a well-constructed, free-standing crib or bed designed for infant sleep that meets current safety standards, with a snug-fitting mattress. This applies unless written documentation is provided by a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse indicating a medical reason for an alternate sleep position.

Once infants can easily roll from back to front and front to back, they will be placed on their backs to sleep but allowed to adopt their preferred sleep position.

No blankets, pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, soft bumpers, or stuffed toys shall be placed under or with an infant 12 months or younger during sleep. These items must be kept out of the crib or sleep space. Nothing shall be placed or hung over the side of a crib or sleep equipment that would obstruct the staff's visibility of the infant.

Records

In addition to current health records, the Childcare Program is required to keep accurate personal

Childcare Policy Handbook

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 settings are non-life-threatening and can be resolved through the following steps:

1. Discuss the problem with the classroom teacher. Many concerns can be addressed and resolved quickly through direct communication with your child's teacher.
2. If the problem is not resolved, contact the Child & Family Services Director at (860) 489-3133 ext. 125 or via email at jviets@nwcty.org. The Director will work with you to understand the concern and develop a resolution plan.
3. If the problem remains unresolved, you may contact the YMCA CEO at (860) 489-3133 ext. 116.
4. If the issue is still not resolved, you may contact the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (CE OEC) at the contact information below.

In the case of an emergency, notify CT OEC as soon as the emergency is under control.

We are committed to addressing all complaints promptly and professionally. All complaints will be acknowledged within one business day, and a resolution will be provided within ten business days, whenever possible.

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood

450 Columbus Blvd.

Hartford, CT 06103

Phone: (860) 500-4450

Toll-Free: (800) 282-6063

All inspection reports and compliance letters are available for your review at this childcare program or through 211Childcare.org

Children with Special Needs

The YMCA Childcare Center will provide programs tailored to children with special needs within the mainstream of its existing programs whenever possible. Referrals to outside agencies will be made with the parents' permission. 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 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

Childcare Policy Handbook

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.

Toys and Personal Items

To maintain a safe, focused, and inclusive environment for all children, we ask that personal toys and other items from home be kept at home. Please read the following guidelines carefully:

Personal Toys and Items: Children should not bring toys, trading cards, or other personal items from home. These items can easily become lost, damaged, or cause distractions or disagreements among children. The childcare center is not responsible for any personal items that are lost, stolen, or damaged.

Electronic Devices: Electronics, including cell phones, smart watches, tablets, handheld games, and similar devices, are not permitted for use during childcare hours. If a child brings any electronic device in a backpack, it must remain inside the backpack and will not be accessed during the day. The center is not responsible for any electronic devices brought to the facility, regardless of whether they are used or remain stored. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us create a respectful and distraction-free environment.

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-child ratios. Childcare may also open on a delayed schedule when weather conditions warrant.

If severe weather develops during the day and causes a closure, a Brightwheel message will be sent to inform you. Parents/Guardians 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 contact persons on the child's authorized pick-up list if we are unable to reach the parent or guardian.

Brightwheel notifications and the YMCA Information Line at (860) 489-3133, option 4, will provide updates regarding any delays, closures, or early dismissals. Communication will be made available in accessible or translated formats when needed to accommodate families with limited English proficiency or disabilities.

Childcare Policy Handbook

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

Staff-to-child ratios will be maintained at all times, in accordance with CT OEC requirements, and at least two staff members age 18 or older will remain on the premises until all children have been picked up.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

Emergency notification and parent contact numbers are located in each classroom.

Emergency evacuation maps are posted in each classroom and include two evacuation routes. If the first route is inaccessible, the second route will be used.

Emergency evacuation drills, including fire drills, are conducted at least once per month, and other types of emergency drills (such as lockdown and shelter-in-place drills) are conducted quarterly to ensure preparedness for all scenarios.

Documentation of each drill includes the date, time, duration, type of drill, number of children & staff participating, and observations, along with any corrective actions taken.

