

SOUTH COUNTY FAMILY YMCA

**PRESCHOOL
FAMILY HANDBOOK**

2014-2015



**YMCA of Greater St. Louis
South County Family YMCA
(314) 849-YMCA**



Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

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PROGRAM VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

YMCA childcare has a unique set of beliefs that have been handed down since the YMCA began in 1841. The YMCA is a volunteer, non-profit, charitable institution dedicated to the development of the whole person, **Spirit, Mind and Body**. We believe:

- Children have a right to a secure and developmentally appropriate environment, which fosters cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth.
- Parents have a right to pursue education and/or job opportunities knowing that their child(ren) are being cared for in a safe and dependable environment.
- Families require support and services at this challenging stage of life when childcare is required.
- Parent participation and decision-making in their children's program develops personal growth, confidence in parenting, and service to others.
- Parents should have opportunities to make informed choices about childcare from a variety of sources and models.
- Childcare should be available to everyone regardless of race, creed or economic circumstances.

DIVERSITY INITIATIVE **Celebrating and Respecting Diversity**

The YMCA of Greater St. Louis is part of the National YMCA Diversity Initiative.

The YMCA Diversity Initiative is an ongoing comprehensive effort to fulfill our mission by being truly inclusive and have a base of employees, volunteers and members that reflect the full character and complete mosaic of our communities.

It is the vision of the YMCA of Greater St. Louis to be recognized in St. Louis, and within the national YMCA movement, for embracing and celebrating the diversity of our community.

GOALS

Program's Goals:

- Follow constructivist theory, children learn through play.
- Programs are developmentally appropriate.
- Promote the uniqueness of the individual child.
- Enhance children's knowledge as they learn through direct interaction with their social and physical environment.
- Improve communication among family members.
- Increase family's ability to work and play together.
- Increase family's sense of community.
- Provide children and families experiences in **YMCA Core Values of Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Caring and Faith**.
- Provide opportunities for Asset Building.

Staff Goals:

- Offer programming that reflects the interest of each child.
- Provide developmentally appropriate activities that meet the needs of the whole child.
- Promote children's self-esteem.
- Provide a positive, creative environment that motivates a love for learning.
- Dedication to professional growth.

Children's Goals:

- Learn that mistakes are part of the problem-solving process.
- Feel safe to explore their environment.
- Become independently creative thinkers who act in their environment.
- Develop the skills of group consensus and cooperation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Children's Responsibilities Include:

1. Taking care of equipment
2. Cleaning up after themselves
3. Sharing equipment with others
4. Keeping hands to themselves
5. Using appropriate language
6. Treating staff with respect
7. Being responsible for all personal belongings

Parents' Responsibilities Include:

1. Signing their child in and out
2. Picking their child up on time
3. Treating staff with respect
4. Paying their fees on time
5. Bringing their concerns to staff
6. Notifying staff of pick-up changes
7. Knowing about changes in policy
8. Informing staff of child's illness
9. Keeping child's record up-to-date
10. Providing complete and current child/ren information

Staffs' Responsibilities Include:

1. Treating children and parents with respect
2. Providing a safe, warm environment
3. Providing a variety of interesting activities
4. Keeping parents informed
5. Keeping accurate records
6. Being a positive role model for the children
7. To provide opportunity for Asset Building

RIGHTS

Children's Rights Include:

1. To be respected
2. To have a choice of activities
3. A safe and reliable environment
4. Having equipment in working order with all pieces
5. To express their creativity
6. Expressing emotions in an appropriate manner
7. Staff members that care about and enjoy them

Parents' Rights Include:

1. To be respected
2. To know their children are safe
3. To voice concerns about the program or activities
4. To know if their child is misbehaving
5. To know about field trips
6. To have open communication with the staff

Staffs' Rights Include:

1. To be respected by children, parents and other staff
2. To give input into the program
3. To express their creativity
4. A safe, comfortable work environment

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **DRESS** – Please dress your child in comfortable-fitting clothes. Closed-toe shoes are required. Please mark all items with your child's name. Please see the section regarding "Child's Belongings" for more detailed information regarding appropriate clothing.
- **FAMILY VISITS** – Parents may visit the program at anytime, participate in snack times, special activities, or to share information.
- **TOYS/VALUABLES** – Toys are not to be brought from home unless previous arrangements have been made with the Preschool teacher.
- **ABSENCES** – Please contact the Preschool Team at 314-849-4668 ext. 261. **There is no discount in fees for absence or illness.** There may be days that you need to change your child's schedule, providing there is availability in the classroom. Please notify your child's teacher by using the Parent Communication Notebook. (For Preschool closings due to weather, see page 9.)

