



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA of Greater Springfield School Age Programs Parent Handbook

275 Chestnut Street
Springfield MA 01104
413-739-6955

45 Post Office Park
Wilbraham, MA 01095
413-596-2749

www.springfieldy.org

Welcome

We are pleased that you have chosen the YMCA's School Age Programs for your child. By working together throughout the year, you can feel secure in the knowledge that your child is enjoying a unique, structured program that reinforces the Four Core Values of the YMCA (Caring, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility) and offers innovative enrichment opportunities. Parents are welcome to visit the program unannounced at any time when their child is present.

The YMCA Parent Handbook is designed to help you and your child have a smooth transition into the program and supply you with the needed information regarding policies and procedures as required by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). A copy of the YMCA Parent handbook will be made available at all sites for reference and to check when you have questions. We look forward to a good year with you and your child.

In addition, you can find a copy of the Parent Handbook on our website, at www.springfieldy.org, under Child Care, School Age Before and After School Programs.

If at any time you have questions, please do not hesitate to stop in our office or contact us by phone at 413-739-6955. We look forward to having your child join us.

Philosophy

The YMCA of Greater Springfield is committed to the provision of quality, affordable child care, and believes that our staff serves as an extension of your family. The children participate in a safe, constructive environment, which fosters healthy growth and development.

Programming consists of daily activities and relationships that offer opportunities for the developmental growth of each child in character, physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Goals

The YMCA of Greater Springfield is committed to providing a program of creative, innovative & engaging learning experiences through supervised activities in which children will voluntarily participate and which provide an opportunity for the children's development and education.

The goal of all before and after school programming is to create an environment that fosters opportunities for the development of the child in the areas of:

- Arts and Humanities
- Literacy
- Character Development
- Global Learning
- Health, Wellness and Fitness
- Service Learning
- Homework Assistance
- Social Competence and support Conflict Resolution
- STEM

The School Age Programs work to promote a more effective on-going family unit and improve the quality of your family's life. Please see the Site Administrators for resources related to social services currently partnered with the YMCA.

Non-Discrimination

The YMCA of Greater Springfield does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families based on race, sex, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, and/or disability.

Program Information

All YMCA of Greater Springfield School-Age Child Care programs are licensed by The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and are mandated to uphold all rules and regulations pertaining to school-age child care licensing. Parents may contact EEC at the number listed below for information regarding this center's compliance history.

Department of Early Education and Care Information

Parents may contact the Department of Early Education and Care at the number listed below for information regarding this center's compliance history.

Region 1 - Western Regional Office

1441 Main Street, Suite 230
Springfield, MA 01103
Phone: (413) 788-8401
Fax: (413) 784-1227

Before School

Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday from 6:00am-8:30am*

During program hours, children will have the opportunity interact and socialize with their peers. They will be able to finish homework, play games and complete projects. Breakfast is only served at our YMCA Chestnut Street location. Parents are encouraged to feed their children prior to dropping them off.

Parents are required to sign their child in on the daily sign in sheet. Failure to sign your child in will result in an absent for the day and could possible lead to termination.

To ensure all children arrive to school in a timely manner, Parents are required to drop off no later than 7:40 AM. This cut off time is enforced at Before School sites where transportation services are provided.

**Each Before School program has specific hours of operation and specific procedures and policies. Please contact the YMCA for the specific information on your child's before school program.*

After School

Hours of Operation: After School: Monday-Friday from 2:30pm-6:00pm*

Children begin arriving to the afterschool program upon dismissal from school. If a child is transported to another YMCA location, a YMCA bus or van will pick them up in a designated location agreed upon by the school.

During program hours, children will have the opportunity to have a healthy snack, start their homework, participate in creative and fun activities, as well as physical activities and/or outside time, when permitted. You can obtain a monthly calendar at your child specific site with activities and planned events.

Parents are required to sign their child out on the daily sign-out sheet. Failure to sign your child out will result in an absent for the day and could possible lead to termination.

** Each After School program has specific hours of operation and specific procedures and policies. Please contact the YMCA for the specific information on your child's after school program.*

Enrollment Procedures

To enroll your child in a YMCA before or after school program, the YMCA requires all registration paperwork to be complete and legible prior to your child's first day in the program. This includes all IEP's, 504 Plan, Health Assessment Forms, Authorization to Administer Medication, as well all appropriate Medications in the original box with your child's name and prescription on the box. The YMCA does not discriminate in providing services to children with special needs. Any child with an IEP for physical, mental or social delays, must meet with the School Administrator prior to admittance to ensure that we can properly prepare and meet the needs of your child.