The head teacher in each class is responsible for taking attendance before and after an evacuation. They are also responsible for bringing the attendance clipboard, first aid kit, and any emergency medications or individual emergency plans for children with special needs.

The Director or an on-site supervisor 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 at Trinity Church or the Frontier office building, located next door across Prospect Street. These pre-approved reunification sites are communicated to families at enrollment and reviewed annually.

Once all children are outside, the Director or designated in-charge person will conduct **another** head count to ensure all children are accounted for.

In the event of a civil emergency evacuation, local police, fire departments, hospitals, and radio stations will be contacted immediately. NWCT YMCA officials will notify the appropriate authorities. Staff will make every effort to contact parents via telephone and/or Brightwheel as soon as they are physically able. If time permits, this will be done before evacuation; however, the safety of children and staff is the top priority, so notification may occur after evacuation via cell phone.

Fire

In the event of a fire, evacuation will occur through the nearest safe exit. Staff are responsible for supervising the children in their care and leading them safely to the designated meeting area outside the building. Once outside, staff will line up the children and take attendance. A designated staff member will bring the rosters, portable first-aid kit, emergency medications, cellphone, and emergency files.

If it is not possible to return to the building, staff will walk the children to a pre-approved alternate place of shelter (Trinity Church or Frontier office building). Parents will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so using Brightwheel and/or phone calls.

Provision for Shelter

If it becomes necessary to shelter in place, all children will remain in their assigned classroom or another safe location within the YMCA facility. Once children are secure, the Director and/or designated staff will gather emergency supplies.

Bins will be used to transport food, water, blankets, health supplies, and emergency medications. Staff will also bring extra batteries, flashlights, and a portable radio. The YMCA maintenance staff will ensure that all necessary sanitation supplies and paper are provided.

Each classroom is stocked with an emergency supply kit containing food, water, first-aid materials, and other essentials. These kits are checked monthly to ensure they are up to date and complete.

Staff Training and Individualized Emergency Plans

All childcare staff receive annual training on emergency procedures, including:

- Fire safety
- Evacuation routes
- Shelter-in-place and lockdown protocols
- CPR and First Aid certification
- Safe supervision during field trips and outdoor emergencies

Staff also receive training on how to accommodate children with special needs during emergencies.

Individualized Emergency Plans are developed for children with special needs or disabilities to ensure their safety during emergencies. These plans are created in collaboration with families and relevant specialists and are integrated into daily routines, staff training, and drills.

Communication Procedures

In the event of an emergency, staff use multiple communication methods to reach families and emergency services, including phones, cell phones, Brightwheel, and two-way radios.

Backup communication methods are in place to ensure parent notification even if primary channels fail. For families with limited English proficiency or communication needs, staff will use translated messages or accessible formats to ensure understanding.

Parents are reminded to keep their emergency contact information up to date to ensure timely communication during emergencies.

Emergency Supplies

Emergency supply kits are maintained in each classroom and include food & water, blankets, first-aid materials, flashlights, batteries, emergency medications, and sanitary supplies. Kits are inspected monthly for expiration dates, functionality, and completeness.

Field Trip Emergency Procedures

During field trips, staff maintain the required staff-to-child ratios. Staff carry first-aid kits and emergency contact and medical information for each child. Cell phones or two radios are used for communication.

In the event of an emergency during a field trip, staff will follow established emergency procedures. Child & Family Services Director and parents will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so.

Incident Reporting: The Childcare Center will report all qualifying serious incidents, injuries, or emergencies to the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood within the required timelines. All incident documentation is completed and maintained in accordance with CT OEC licensing requirements and NWCTY policies and procedures.

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, Parasites, and Immunization Exclusion

Parents are required to notify the Center if their child has been exposed to a contagious disease. This includes, but is not limited to: strep throat, conjunctivitis (pink eye), fifth disease, meningitis, hepatitis, ringworm, impetigo, chickenpox, lice, and scabies.

If a case of a contagious illness is reported, the Center will notify families via Brightwheel and on classroom doors. Information provided will describe the illness, its symptoms, and any necessary precautions.