REGISTRATION

A registration fee of \$35.00 for YMCA preschool must be paid at the time of registration. This is a non-refundable, non-transferable fee.

All forms in the Enrollment Packet must be completed in full ... NO BLANK SPACES. Omitting information is falsification of the document. Failure to describe any and all pertinent information about your child can lead to termination of the participant in the program. A physician must complete the Medical Examination Form. Immunizations must be up-to-date.

Forms may be returned at our Preschool Open House on Sunday, 8/23/14, from 4:00pm-5:00 p.m. It is important that you notify us of any changes in address, phone numbers, authorized pick-up, etc. Legal documents **must be on file** regarding divorce/custody arrangements, i.e. original or notarized copy of custodian.

The time and date(s) stated on legal documents for child pick up by non-custodial parent will be strictly followed:

- Divorce decree instructions, court order or document supersedes all ECE policies listed in the Family Handbook.
- A legal restraining order must be on file at the site if biological/adoptive parent is not allowed to pick up the child.
- Per YMCA and Department of Health licensing regulations, children's files will be retained and remain the property of the YMCA.
- All enrollment forms on each individual child are kept strictly confidential. They will only be shown to YMCA staff, Department of Health, Family Services, or custodial parent.
- Should the custodial parent wish to view or obtain copies of the child's file, a notarized written request must be submitted. See the Early Childhood Director for required forms.
- The YMCA reserves the right to require an official court ordered subpoena for release of records.
- **In the case of a legal court order or document, the YMCA will follow and enforce the court order stated as written. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

WITHDRAWALS

We ask that you give a minimum of one month written notice prior to your child's last day of attendance. Re-admittance to the program is based on space availability.

- Child's belongings will be held for one week after withdrawal then given to charity.
- **Temporary** withdrawal must be arranged and approved with the Director.
- If policies or agreements are broken, the YMCA reserves the right to withdraw your child.

PAYMENT

The Preschool charges a monthly fee that is payable the first scheduled day of each month. Please read over the fee agreement carefully. **These guidelines are strictly *enforced*:**

- **Your timely payments are crucial to the survival of our program.**
- **Checks or money orders are made payable to the YMCA, or a credit card number with expiration dates are to be written on the payment envelope. NO CASH WILL BE ACCEPTED.**
- **Receipts may be picked up in your child's classroom folder located at the parent table. If you have not received a receipt for your payment within the week, notify the Director immediately.**
- **Childcare payments are tax deductible. The YMCA Federal Tax Number is**
- **43-0653616. Please retain your monthly payment receipts for tax purposes.**
- **There will be a \$25.00 processing fee for returned checks. After two (2) incidents, payments will only be accepted by money order.**
- **There is no pro-rating for illness, holidays, or scheduled school closings.**

LATE FEES

- A \$5.00 per day late fee will be applied beginning on the second day that your payment is due.

LATE PAYMENT

If your payment is not received within 3 business days of the initial payment per billing cycle, your children's participation in the preschool program, or any other program(s) or services within the Association, will be terminated until account is current or arrangements have been made with the YMCA Program Director.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

It is the mission of the YMCA to provide services for any person who desires to participate in programs. YMCA scholarships are made available to those who qualify through the YMCA Strong Community Campaign. For an application, contact Jean DeVine at the South County YMCA, 849-4668, Ext. #224.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Your child **must** be picked up by closing time (12:00 p.m.). A 10 minute grace period will be allowed for unexpected delays, however, a phone call to the YMCA is required if you will be late. This will help reassure your child that they have not been forgotten. If you cannot pick up your child by closing, it is your responsibility to make other arrangements.