All registration paperwork can either be brought to the Education Department at the YMCA of Greater Springfield or to the Membership Desk at the Scantic Valley YMCA. No paperwork or money will be taken on-site at a before or after school program.

Conclusion of the Program

On the last day of the program, we ask that all medication be picked up by the parent/guardian. All medication not picked up will be brought to the YMCA of Greater Springfield. After 1 week medication that is not picked up will be discarded accordingly.

Participants Records

The following forms are to be completed and on file prior to enrollment in the program:

1. Registration Form
2. Arrival/Departure Agreement
3. First-Aid/Emergency Medical Care Consent Form
4. Authorization for Daily Release & Transportation Policy
5. Program Authorization/Agreement Form
6. Children's Current Physical & Immunization Record
7. Any special instruction regarding your child's care
8. Individuals authorized by family to have access to child's health information
9. Individualized Education Plans/Behavior Intervention Plan/504 Plan (if applicable)
10. Payment/Enrollment Agreement

Schedule/Record Changes

Parents/Guardians must make changes to their accounts in writing. Changes over the phone are not accepted. After one change, there will be a \$25.00 fee applied to the account.

Tuition Policies

The YMCA of Greater Springfield strives to provide high quality services to all families enrolled in our programs. To ensure continuation of services, the YMCA requires that tuition be paid for services rendered.

Tuition is due every Thursday for the following week. You may pay weekly, bi-weekly or monthly through automatic draft (EFT). Please specify when registering, which plan you are choosing. All payments must be made automatic draft (EFT).

You will continue to be billed and are responsible for all fees two weeks from the date we are informed of your child's intended withdrawal from the program. Parents are responsible to provide a two-week, written notice to the YMCA if a child will be withdrawing from the program. Parents are responsible for renewing their voucher, EEC slot, or financial assistance paperwork in a timely fashion to prevent termination or a gap in services. Parents are responsible for full payment regardless of their child's attendance.

*****Because fees are based on the total yearly cost of the program and our expenses go on whether we are closed or open, we cannot give credits or refunds for holidays, sick days or inclement weather days or emergency closures.***

Delinquent Payments

Payments behind two weeks or more may result in termination. Any outstanding balances in the program will result in your child not being allowed to participate in any other YMCA program until the balance is paid in full.

EFT Fee

If two payments of EFT are returned by your bank for any reason, a service fee will be charged. Any additional EFT returns by your bank for any reason may result in termination of services.

Vacation Week Payments

Parents **are required** to pay their **afterschool fee** during vacation weeks regardless of whether their child is attending. This ensures the child's placement in the program is reserved. Fees are based on the total yearly cost of the program; YMCA expenses are calculated based on all children enrolled in the program.

If you send your child to vacation week please see the fee schedule below, as the fee will differ from your afterschool fee:

Vacation Week Fee:	5 Days	4 Days
	N/A	\$195.00

Late Pick-up Fee

The YMCA After School program closes at 6:00PM. After 6:00PM, a late fee of \$7.00 per child will be charged beginning at 6:01-6:15. An additional \$13.00 per child will be charged beginning at 6:16-6:30pm. After 6:30pm \$13.00 per child will be charged for every 15 minutes thereafter.

If a child is not picked up by 7:00PM and we are unable to reach a parent or emergency contact, we will contact the Child-At-Risk Hot Line as required by the Department of Children and Families.

While we understand that emergencies do arise, we request that parents' keep in mind the 6:00PM closing time. The Y reserves the right to terminate enrollment for 2 or more late pick-ups in a 1-month period.

Special note:

It is required that we have on file an up-to-date telephone number where parents can be reached during program hours. We must also have an emergency number for an alternate person who can be reached if the parent is unavailable. These numbers must be kept up to date. Please notify the Education Desk in Springfield, in writing whenever phone numbers have changed.

Field Trip Fees & Vacation Week

Field trip expenses are not included in our program rate. Field trip fees will be included in a written permission form in advance of all field trips. All fees must be paid in advance of field trips.