Return to Care Requirements: A child may not return to the Center until they are symptom-free and no longer contagious. In some cases, a doctor's note is required for re-entry. Below is a summary of common conditions and exclusion guidelines:

Symptom/Condition	Excluded Until
Temperature over 100°F	Fever-free for one full school day (unmedicated)
Vomiting	No vomiting for one full school day
Diarrhea	Return to normal bowel movements

Symptom/Condition	Excluded Until
Off-color nasal secretions	Drainage is resolved
Rash of unknown origin	Rash resolved or diagnosed and treated
Strep Throat	24 hours (or 3 doses) of antibiotics and fever-free for 24 hours
Purulent Conjunctivitis (Pink-eye)	No eye drainage, no lid inflammation, and 24 hours on medication
Impetigo	After 24 hours (or 3 doses) of antibiotics
Head Lice	Nit-free
Chickenpox	At least 6 days after onset of rash and all lesions are dried/crusted

In all cases, if a child is out for 3 or more consecutive days, a doctor's note or a copy of the prescription may be required for the child to return.

Immunization and Exclusion During Outbreaks: In compliance with Connecticut state law and public health regulations, under-immunized children, including those with medical or religious exemptions, may be excluded from the program during a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak. This is done to protect the health of all children and staff.

Definition of Under-Immunized: A child who has not received all age-appropriate immunizations as recommended by the CDC and Connecticut Department of Public Health.

Exclusion Procedure: When a vaccine-preventable disease (e.g., measles, mumps, pertussis, chickenpox) is identified in the center or local community, under-immunized children will be temporarily excluded from the center.

The exclusion will remain in effect for the duration of the outbreak or until public health officials determine that it is safe for the child to return. Parents/guardians will receive written notice of the exclusion and guidance from the local health department. A doctor's note or public health clearance will be required to return to care.

The center will notify the NWCTY health consultant and, if required, the local health department.

Communication with Families: Families will be notified in writing if their child is impacted by an outbreak or exclusion requirement. Any child excluded for this reason is not considered to be suspended or expelled under the disciplinary policy. This is a public health measure.

We recognize the diverse reasons children may be under-immunized and will support families with resources and referrals as needed, including to their healthcare provider or the CT Department of Public Health.

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.

Childcare Policy Handbook

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 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:

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 repellents 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 medication box, unless otherwise specified by licensing regulations for emergency medications.

Emergency medications (such as EpiPens, inhalers, and seizure rescue medications) must be immediately accessible to trained staff at all times, while remaining out of reach of children.

All staff handling any medication will observe proper handwashing procedures before and after administering or applying medication and will avoid direct contact whenever possible. Gloves must be worn when administering medications.

All application devices (e.g., droppers, spoons, measuring syringes) must be thoroughly washed after use or disposed of in accordance with the packaging or application directions.

Children's privacy and dignity must be respected at all times during medication administration.

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.

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>

Diabetes Management Policy

The YMCA Child Care Center is committed to supporting the health and safety of children with diabetes through clear communication, trained staff, and individualized care planning.

Before enrollment, families must meet with the Director and Nurse Consultant to create an individualized health care plan and Emergency Care Plan in collaboration with the child's physician. These plans must include monitoring schedules, symptoms of low or high blood sugar, insulin or medication instructions, nutrition plans, and emergency steps.

Staff Training: Designated staff will receive annual diabetes care training from a licensed medical professional. Training will cover blood glucose monitoring, insulin administration, signs of emergency, safe storage, and documentation. Training will be documented in staff files.

Medication and Supply Storage

- All diabetes medications and supplies must be labeled with the child's name and provided in original containers.
- Medications are stored in a locked, child-inaccessible location. Emergency medications (e.g., glucagon) are easily accessible to trained staff.
- If refrigeration is required, medication must be kept in a locked container in the refrigerator.
- Used sharps are disposed of in approved sharps containers. Full containers are disposed of per local health guidelines.