Late fees will be assessed for children picked up after the program closes. The fee is \$1.00 per minute, according to the YMCA clock. The following steps will be taken when a child is left at the program past closing time:

- Emergency contacts on the child's Enrollment Form will be called.
- If the program has not been contacted by the parent, or an emergency contact has not been reached one-half hour after the program closes, the police and the Department of Health will be notified that the child has not been picked up, so they can assist in finding the parents.
- **If late pick-up occurs continuously, the Program Director may ask the parent to withdraw the child from the Program.**

STAFF

Program Director: Jennifer Davis, 314-849-4668, #235
Lead Teacher: Mrs. Katie Sarniguet
Assistant Teacher: Mrs. Melody Kahlo

Our staff appreciates adults committed to the well being of the children and the support of families. They must meet and maintain stringent requirements to be a part of the YMCA Early Childhood Education Program. Examples of these requirements include:

LICENSING:

- Educational Requirements
- Annual Time Test
- Medical Examination
- National Criminal Record Checks / Child Abuse and Neglect Screening
- Hepatitis A (if applicable)
- Hepatitis B (if applicable)

TRAINING:

- YMCA Early Childhood Education Center Policies and Procedures
- Continuing Education (minimum of 12 additional hours per year)
- Communicable Disease Prevention
- Child Abuse/Neglect Training
- CPR/First Aid
- YMCA Policies and Procedures
- YMCA Customer Service
- National YMCA Training

- Project Construct Training
- In House Training

PERFORMANCE:

- Creative Planning
- Community Events
- Parent Communication
- Developmentally Appropriate Practices
- Constructivist Practices
- Accreditation Standards
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Annual YMCA Metro Parent Satisfaction Surveys

PRESCHOOL CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER

The Preschool does not offer care on snow days. The Preschool follows the Mehlville School District’s snow schedule. Please access Mehlville school district’s website, listen to KMOX (1120 AM) radio station or watch the news channels for information on school closings. **If in doubt, please make a phone call before you leave your home, after 7:30am, (314) 849-9622.** The front desk staff at the YMCA will know whether or not preschool is closed. The Preschool does not refund money for snow days.

HOLIDAYS

We are closed for the following holidays:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents’ Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following Thanksgiving
- Winter Break (includes Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day)

YOUR CHILD AND THE YMCA PRESCHOOL

CHILD’S FIRST DAY

- Please, for safety precautions, remember to sign in and out.
- Bring a complete change of clothes (socks, underwear, clothing suitable for current weather conditions). Please replace these items as they are sent home, outgrown or as the weather changes.

- Reminder: Please label your child’s belongings. This will help reduce misplaced or lost items. The YMCA is not responsible for lost clothing.

CHILD’S BELONGINGS

- Dress your child in clothing that is weather appropriate and is suitable for a childcare environment.
- Select comfortable clothes that children can manage themselves. We discourage overalls, buttons, and zippers down the back, and belts. We encourage clothing that can be exposed to paint, sand and other sensory and craft materials.
- Closed-toe shoes are required. We encourage rubber-soled shoes.
- All children go outside. **Please dress your child appropriately during the winter weather (heavy socks, coat, boots, gloves or mittens and hat). Please mark all items with your child’s name.**
- Jewelry (bracelets, rings, necklaces, earrings) is not allowed at preschool unless wearing them is due to religious beliefs.
- **Money is not permitted.**
- **Toys from home are not allowed except during designated show-and-share days.**

TEMPERATURE GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR PLAY

95° and above	Limited time, quiet activities
90° - 95°	10-15 Minutes (Depending on humidity levels)
32° - 90°	Unlimited time
20° - 32°	10-15 Minutes
10° - 20°	5 Minutes
10° and below	Do not go outside

If you feel your child’s health does not permit them to go outside, then your child is not healthy enough to be in the preschool program at this time.

If you want sunscreen applied to your child, parents must bring in the sunscreen, a physician’s statement and complete the required medical form.

ADJUSTMENT PERIOD

Your child will need a period of time to adjust to the new surroundings, teachers, volunteers, and other children even if your child has previously attended childcare. The staff will assist in the separation period. They are experienced with this situation and will be nurturing and caring. Feel free to call the Director when you arrive at your destination and ask how your child is doing. Chances are that your child will be busy playing and you can ease your mind and concentrate on your tasks for the day. Depending on age and disposition, a child might “act out” during this transition by doing some of the following:

- Cling to you and refuse to let go
- Have a tantrum
- Forget their toilet-training, bed-wetting
- Loss of appetite
- Revert back to an old comfort
- Wake up during the night, have bad dreams
- Express a desire to stay home

Usually these problems are temporary. If your child is treated lovingly but firmly, these behaviors should dissipate. If you are enthusiastic, chances are your child will be, too! During this adjustment period, staff will send notes home to inform you of your child’s progress. Please respond and let the staff know how things are going at home.