To sign up for a field trip accounts must be current at the time of registration. Deadlines set for fieldtrip are strictly enforced to account for ticket confirmation and staffing ratio. Exceptions cannot be made.

Generally, fieldtrips are planned for the December, February and March vacation weeks. These forms are passed out at the site your child attends.

Special Event Fees

Individual programs may occasionally provide extracurricular activities or events at their sites. Parents may be asked for a small monetary or material donation to supplement the activity.

Suspension or Termination Policy Regarding Non-Payment

If a child is terminated from the program due to non-payment of tuition fees, the program may re-admit the child for enrollment if all past due fees are paid in full or a re-payment plan is approved and signed.

Income Tax Credit

If you use childcare to work, you may qualify for a federal income credit for a portion of your childcare expenses. Check with the IRS office for current information. Be sure to save your receipts for your entire child care expenses to document your child care costs for tax purposes.

Tuition Assistance Programs

Please contact our office to inquire about possible tuition assistance programs you might qualify for. Depending on the type of tuition assistance program we suggest for your family, we may ask you to also contact the agency involved such as the New England Farm Workers Council.

YMCA Plan for Behavior Management

Discipline and guidance shall be consistent and based on an understanding of the individual needs and the level of development of each child. The goal of all behavior management is to maximize the growth and development of self-discipline, while ensuring the safety of the group.

All rules and limits will be clearly explained to the children frequently so that the children understand and feel secure that the adults in charge care enough to keep them safe. Developmentally appropriate methods of behavioral management will be used in dealing with unacceptable behavior.

These methods include: redirection, reminders, offering acceptable choices, time off from an activity (something else maybe offered), and when necessary, quiet time not exceeding more than 15 minutes.

Repeated behaviors which threaten the physical and/or emotional safety of the child, other children, or staff (such as hitting, biting, verbal assault, kicking, throwing objects, pushing, temper tantrums, etc.) will result in appropriate consequences, including but not limited to discussion of actions with staff & parent/guardian, discussion about how to make better choices, formal disciplinary write up, suspension or termination from YMCA programming.

At no time will a behavioral incident be dealt with in a demoralizing, humiliating, or abusive manner. No child will be subject to neglect, cruel, unusual, severe, or corporal punishment including: punishment which subjects a child to verbal abuse, ridicule or humiliation, denial of food, rest, or use of bathroom facilities, punishment for soiling or wetting, relating to or not eating food. No staff member shall be subject to verbal or physical abuse by a child enrolled in the program. This includes humiliation, foul or abusive language or ridicule.

The YMCA has zero tolerance for offenses of physical violence, bullying, inappropriate and foul language. Serve infractions are reviewed by the Director, per their discretion severe enough infractions may result in automatic suspension.

Child Guidance Policy

Child guidance shall be consistent and based on an understanding of the age, individual needs and development of each child. The goal of all child guidance is to maximize the growth and development of self-control, while insuring the safety of the group always.

Care will be taken that all rules and limits are clearly explained to the children frequently so that the children understand them and so that they feel secure that the adults in charge care enough to keep them safe. Developmentally appropriate methods of behavioral management will be used in dealing with inappropriate behaviors. These methods include use of the following consistent and progressive techniques, distraction, redirection, gentle reminders, offering acceptable choices, natural consequences or if needed, relocation to a different activity center to give them an opportunity to relax and renew self-control away from the situation.

The prohibitions in the Department of Early Education and Care regulations:

- Spanking or other corporal punishment of children.
- Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or
 - physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment;
- Depriving children of meals or snacks;
- Using methods such as force-feeding children; and
- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting
- The Department of Early Education and Care does not allow any licenses child care programs to use discipline techniques that require the use of any physical restraint.
- Children will not be confined to a swing, high chair, crib, or any other piece of equipment for extended periods in lieu of supervision.
- If used, time out may not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and must take place within the educator's view.

Child guidance goals that help children with the following:

- To be safe with themselves and with others;
- To feel good about themselves;
- To develop self-control and good coping skills;
- To appropriately express their feelings;
- To become more independent;

- To balance their needs and wants with those of others;
- To learn new problem-solving skills, including non-violent conflict resolution;
- To learn about conservation and to use equipment, materials, and other resources in caring, appropriate ways.