Documentation and Monitoring: Staff monitor and document blood glucose checks, medication administered, symptoms observed, meals provided, and parent communications.

Daily logs are kept confidential and stored with the child's health records.

Parents are updated regularly on their child's condition and notified of any concerns.

Communication and Updates: Any changes to care plans must be submitted in writing by the child's physician and signed by the parent. Plans are reviewed annually or when changes occur. Staff maintain confidentiality while ensuring all care needs are met.

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.

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 and change them at least every 2 hours when children are awake and after naps. 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 places 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

Childcare Policy Handbook

- 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, under, around, and on the backs of nail beds and hands.
2. Rinse hands well under running water with fingers down so water flows from wrist to fingertips. 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 essential activity for young children. They acquire a wide range of skills about their world during this activity. To ensure that our environment is healthy for all, the children wash their hands before 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 insufficient 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 the time of registration and annually for renewal. This includes registration and the 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 certificate.
2. The financial aid share is calculated on a sliding scale fee utilizing the Y's income and family size table. The parent or guardian is responsible for notifying the Childcare Director and Childcare Billing Administrator of any changes in household income or employment.
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, 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 child's tuition for two weeks may result in dismissal from the childcare program. To ensure the smooth operation of our services, all accounts must remain in good standing. Repeated instances of carrying any past-due balance may result in suspension of services until full payment is received. A past due balance, including NSF fees, must be paid before the child returns to the program.
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 before the week your child will be absent to prevent being drafted. Tuition-free request forms will be available only to Infant/Toddler or Preschool families. If using tuition-free time, you will not be drafted for that week and may not attend any part of the week.
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.
11. If your child is in AM Care only or is not registered for a specific day, and there is an emergency dismissal (ex., inclement weather), the charge will be an additional \$30 per day if your child attends. This will be drafted the following week to your account. The same charge will apply for two-hour delays if the child is not registered in AM care.
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 6/8/2026, 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 \$45 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 are \$30 each. The same fee applies to a delayed opening if not enrolled in am care.
7. Emergency early dismissals/delayed openings are \$15 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.)

Positive Guidance Policies and Exclusionary Practices

The goal of discipline at the NWCT YMCA is to help each child develop self-control and build positive social-emotional skills. We treat all children and families equitably and with respect, and we are committed to inclusive, anti-bias practices. We believe every child can succeed with individualized support, and we prohibit the use of suspension, expulsion, and informal removal except as a last resort—only after all appropriate strategies, documentation, and family collaboration have been exhausted.

Definitions:

- Suspension is the temporary removal of a child from the program or a classroom due to behavior that presents an immediate or ongoing safety concern.
- Expulsion is the permanent removal of a child from the program.
- Informal removal refers to any practice, such as repeatedly asking families to pick a child up early, that separates a child from their group or program without formal documentation or process.

The NWCT YMCA does not allow exclusionary discipline unless all documented support strategies have been attempted and the child's behavior poses a safety risk. Any such decision must be made in consultation with families and, when applicable, specialists. All decisions are guided by fairness, transparency, and the child's best interest, free from bias or discrimination.

Positive Guidance & Preventive Support

All staff receive training in positive guidance, trauma-informed care, and the Conscious Discipline model upon hire and on an ongoing basis. Staff use developmentally appropriate techniques to teach self-regulation, cooperation, empathy, assertiveness, and conflict resolution. Common strategies include redirection, modeling appropriate behavior, using visual cues, establishing clear expectations, and engaging children in problem-solving. Disputes are used as learning opportunities to help children identify their emotions and generate solutions.

Under no circumstances are staff permitted to use corporal punishment, humiliation, isolation, neglect, or any form of abusive or frightening discipline. Physical restraint is used only when necessary to protect the child or others, and always in the least restrictive and safest way possible. Continuous supervision is maintained throughout disciplinary actions.