TOILET TRAINING

Your child must be toilet trained. Please send a change of clothing every day with your child. Please make sure all clothing is labeled with your child’s name.

DAILY PROCEDURES

- ***Your child must be escorted into and out of the classroom to a staff member. NO EXCEPTIONS!*** For their safety, please do not allow children to run ahead of you both in and out of the building.
- Class will start promptly at 9:00 A.M.
- Per state regulations, parents/guardians are required to sign their child in and out as they arrive at the Preschool and depart from the Preschool at the end of the session.
- **Staff members are required to check all children for illness upon arrival. Your child will not be accepted into the Preschool if he or she has symptoms of a contagious disease or illness.** If you feel your child’s health does not permit them to go outside, your child is not healthy enough to be at preschool at that time.

PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP CHILD

If anyone other than the child(ren's) regular escort will be picking them up, please notify the YMCA in advance. Anyone not on your enrollment form, or who is not authorized in writing, will not be allowed to take your child(ren) from the YMCA. **EVEN IF YOUR CHILD(REN) APPEARS TO KNOW THE PERSON, identification will be requested and required of anyone unfamiliar to the staff.** Permission for someone to pick up a child cannot be given over the phone. However, a written note faxed to the YMCA is acceptable. If the authorized pick-up parent or guardian appears intoxicated, the child(ren) will not be released from the YMCA Preschool Program. Staff members will call to assist in making other arrangements.

STAFF MEMBERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SIGN OUT YOUR CHILD(REN)

Staff members are not allowed to relate to children in non-YMCA activities, such as babysitting, weekend trips, etc.

The time and date(s) stated on legal documents for child pick up by non-custodial parent will be strictly followed:

- Divorce decree instructions, court order or document supersedes all ECE policies listed in the Family Handbook.
- A legal restraining order must be on file at the site if biological/adoptive parent is not allowed to pick up the child.
- Per YMCA and Department of Health licensing regulations, children's files will be retained and remain the property of the YMCA.
- All enrollment forms on each individual child are kept strictly confidential. They will only be shown to YMCA staff, Department of Health, Family Services, or custodial parent.
- Should the custodial parent wish to view or obtain copies of the child's file, a notarized written request must be submitted. See the Early Childhood Director for required forms.
- The YMCA reserves the right to require an official court ordered subpoena for release of records.
- **In the case of a legal court order or document, the YMCA will follow and enforce the court order stated as written. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

ABSENCES

Please call the YMCA Front Desk staff @ 849-9622, after 7:30am, if your child will be absent. **There is no change in fees for absence or illness.**

HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROCEDURES

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

A Medication Authorization form must be appropriately filled out by the parent/guardian the day the prescription is brought to the YMCA Preschool Program (forms are available in your classroom). **Medicine must be given to a staff member.** Medicine will only be given out if accompanied by a completed medical form. Non-prescription drugs cannot be dispensed without a doctor's note (or a fax from the doctor's office) explaining exactly: how much, what for, how often, and for how long the drug can be dispensed. Staff members may dispense only prescribed drugs in the original container which bears the original label displaying legible information stating the following:

- Prescription number
- Prescription name
- Strength and quantity of the prescription
- Expiration date of prescription
- Directions for use
- Child's name
- Physician's name
- Date of original issue, or with refill, most recent date of issue
- Name and address of licensed pharmacy issuing the medication

CHRONIC OR SEVERE HEALTH CONDITIONS:

To establish a safe environment for your child and our staff members, the following procedures must be followed for your child's medical care and treatment should your child require the use of nebulizers, inhalers, epipens or diabetes testing.

- An Identification of and Authorization for Treatment for Child Care Participants With Chronic or Severe Health Conditions form is to be filled out completely **by your physician and/or specialist.**
- A Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Treatment to Children With Chronic or Severe Health Conditions form completed in full.
- A Department of Health and Medical Authorization form completed in full.
- It will be the **parent's responsibility** to monitor and track prescriptions' expiration dates and replace said medication as needed.
- Staff members will receive informational training on administration of said items.