Methods of child guidance:

- Plan for appropriate behavior through the environment by arranging furniture and other materials to encourage active learning and independence;
- Plan daily scheduling that prevents boredom, waiting, hurriedness, with time to relax and enjoy activities;
- A daily routine with ample opportunity for children to select activities and move between them at their own pace and one that gives children ample notice of transitions ahead of time;
- Provide children with expectations that are clear, age-appropriate and applied in a consistent way. Allow children to participate in the establishment of rules, policies and procedures where appropriate and feasible;
- Reinforce positive behavior by recognizing children’s positive actions;
- Adults model appropriate behavior by being consistent with what the program’s expectations are for children;
- Re-direct children toward positive activities by interrupting a child’s negative behavior and steering the child toward an acceptable substitute activity
- Teach children new skills and encourage them to discuss and resolve their conflicts on their own or with the adult’s assistance when necessary rather than imposing an adult’s solution on them. Encourage children to express their feelings in words and to resolve problems peacefully;
- Ignore simple inappropriate negative behavior that is unpleasant;
- Work in close partnership with parents; keep informed of the children’s difficulties at home and at the program. Develop shared understanding to develop consistency between home and child care;
- Observe and document children’s behavior;
- Meet with parents, keep them informed of their children’s behavior and document parent discussions;
- Assess specialized support services if a child’s behavior continues to be harmful to themselves or others. With written parental permission, refer the family for mental health counseling or other specialized services that can help address the child’s behavior problems. Follow our referral policy.

Supports that are available to assist child guidance efforts:

- Referral agency suggestions are listed in the back of this Family Handbook. If you would like assistance with the referral process do not hesitate to speak with the Director.
- Staff and family training sessions will be offered at our center to assist with a collaborative home/center child guidance development effort.

Referral Policy

If a staff member has a concern regarding a specific child and believes a child could benefit from social, mental health, education or medical services the following procedures will occur:

The staff will:

- Write down specific observations of the child at various times of the day. (2-3 days)
- Document specific incident
- Meet with the Site Coordinator
- Complete a "Behavior Observation Report"

The behavior or concern will be discussed between the staff and Site Coordinator. The parent/guardian will be notified if the Director deems it appropriate at this point.

A plan of action will be decided to meet the specific needs of the child. The plan of action may include, but not be limited to:

- Redirection
- Behavior modification techniques
- Redesign of the classroom environment
- Adjusting the classroom schedule
- Reassignment of the child to another group if possible

If the child does not respond to these methods a meeting with the parent/guardian is necessary. The Director will request a conference with the parent(s) and staff.

Parent/guardian meeting agenda:

- Discussion of concerns and review of Behavior Observation Report.
- Develop a plan of action with parent input.
- A referral to a local early intervention program or family service agency may be made by the YMCA. The referral will be documented in the child's file.
- The parents will also be given a list of additional referral resources in the community. If the child is at least 2 ½ years of age, the parents will be informed of the availability of services and their rights, including right to appeal, under Chapter 766. If the child is under the age of three, the parents will be informed of the availability of services provided by Early Intervention Programs.
- Staff members will offer the parents assistance in making the referral. If the parents agree, they will be asked to sign an "Authorization to Share Information" form before any outside referral is made.
- YMCA staff will continue to document observations and any incidents that may occur.
- A date for follow-up meeting will be set.

If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from that agency, or is ineligible to receive services, the staff will review the child's progress at the center at least every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.

All conferences and screening results will be documented and placed in the child's record. This information will be made available to the parents on request.

Follow-up meeting with Director, Parent/Guardian and YMCA Staff

- Discuss progress or further need to improve the situation.
- If it is determined that the program is unable to meet the needs of the child, the parent will be asked to withdraw the child from the program. (All efforts will be made to give the parents a two-week notice).
- In the case of extremely violent or threatening behavior where the safety of the child, other children or staff are at risk, the child may be immediately terminated.

***Note if the parent is uncooperative, or refuses to work with referral agencies the YMCA reserves the right to terminate without notice.**

Bullying Policy

General Statement

The YMCA of Greater Springfield core values are caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. As a priority we are addressing bullying. The Y does not tolerate any form of bullying. We will investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, including cyber bullying and will take prompt effective action to end that behavior and prevent its reoccurrence. This prohibition includes anyone associated with the YMCA including but not limited to members, staff, administrators, parents, program members, and guests.