Progressive Support Steps

When challenging behavior occurs, the following steps are followed:

1. Verbal redirection and support: Staff offer guidance and alternative choices.
2. Temporary removal from group (ex. cozy corner): A child may be given time away in a supervised space to regulate.
3. Family meeting and written support plan: If the behavior continues, staff will notify families in writing and meet to create an Individualized Behavior Support Plan that outlines goals, strategies, and accommodations.
4. Referral to support services: With parental consent, referrals may be made to community resources such as ECCP, 2-1-1, or Mobile Crisis. The program may also consult with specialists or mental health professionals.
5. Monitoring and probation: The child may be placed on a short-term behavior support period (e.g., two weeks) to assess progress.
6. Ongoing communication and documentation: Staff document incidents, strategies used, and all communications with families. Families are expected to provide information on outside evaluations if applicable.

Suspension, Expulsion, or Removal (As Last Resort Only)

Suspension or expulsion is only considered when the child's behavior continues to pose a persistent safety concern to themselves or others despite all previously documented support efforts. If removal is necessary, the family will receive written notice, and the program will assist in identifying an appropriate alternative placement. Suspension must be temporary and include continued engagement with the child and family.

Childcare Policy Handbook

If a child is removed temporarily, staff and families will work together to develop a Reintegration Plan that ensures a safe return to the classroom. The NWCTY will continue to support the child through adjusted strategies and connections to outside resources.

Family Engagement & Responsibilities: Families are essential partners in their child's success. Parents must inform staff of any medical, emotional, or behavioral needs. Staff will inform parents of any concerning changes in behavior (e.g., aggression, withdrawal) and collaborate on solutions. Parents are encouraged to participate in all meetings and support planning processes. Costs for external services (if applicable) remain the family's responsibility.

Staff Training & Policy Review: All staff are trained in developmentally appropriate guidance, equity, and trauma-informed care. The Child & Family Services Director reviews all behavioral incidents and exclusionary actions to ensure fairness and compliance with policy. The NWCTY is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive environment where every child can learn, grow, and thrive.

Supervision Policy

Children are under the active supervision of staff at all times to ensure their health, safety, and well-being. This includes continuous scanning, frequent head counts, and appropriate supervision by sight and/or sound, depending on the child's age and activity. Childcare staff are responsible for supervising the safe arrival and departure of all children. No child will be allowed outside of the childcare center without direct staff supervision.

Staff-to-Child Ratios

Staff-to-child ratios will be maintained at all times and are as follows:

- 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

Maximum group sizes are also enforced:

- Infant/toddler groups: 8 children
- Two year olds: 10
- Preschool groups: 20 children
- School-age groups: 30 children

Group sizes and ratios apply in all settings, including classrooms, bathrooms, playgrounds, and gym spaces. When caring for mixed-age groups, the younger child's required ratio and group size will apply.

Supervision Expectations by Age

- Infants and Toddlers (under 3 years old) are supervised by sight and sound at all times, including during nap time.
- Preschool-aged children (3 years and older) are supervised primarily by sight, including during naps and transportation.

If a child over the age of 3 uses the bathroom independently, supervision by sound only is permitted for no more than five minutes. Staff must stay near the bathroom area and maintain awareness at all times.

Childcare Policy Handbook

Staff are expected to position themselves strategically to see as many children as possible, conduct regular head counts, and actively scan their environment. No child will be left alone for any amount of time.

Bathroom Supervision: Staff will supervise children using the bathroom in an age-appropriate and respectful manner. They will also reinforce proper hygiene practices, including thorough handwashing.

Environmental Safety Checks: Staff are responsible for inspecting all program areas, indoors and outdoors, for potential hazards. This includes regular checks of furniture, play equipment, and surrounding environments to ensure they are safe and in good condition.

- When transitioning between areas, staff must inspect the space being exited and take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for.
- Classrooms and other areas being closed for the day will be checked thoroughly, and rosters will be reviewed at closing to ensure that no child remains in the facility.