Failure to disclose all necessary information will void enrollment and be considered falsification of records.

EXCLUSION OF SICK CHILDREN:

Any staff person may evaluate a child exhibiting any of the following symptoms per State Health Communicable Disease Guidelines before being accepted or continuing in the program (i.e. health check):

- Fever: If 100° or above by mouth or 99° under the arm, auxiliary or accompanied by other symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, behavioral change or undiagnosed rash. **Children must be fever and symptom free before they can return to the program the concluding day.**
- Respiratory Symptoms: Wheezing that occurs suddenly and is unexplained. Congestion that is severe.
- Vomiting: If child vomits and has any other symptoms such as fever, behavioral change, abdominal pain or diarrhea.
- Diarrhea: Loose, watery stool, if it is not food related (child ate too much corn or drank too much apple juice), if it is accompanied by symptoms such as fever, abdominal pain, or vomiting. If your child has two loose, watery stools within one hour, s/he will be sent home.
- Behavior: If your child wants to sleep most of the time, does not eat, cries and generally acts miserable, your child may be coming down with something. Please check your child for these symptoms before bringing him/her to the preschool.
- Congestion and/or Excessive Coughing: Excessive mucus from ears, eyes, nose and mouth.
- **Other Symptoms: Such as fever, rash, swollen glands, vomiting, or stomachache accompanies sore throat or possible strep-throat.**

Our Preschool has a 24-hour rule: the child must be free of the symptoms 24 hours without medication before returning to the Preschool.

The Program Director will evaluate any unusual symptoms and have final authority if child should be excluded from care.

The following diseases are communicable:

- Impetigo: If infected sores or lesions are oozing and/or crusting. It is contagious and must be treated for 24 hours before a child may return.
- Lice: If lice or nits are found in the child's hair. The child may return after they have been treated and are free of lice and nits.
- Thrush/Candida: If a child has creamy white spots or patches on inside of mouth (gums, cheeks or tongue). Can also be found in diaper area by smaller raised red spots or sore pustules.
- Roseolla: Child has a high fever for 48 hours followed by small red spots for a few days.
- Scabies: If child has red, itchy areas in finger webbing, on the wrist, or under the armpit and says it also itches at night.
- Measles: If child has a rash accompanied by flu symptoms.
- Pinworm or Ringworm: If child is itching in rectal area, especially at night (pinworm). If child has a raised itchy spot resembling a hoop (ringworm).
- Rash: If the cause of the rash is unknown.

- Chicken Pox: If child has skin eruptions that are not yet scabbed over and with or without a fever. Please let us know immediately if your child comes down with chicken pox so that we may inform other parents to watch their child(ren) for symptoms.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): If the eye is red or swollen and has drainage or is oozing. Is highly contagious and must be medically treated for at least 24 hours before returning.
- Fifth Disease: Child will exhibit a slapped red rash appearance on cheeks. Child is contagious before exhibiting symptoms.
- Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease: Mild fever and sore throat; 1 to 2 days later blisters or ulcers inside mouth, tonsils, gums, tongue or cheek. Blisters or red spots appear on hands or soles of feet. Children usually get sick 3–6 days after exposure.
- Strep or Possible Strep: Sore throat, tonsils, swollen neck glands, lack of appetite or tiredness. May be no more than sore throat or fever.
- Any rare or unexplained contagious disease.

PHYSICIAN’S RECOMMENDATION AND WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION ARE REQUIRED FOR THE RETURN OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE TO THE YMCA PRESCHOOL PROGRAM. (Physician’s written recommendation may not supercede YMCA policies or Director discretion.)

A parent/guardian will be notified by phone when a child displays any of the above symptoms. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency party designated by the parent/guardian on the Enrollment Form will be contacted. The ill child will be isolated from the other children. **Child must be picked up within one hour of call. Sign-out is required.** A cot and bedding are provided and the child is made as comfortable as possible.

Communication between the YMCA preschool program and families is the best communicable disease prevention. Please notify the Director immediately of any communicable diseases and the YMCA Preschool Program will do likewise.

HYGIENE

Parents are expected to ensure their child(ren)’s proper hygiene at all times. If there are any concerns, the Director or teacher will discuss this with the parent or guardian confidentially.