The Y will perform all due diligence with regards to bullying response and prevention, including penalties for false claims. This policy is in addition to our behavior modification plans for all childcare programs and code of conduct for members and guests.

Our efforts to prevent bullying includes: staff training, program curriculum, and an association taskforce to keep current on training and research.

Definition of Bullying

The YMCA of Greater Springfield will use a modified version of the state definition and defines "Bullying" as the following:

The repeated use by one or more students/members/participants [aggressor(s)] of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- ❖ causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property
- ❖ places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property
- ❖ creates a hostile environment at within our programs or facilities for the target
- ❖ infringes on the rights of the target within our programs or facilities
- ❖ materially and substantially disrupts a program or membership benefits or the orderly operation of a program or at a Y facility.

Definition of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying, using technology or electronic devices such as cell phones, computers, video gaming systems and the Internet

Cyberbullying, like bullying in the physical world, may include:

- ❖ Sending hurtful, hateful, derogatory, harassing or threatening messages to others
- ❖ Spreading rumors
- ❖ Sending personal or embarrassing information about or pictures of others – all with the intention of intimidating, frightening, ridiculing, or harming someone else.

Y Reporting Procedures

All Y staff are mandated child abuse reporters. In the event they witness an act of bullying, they are to immediately intervene and notify their direct supervisor. If it is reported to a staff member, the staff is to notify their immediate supervisor and an investigation will take place within 24 hours of notification, including notifying parents of the alleged victim/aggressor is a minor.

Forms and flow charts related to the Y's bullying policy and reporting procedures are available on our website www.springfieldy.org

Absences

Parents must telephone the YMCA office by noon if your child will not be attending the YMCA program that day. This will assure the staff of the safety and whereabouts of your child. If a child has more than 4 unexcused absences in a row, the YMCA will contact the parent/guardian to determine the reason for the absence. The YMCA does not refund for absences. Children who have more than 45 absences in a 12-month period may lose their New England Farm Workers Voucher or their EEC slot.

Termination Policy

When the health, welfare and/or safety of a child, other children, or staff are at stake, the YMCA reserves the right to terminate child care services immediately. Parents will receive written documentation of the termination. Possible reasons for suspension and/or termination from child care services are:

- Overdue payment(s)
- Inappropriate physical and/or verbal behavior by a child or parent
- Chronic tardiness at pick-up time, which is 3 times (more than 10 minutes) within a two-week period
- Is dangerous to him/herself
- Is dangerous to others in the classroom
- Does not want to participate in the program
- Is unable to benefit from the program
- Is excessively and repeatedly disruptive to others
- Is unable to follow the rules and expectations of the center
- Repeatedly uses offensive or obscene language (this will also apply to parents)
- Repeatedly damages materials
- Is abusive to others
- Inappropriate parental behavior towards staff or any program participants

Procedures for termination:

The sequence of events that can lead to termination of a child is as follows:

- Implement regular child guidance policy
- Schedule a parent conference to discuss concern
- Invite parent to observe behavior
- Review the situation
- Describe what steps have been taken to help the child
- Solicit input and suggestions from the parent
- Provide suggestions for parents, if appropriate
- Follow Referral Policy
- Inform parent of possibility of termination if no progress is made. Include time frames.
- Briefly suspend from program
- Implement procedures for special services, if appropriate

Termination:

- Inform parents with as much lead time as possible
- Assist, where feasible, in transitioning to new program or special services
- Prepare the child for termination in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand
- Complete "Referral/Termination Report" and present to parents

Special Notes:

Termination from the program will not be conducted or treated as a punishment. Every effort will be made to balance the interests of the individual child as well as the class. However, ultimately, the interests of the program shall be given priority. Throughout the termination process, close communication will be maintained with the parent.

Every effort will be made to help the student by providing suggestions and recommendations for special services where appropriate to the parent. All activities concerning the termination process will be thoroughly documented in the student's record.

Withdrawal from Program

The YMCA requires a **two-week written notice** for all withdrawn children from the program. Parents who fail to do so will still be responsible to pay for the two-week period.