Field Trips: Staff/child ratios and supervision standards will be maintained at all times during field trips. Prior written parental permission is required for each child. Staff will bring:

- Each child's emergency contact information
- A complete first aid kit

Transportation: Children will be actively supervised while boarding and exiting any mode of transportation. Staff will ensure safe transitions to and from vehicles or buses.

Safety Awareness: Staff will regularly review and remind children of safety rules and expectations. Activities may be planned to promote safety awareness both within the center and in the broader community (e.g., traffic safety, emergency drills, home safety).

Child Abuse and Neglect

The Northwest CT YMCA staff have a responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of any children involved in our center. All Childcare Center 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 regarding these issues may contact the Child & Family Services Director.

Definitions

Child Abuse includes:

Any non-accidental physical or mental injury (i.e., shaking, beating, burning)

Any form of sexual abuse (i.e., sexual exploitation)

Neglect of a child (i.e., failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, education, mental care, and/or appropriate supervision)

Emotional abuse (i.e., excessive belittling, berating, or teasing which impairs the child's psychological growth)

At-risk behavior (i.e., placing a child in a situation that might endanger him by abuse or neglect).

Child Abuse is defined as a child who has had:

Non-accidental physical injuries inflicted upon him

Injuries that are at variance with the history given of them

Is in a condition, which is the result of maltreatment, such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual exploitation, and deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment, or cruel punishment.

Childcare Policy Handbook

Child neglect is defined as a child who has been:

Abandoned

Denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally

Allowed to live under circumstances, conditions, or associations injurious to his well-being (CT statutes 46b-120)

Staff responsibilities: As childcare providers, we are mandated by law to report any suspicion that a child is being abused, neglected, or at risk.

Specifics on reporting a suspected case of abuse or neglect –

Call the Department of Children and Families (open 24 hours a day) at 1-800-842-2288

The reporter's name is required, but may be kept confidential.

Information needed:

Name of child/Date of birth

Address of the child

Phone number of child

Name of parents or guardians

Address of parents or guardians

Phone number of parents or guardians

Relevant information such as: physical or behavioral indicators, nature and extent of injury, maltreatment or neglect

Exact description of what the reporter has observed

Time and date of incident

Information about previous injuries, if any.

Circumstances under which the reporter learned of abuse

Name of any person suspected of causing injury

Any information the reporter believes would be helpful

Any action taken to help or treat the child

Seek medical attention for the child – if needed

Mandated reporters must report orally to DCF or a law enforcement agency within 12 hours of suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected.

Within 24 hours of making the report, the mandated reporter must submit a written report (DCF – 136) to DCF.

Staff are protected by law from discrimination or retaliation for reporting suspected abuse or neglect (CT General Statutes, Section 17a-101e).

All phone calls to DCF shall be documented and kept on file at the Center. A copy of all statements from staff and the DCF-136 shall also be kept on file.

4. The management of this program supports a zero tolerance for abuse and neglect and will implement immediate action should there be an allegation that a staff member abused or neglected a child. The administration will protect the child, including immediate notification of a parent or guardian, once there is an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child in our program. Any staff member accused of abuse or neglect may be immediately removed from his or her position until DCF's investigation is completed. Based on whether the allegations were substantiated or not, the employee would either be dismissed from his/her position or allowed to return to work.

Staff Training: Staff will be required to attend bi-annual staff meetings, held in September and February, focusing on the steps for reporting suspected abuse and neglect and the role of a mandated reporter. All new staff will be trained in these procedures prior to their start in the classroom.

Provisions for informing families of abuse and neglect policy: A copy of this policy will be included in our parent

Childcare Policy Handbook

information packet, and each family will be given a copy upon enrollment. A copy of this policy will also be posted on the parent board. When an accusation of abuse or neglect by a staff member is made, the Director must immediately inform the parents or guardians that a report has been made to DCF. Health care officials may need to talk to a child's parents to access the cause of the child's injuries and offer support and guidance.