INJURY

If a child is injured, an Accident Report will be completed the same day and given to the YMCA office. An incident report will be placed in the child’s file.

Minor injuries: Minor injuries will be treated as needed: washing, band-aid, ice pack. Parents will be given notification of the injury at pick-up time.

Major injuries: If a major injury occurs, the Director, after evaluating the situation, will take whatever steps are judged necessary to obtain the appropriate medical attention.

This may include the following options:

1. Contact the parent.
2. Contact an authorized person to pick up the child.
3. Transport the injured child to the hospital via ambulance.

If 911 is called and the child is sent to the hospital, the Director will notify the parents and the Director of Child Care Services and Executive Director as soon as possible.

The YMCA does not provide accident insurance for your child. This will be the responsibility of the parent.

Accidents will be upsetting and traumatic for the other children. Staff members who are not needed to deal with the injured child will move the other children to another area. Children will be allowed to ask questions and express their feelings about what has happened. Staff will not alarm the children with opinions of the outcome of the accident, but will be reassuring to the children.

CHILD ABUSE

The increasing incidence of reported child abuse has become a critical national concern. It is a special concern of the YMCA of Greater St. Louis because of our organization's role as an advocate for children and our responsibility for enhancing the personal growth and development of both children and adults in all YMCA programs. Based upon our concern for children, parents and YMCA staff, the following standards related to identifying signs of child abuse, reporting procedures, staff hiring practices and a code of conduct for parents and children have been developed.

DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE - Child abuse is damage, mistreatment or neglect of a child by another person resulting in injury or harm to the child. Child abuse may be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual.

REPORTING PROCEDURES - At the first report of suspicion of child abuse, the staff or volunteer observing the abuse, or the person to whom it has been reported, shall inform the Director. The Executive Director will be informed immediately.

The YMCA will make a report to the ***Child Abuse and Neglect Hot Line at 1-800-392-3738***. As licensed child care providers, this reporting is mandated by Missouri Law.

A call is made in "good faith," only reporting a suspicion. It is the Department of Family Service's responsibility to investigate the case.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Inappropriate behavior of any student toward any other student is strictly prohibited in the YMCA Preschool program. A student is any person enrolled in the YMCA Preschool Program. Inappropriate behavior is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other physical conduct of a sexual nature made by any student toward another student.

Students who believe they have been the victims of, or have witnessed, inappropriate behavior should report the incident(s) to any YMCA Preschool staff person immediately. Parents of a student who believe their child has been a victim of inappropriate behavior or witnessed such an incident should also report the incident(s) to any YMCA Preschool Program staff person, Early Childhood Director or Program Executive immediately. The staff member who receives the complaint shall promptly inform the Director and Program Executive, who is designated to address such reports. The Director shall investigate the incident.

Any student accused of inappropriate behavior shall be immediately suspended pending the outcome of the investigation. Any student found to have violated this policy by committing an act of inappropriate behavior shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Confidentiality will be preserved consistent with applicable laws. If investigation of a student complaint results in reasonable cause to suspect the student has been subjected to abuse or neglect, the matter will be reported in accordance with the YMCA Child Abuse Policies and state law.

DISCIPLINE

There are three specific rules at the YMCA Preschool.

- Act in ways to keep yourself safe and unharmed.
- Act in ways to keep others safe and unharmed.
- Act in ways to keep property safe and unharmed.

Our program's philosophy is based on respect for the child's self-esteem, setting reasonable limits, and creating an environment that encourages self-discipline, problem solving, and conflict resolution. We see the opportunity to teach values of getting along with others, solving problems in a positive way and learning self-control as the key to a successful program. The staff is dedicated to working together with the children and parents to resolve any concerns that may arise. Our methods of discipline are:

- Setting an appropriate environment for programming.
- Having well-planned activities.
- Redirecting behavior by giving choices.
- Encouraging group discussions on problem solving.
- Offering special responsibilities that will help to build self-esteem (for example, special helpers, clean-up supervisor, snack helper).