Authorized Releases

The YMCA will release a child only to parents or legal guardian(s) or to persons authorized and identified on the Child's Authorization for Release Form. Staff members of the program will ask for identification from individuals authorized for pick-up. **A photo I.D. is required for us to release of your child.**

In the event a relative or friend not identified on the form needs to pick up a child, parents must provide **advance** written notification to the YMCA Youth Desk. If an emergency or unexpected need should arise for an unauthorized person to pick up the child, precluding advance written notification, a telephone call from the parents or legal guardian(s) must precede the arrival of the unauthorized person. Identification from this person will be required.

If only one parent has custody of the child and the other is not authorized to pick up or have access to the child, the parent must inform the program and must provide the YMCA with a certified copy of the Court Order/Restraining Order confirming that one parent does not have the right to pick-up the child from the YMCA. If there is any change in legal custody of the child while the child is enrolled in the program, the parent must immediately notify the program and must provide the YMCA with a certified copy of the notarized Court Order confirming the change in custody.

Transportation Policy

The YMCA provides transportation to designated Before/After School Program sites each day. Monitors are provided on each YMCA vehicle for your child's safety.

Disruptive behavior by a child on the van/bus is a serious safety concern and may cause the child to forfeit their right to transportation. This includes not remaining in seat, swearing or arguing, fighting, unnecessary noise, throwing trash out of window, hanging arms out of window and not following instructions of driver or monitor.

The following procedures will be used for a child with disruptive behavior:

- The monitor or driver will speak to the child about their behavior.
- If the behavior continues the child will be assigned a seat at the front of the bus or with the monitor.
- If the child refuses to move their seat and/or continues the behavior, a bus behavior report will be filled out and turned in to the site coordinator.
-

If a behavior is severe or dangerous a Bus Behavior Report will be filled out on the 1st offense. Bus Behavior reports will be dealt with in the following manner:

1st Report: Transportation Coordinator or Site Coordinator will speak with child

2nd Report: Coordinators will speak with parent

3rd Report: Child suspended from all YMCA programming for 1-3 days

4th Report: Parent and Child conference with Transportation & School Age Director to discuss termination from the YMCA program

If there are extenuating circumstances, the Transportation Coordinator should be contacted for assistance. If severe violence is involved, it may result in immediate suspension or termination from the program.

Accidents/Violations

The Transportation Coordinator will report all moving violations and accidents that occur while children are being transported to our insurance company and the Registry of Motor Vehicles. A designated YMCA staff will notify parents or guardians. If a moving violation or accident occurs while using transportation provided by the YMCA or a subcontractor, the Site Coordinator will notify the YMCA Executive Director 739-6955 and the Transportation Coordinator at 739-6955.

For Children Transported to The Program by Parents

Parents will sign their child in and out on the daily sign in sheets. The parent will make verbal or visual contact with the staff so the staff acknowledges the arrival of the child into the program space.

Disabled Vehicle

If a vehicle becomes disabled during transport the driver will contact the Transportation Director who will arrange for alternate transportation. If the bus stalls in an unsafe location, or other dangers exist, the driver and monitor will evacuate the children to a safe location.

For Emergencies:

The school reserves the right to transport or have transported any child in need of emergency care with or without parent written consent.

In the event a situation arises that could be life threatening an ambulance will be called immediately. The parent will be called to meet the child and staff member at the hospital. The designated staff will go with the child in the ambulance. The child's file will be taken, including permission forms and pertinent insurance information if the center has it.

Child Injuries

If a child is injured during the daily activities and if the injury is minor, a YMCA staff member certified in First Aid will administer first aid. If the injury requires outside medical attention, and is serious (life threatening), the child will be taken to the emergency room at the hospital by ambulance. The parent will be called and should meet them at the emergency room. If the injury requires medical attention, but is not serious, parent may choose to pick their child up at the center. An accident report will be filled out on all injuries -- minor or major.

Special note:

It is required that we have on file an up-to-date telephone number where parents can be reached during program hours. We must also have an emergency number for an alternate person who can

be reached if the parent is unavailable. These numbers must be kept up to date. Please notify the Center whenever phone numbers are changed.

Please refer to the Healthcare Policy and Procedure Guide for more comprehensive information.

Policy for Reporting Abuse & Neglect of Children

Child abuse is damage to a child for which there is no "reasonable" explanation. Child abuse includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual molestation and emotional abuse.