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 a core value in our program, and it is consistently upheld. Staff do not discuss individual children with other staff members unless it directly relates to the child's care or development. Conversations about children are never held in front of other children or

Childcare Policy Handbook

parents. Any information shared with us, whether verbal or written, is used solely to support your child's well-being and is held in strict confidence.

All staff and volunteers are expected to maintain professionalism and protect the privacy rights of children and families in all matters. A child's individual screening and assessment results may be shared with outside professionals only with written permission from the child's parent or guardian, and only when needed for referrals or additional support services. Medical, behavioral, and emotional information is considered confidential and is shared only between the child's teacher and the Child & Family Services Director. The center's nurse consultant may also access medical records as needed to support children's health and ensure regulatory compliance.

All records are securely stored and accessible only to authorized staff and consultants who require access to perform their responsibilities. Financial information, including documents verifying eligibility for services, is confidential and is shared only between the family and the childcare administration. This information may be released to funding sources upon request, solely for the purpose of verifying program eligibility.

We are committed to protecting the privacy and trust of every family we serve.

Parent Involvement and Contact

The NW YMCA offers parent meetings twice a year for each teacher. This will enable parents to meet with teachers, plan events, and contribute to the program's evaluation. A strong home/center connection is essential to building a quality environment for young children. Parent participation will enhance the program and provide balance in each child's life.

Parent Advisory Committee

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

Family Communication

Daily communication with parents is vital to the success of the children's experience in the program. Open, respectful, and consistent communication helps us build strong relationships with families, ensuring each child receives the best care and support.

Parents are encouraged to speak directly with teachers during drop-off and pick-up times to receive brief updates or share important information about their child's day. For more extended conversations or private matters, we recommend scheduling a time that allows for uninterrupted discussion.

Childcare Policy Handbook

If you need to reach your child's classroom by phone during the day, please call (860) 489-3133 and dial the appropriate extension, or press 0 to reach the front desk.

In addition to in-person and phone communication, we use the following tools to support ongoing family engagement:

- **Brightwheel App:** This is our primary communication platform for real-time updates, daily reports, messages, photos, and announcements. Families are encouraged to check the app regularly and use it to message teachers or administrative staff with questions or updates.
- **Email:** Teachers and administrative staff are available by email for non-urgent questions or concerns. Email can be used to schedule meetings, share documents, or follow up on classroom matters.
- **Newsletters:** Monthly classroom or program-wide newsletters are shared via Brightwheel and on paper. These newsletters include important dates, curriculum highlights, reminders, and tips for supporting learning at home.
- **Open-Door Policy:** We welcome families to visit the program at any time during operating hours. Whether you're observing part of the day, participating in classroom activities, or checking in with teachers, we value and encourage your involvement. All visitors are asked to check in at the front desk upon arrival.

We strive to incorporate a multicultural learning experience and welcome opportunities for families to share their traditions and cultures with the classroom. If at any time you feel that the YMCA Childcare Center's practices are not aligned with your family's values, please don't hesitate to speak with your child's teacher or a member of the administrative team. We are here to support open, respectful dialogue and collaboration.

Our goal is to maintain clear and supportive communication with every family. If you feel that more communication is needed at any point, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher or the administrative team. We are committed to working together to support your child's success.

Bulletins

Notices will be posted on the Parents' Bulletin Board. There is a special bulletin board dedicated to 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. Eat lunch with us, drop by and tell a story, share something special, or take a break and chat with the children when your schedule permits. Parents are also encouraged to participate and chaperone on field trips.

Family & Community Resources

At the YMCA Childcare Center, we are committed to supporting not only the children in our care but also their families. Our goal is to help connect families with helpful, reliable, and compassionate resources both within our program and in the broader community.

The NW YMCA Childcare staff is familiar with and utilizes family support services. If your family needs support with food, healthcare, parenting, or developmental concerns, please ask your child's teachers or the Child & Family Services Director for assistance. We are happy to help guide you toward services that best meet your needs, confidentially and without judgment.