- Reflecting children's successes and accomplishments.
- **THE YMCA WILL NOT USE PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT.**
- **If a child endangers themselves or others, the child will be promptly and appropriately guided away from the situation.**

STAFF SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

- Children in YMCA programs will be supervised at all times.
- Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from relating to children in non-YMCA activities, such as baby-sitting or weekend trips.
- Staff providing direct care for children will be identified by a YMCA badge.
- Staff and volunteers should be alert to the physical and emotional state of all children and any sign of injury or suspected child abuse.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The YMCA Preschool program-learning environment consists of the following:

INTEREST CENTERS:

- Dramatic Play/Housekeeping
- Blocks
- Art and Construction Area
- Manipulative Area
- Science/Math Area
- Sensory Area (Water/Sand)
- Language/Writing Area
- Physical Development Area
- Music Area
- Woodworking Area
- Computer Area

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES:

- Guest Speakers
- Pre-School/Kindergarten Activities
- Cooking
- Story Time
- Cultural Awareness
- Group Games
- Field Trips
- Outdoor Environment
- Emergency Drills
- Dance, Gymnastics, Swim Class and Music (additional charge to participate if offered at branch)
- Family Events/Activities
- HUB usage

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT:

- Parent helpers (project preparations, outside activities, etc.)
- Parent sharing special topics
- Community visitors
- High school/college students
- Fundraising

NUTRITIONAL PROGRAM

- Your child(ren)'s daily nutritional needs are met through planned, balanced meals that follow USDA guidelines. Menus are posted weekly.
- If your child has a food allergy or other special nutritional need, we must have a statement explaining this need signed by your physician.
- Only staff may serve children due to Department of Health and Sanitation regulations.
- **PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD TO THE PROGRAM WITH FOOD, DRINKS, ETC. ONLY PROGRAM PREPARED FOODS ARE ALLOWED TO BE SERVED.**

BIRTHDAYS

- Please notify staff if you want to bring a special snack for your child's birthday. **Per State regulation, only store-bought snacks are allowed. Sorry, no candles.**
- We encourage families to honor birthdays by donating a book. This birthday book should be signed and dated. Thereafter, whenever the book is read, your child's birthday will be acknowledged.

FIELD TRIPS

To ensure safety for every child, the YMCA Preschool requires a parent or guardian to attend on scheduled field trip days. It is that parent or guardian's responsibility to safely transport their child to and from the event.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

PARENT TABLE/BOARD

- Parent tables are important communication areas. Here you will find children's art, photographs of YMCA Preschool activities, community resources, newsletters, articles, calendar of events, lesson plans, event notices, etc.
- We encourage parents to bring in articles, community event notices, etc. to be shared.
- On the parent table, you will also find: Parent Communication Notebook, Sign In/Out Book, payment box and family mailboxes.

NEWSLETTERS

A monthly newsletter is sent out to each family. It only take a few minutes to read, but contains a wealth of information. We encourage you to read the newsletter right away.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The YMCA recognizes the need for a consistent method of input and support by parents, school officials, and interested community officials and volunteers. To fill this need, a Parent Advisory Committee was commissioned by branches with Preschool programs with the following purposes and objectives:

- To increase community support for the YMCA Preschool Program.
- To enhance the quality of the program through recommendations and feedback.
- To assist in implementation of YMCA Preschool fundraisers and special events.
- To assist in identification of community resources.

Please contact your Director or teacher, if you would like to participate.

PARENT EVENTS

The YMCA Preschool Program conducts parent/family events. Please look for flyers in the communication folders.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

All parents are encouraged to volunteer their time and services to our Preschool. Parent participation is a rich tradition here. You can visit anytime, have a snack with your child, share your cultural heritage, go on field trips, make small repairs as needed, etc.

FUNDRAISERS

The YMCA Preschool Program will conduct fundraising events. Proceeds will be used to help replace the many toys and materials needed to provide a rich learning environment for your child. These fundraisers may also help with the YMCA Strong Community (Financial Assistance) Campaign. More information on the actual fundraisers will be posted on the parent bulletin boards and in your child's mailbox.

**SOUTH COUNTY FAMILY YMCA
PRESCHOOL**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE

My signature below verifies that I have received, read and understood the YMCA
Preschool Family Handbook. I agree to abide by the policies set forth therein.

Child's name _____

Parent's name _____

Parent's signature _____

Person responsible for payment _____

Today's date _____

Class _____

I would like to be a Parent Helper for my child's preschool

_____ YES _____ NO

This page must be given to your child's Preschool teacher.

Items in the Handbook are subject to change. Written notification of changes will
be provided to parents and will supersede the Handbook.