The increasing incidence of reported child abuse has become a critical national concern. It is a special concern of the YMCA because of the organization's role as an advocate for children and its responsibility for enhancing the personal growth and development of both children and adults in all YMCA programs.

For the protection of its children, families, members and employees, the YMCA of Greater Springfield has established policies to aid in the prevention and reporting of child abuse cases.

Any parent may request a complete copy of the YMCA Child Abuse Policy. All YMCA Child Care Staff are mandated Reporters to suspected cases of child abuse. This includes the reporting of parents who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT INFORMATION

The General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates to the Department of Early Education and Care the legal responsibility of promulgating and enforcing rules and regulations governing the operation of family child care, small group and school age and large group and school age child care.

These regulations, 606 CMR 7.00, establish standards for operation of family child care, small group and school age and large group and school age child care programs in the Commonwealth. The regulations require certain things of licensees (program owner) regarding their work with families. A summary of the required parent information, rights, and responsibilities are identified below.

Family Involvement

The following 606 CMR 7.08 requirements apply to all programs, including family child care, small group and school age and large group and school age child care. Additional requirements for family child care are found at 606 CMR 7.08(9). Additional requirements for small group and school age and large group and school age child care are found at 606 CMR 7.08(10).

The licensee must support and encourage a partnership with and the involvement of parents in the early education and care of their children.

Parent Communication

The licensee must develop a mechanism for and encourage ongoing communication with parents, and must be able to communicate effectively with families whose primary language is not English or who require alternative communication methods.

Parent Input

The licensee must have a procedure for allowing parental input in the development of program policies, which may include, but need not be limited to a suggestion box and individual or group parent meetings.

Parent Visits

The licensee must permit and encourage unannounced visits by parents to the program and/or to their child's room at any time while their child is present.

Written Information for Parents

The licensee must provide the following information to families in writing prior to enrollment of their child:

- notification that parents are welcome to visit the program unannounced at any time while their child is present; and that input from and communication with parents is encouraged;
- the frequency of children's progress reports;
- the program's policy regarding administration of medication;
- the procedures for meeting potential emergencies;
- the transportation plan;
- a program calendar noting closed days and hours of operation;
- the program's fee schedule, including any fees for late payment, late pick-up, field trips, special materials, etc.;
- the program's plan to provide positive and consistent guidance to children based on their individual needs and development;
- the program's criteria for excluding children from care due to serious illnesses, contagious diseases and reportable diseases in conformance with regulations and recommendations set by the Division of Communicable Disease Control, Department of Public Health;
- information regarding SIDS risk reduction practices, including the practice of sleeping infants on their backs;
- the procedures relating to children's records;
- notice that child educators are mandated reporters and must, by law, report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families;
- notice that the program is licensed by EEC, including the telephone number and address of the EEC regional office responsible for the program;
- a statement that parents may contact EEC for information regarding the program's regulatory compliance history.

Parent Conferences

The licensee must make educators available for individual conferences with parents at parental request.

Notifications to Parents

The licensee must inform parents:

- immediately of any injury which requires any medical care beyond minor first aid or of any emergency administration of non-prescription medication;
- immediately of any allegation of abuse or neglect involving their children while in the care and custody of the licensee;
- prior to or as soon as possible following any change in educators;
- at the end of the day regarding any minor first aid administered; in writing within 48 hours of any incident;
- whenever special problems and significant developments arise;
- whenever a communicable disease or condition has been identified in the program;
- in writing seven days prior to the implementation of any change in program policy or procedures;
- prior to the introduction of any pets into the program; of the use of any herbicides or pesticides, prior to their use whenever possible; and
- whenever the program deviates from the planned menu.

Parent Suggestions

Your questions, suggestions and concerns are important to the success of our program. If a staff member is not free to talk with you immediately, please leave your name and phone number, and someone will call you as soon as possible. A meeting can be scheduled.

Remember, you are your child's advocate. You should tell the staff if your child is having any difficulty at the Center. If your child exhibits inappropriate behavior at the Center, the Director and staff need your input. Let them know if changes are occurring at home that are affecting your child's mood or behavior. Do not let a potential problem arise and grow. Also, if your child enjoyed a particular event or project and you appreciate something special at the Center, please tell the staff. If you need a Spanish translator, the Assistant Director will be available.