For developmental concerns, staff will document observations, meet with the family, suggest next steps, and provide referrals if necessary.

Childcare Policy Handbook

Additionally, the childcare center maintains contracts with the following professional consultants, who are available by phone or for on-site evaluations and meetings as needed:

- Education Consultant – for learning and behavioral strategies
- Social Service Consultant – for family support, referrals, and mental health concerns
- Nurse Consultant – for health and safety guidance
- Nutritionist – for support with healthy eating, allergies, and dietary needs

The health consultant makes weekly visits for infants & toddlers, in addition to quarterly consultation visits. The education consultant conducts annual visits. All consultants review policies & procedures annually and complete documentation logs and contracts.

Community Resources

Here are some local and statewide resources available to families:

- United Way 2-1-1
Dial 2-1-1 or visit www.211ct.org
Free, confidential service available 24/7 to connect you with services for housing, food, healthcare, childcare, mental health, and more.
- WIC (Women, Infants, and Children Program)
Nutrition support for pregnant women, new mothers, and children under 5.
(860) 489-1328 | www.ctwic.org
- Friendly Hands Food Bank – (860) 482-3338
Staff can also help connect you with additional emergency food programs in the area.
- Birth to Three
Early intervention for children under 3 with developmental delays.
(800) 505-7000, www.birth23.org
- Child First, CHH
Provides home-based services for young children and families experiencing trauma, behavioral concerns, or other serious challenges.
www.childfirst.org, 860-496-0867
- Torrington Youth Services Bureau
Provides counseling, skill building & support groups, Juvenile Review Board, community-based life skills/mentor program, positive youth development, and family support services.
(860) 496-0356, www.nwcty.org/branch/torrington-youth-service-bureau/
- Torrington Youth and Family Services
Counseling, parenting support, youth programs, and crisis assistance.
(860) 496-0356
- Susan B. Anthony Project
Services for individuals affected by domestic violence or sexual assault.
24-Hour Hotline: (860) 482-7133, www.sbaproject.org
- Torrington Public Library
Free access to books, digital resources, educational programs, and family events.
(860) 489-6684, www.torringtonlibrary.org

Childcare Policy Handbook

- CT Care 4 Kids
Financial assistance for eligible families to help pay for childcare.
1-888-214-KIDS (5437), www.ctcare4kids.com
- Department of Social Services (DSS)
Assistance with SNAP (food stamps), HUSKY health insurance, and other programs.
www.ct.gov/dss

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.

Volunteer & Service Provider Policy: At the Northwest CT YMCA, we value and encourage volunteer participation in our program. Volunteers may include individuals from the community, high school or college students, and those affiliated with community organizations or partner agencies. Their involvement enhances the quality of our programming and strengthens connections between children and the broader community.

All volunteers must complete a formal application and undergo background checks prior to participation. Volunteers are always supervised by staff and **are never left alone with children** at any time. Volunteers are expected to follow all YMCA policies and procedures, including health and safety regulations, confidentiality agreements, and appropriate boundaries.

We also welcome approved service providers, such as those from Birth to Three or other early intervention and support agencies. These professionals work collaboratively with families and staff to support children's development. All service providers must follow YMCA protocols, check in with administration, and obtain parental consent before working directly with children. Like volunteers, service providers must never be left alone with children unless authorized under state regulations and with proper clearances.

We believe that strong collaboration with volunteers and service providers contributes to a supportive, inclusive environment that promotes growth and success for all children.

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) 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.

To ensure the smooth operation of our childcare program, it is essential that all tuition payments are made on time and accounts remain in good standing.

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 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.**

The parent or guardian is responsible for the childcare fee as determined upon the intake enrollment form. Loss of financial aid or Care 4 Kids assistance will result in the remaining balance being charged to the 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 2 weeks will force the dismissal of the child from the program.

Repeated instances of carrying a past-due balance may result in loss of services. All past due balances, including NSF fees, must be paid before the child returns to 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.

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

Child(s) name (s) _____

Parent signature _____ Date _____