



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

# **YMCA of Greater Springfield School Age Programs Parent Handbook**

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[www.springfieldy.org](http://www.springfieldy.org)

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## **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.

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 having a great year with you and your child.

A copy of the Parent Handbook can be found on our website, at [www.springfieldy.org](http://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 contact the Youth Development office by phone at 413-739-6955. We look forward to having your child join us.

## **Our Philosophy**

The YMCA of Greater Springfield is committed to the provision of quality, affordable childcare, and the belief that our staff serve 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 be provided an opportunity for 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. Our fully licensed program:

- Provides a safe, constructive alternative for school age childcare needs
- Welcomes and supports the diversity of our participants
- Works closely with your child's school to keep rules consistent by adhering to school policy
- Offer choices of activities for participants
- Provides information to and communication with caregivers to develop the best possible program for your children.

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.

## **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 childcare 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

## **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.

## **Locations**

Our programs are held at various locations throughout Springfield, Chicopee, and Hampden/Wilbraham. Programs are assigned to specific areas of the school building. Usage of the school space is at the discretion of individual principals and is subject to change. We appreciate the support of our schools that welcome our programs! Program sites are determined based on proximity of your child's school from one of our licensed program sites.

## **Enrollment Procedures**

To enroll your child in a YMCA school age program, the YMCA requires all registration paperwork to be complete and legible prior to your child's first day in the program. This includes 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.

Registration and all necessary documents should be turned in one of three ways: to the Drop-box located at the TSQ Youth Development Center, 1500 Main Street Springfield, MA 01115, by mail to the YMCA of Greater Springfield PO Box 16329 Springfield, MA 01115-5329, or by email to [schoolagereg@springfieldy.org](mailto:schoolagereg@springfieldy.org).

We will not be accepting paperwork in person nor will we accept payment at any of our off-site before and after school locations. Paperwork received incomplete will not be processed.

## **Hours and Days of Operation**

Our hours of operations vary based on the location attended. The YMCA will do its best to offer programming that aligns with the School District that your child is being served in (Springfield, Chicopee & Hampden/Wilbraham).

## **Absences**

To ensure the safety and whereabouts of your child, the parent/guardian must contact the Youth Development Center by noon to notify that your child will not be in attendance. If a child has more than 3 consecutive unexcused absences, 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 unexplained absences in a 12-month authorization may lose their New England Farm Workers Voucher or their EEC slot.

## **Half days**

Our programs will follow the School District's Calendar

## **Before School**

Before School care will be determined based on the School District's Calendar. Due to the complexity of a Hybrid, Remote and or a Phased in approach before school programs may vary.

## **After School**

After School care will be determined based on the School District's Calendar. Due to the complexity of a Hybrid, Remote and or a Phased in approach after school programs may vary.

## **Full Day Remote**

Full Day Remote will be determined based on the School District's Calendar. Due to the complexity of a Hybrid, Remote and or a Phased in approach after school programs may vary.

## **Staffing**

Our main objective is to nurture the developmental growth of each child. Staff are trained and committed to meeting the needs of all children. Our staff brings a multitude of experience and backgrounds to our childcare programs. Staff is required to complete an in-depth orientation program at the beginning of the school year. They are then required to attend additional trainings and hands-on workshops throughout the year to enhance their education and skills. All of our staff undergo a criminal background check and attend child abuse training and other YMCA childcare certification trainings. All staff are required to obtain First Aid and CPR certifications. The staff to child ratios is 1:13 as defined by EEC.

## **Typical Daily Schedule**

The Before and After School programs are designed to allow the children the opportunity to grow, learn and thrive in a safe educational environment.

## **Program Components**

- Character Development focusing on the Y Core Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility
- Literacy
- Arts, Drama and Music
- Science and Technology
- Homework Support
- Service Learning
- Social Competence and Conflict Resolution
- Healthy Snacks and Nutrition Education

- Physical Activity

## **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 Friday. Payments can only be made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), unless you are committing to pay for the entirety of the program upon registering.

Please be advised that notices to withdrawal your child from the program must be submitted in writing two weeks before the last intended date. Failure to provide a written notice will result in a non-refundable EFT withdrawal for normal programmed services. You will still be billed, and also be responsible for all fees through the duration of your two-week notice.

It is the parent's responsibility to renew 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.

***Disclaimer: We do not provide credits and refunds for holidays, sick days, inclement weather days, or emergency closures. For further details please contact the Youth Development Center.***

## **Tuition Assistance Programs**

The YMCA offers the following Tuition Assistance Programs: Financial Aid, EEC Contracted Slots, and vouchers through New England Farm Workers Council. To inquire about how you may qualify or further information, please contact the Youth Development Center at 413-739-6955.

## **Additional Fees**

### ***Insufficient Funds***

If your payment is returned, the YMCA of Greater Springfield reserves the right to add a \$15 fee to your account, that will be due on the next draft date. After 2 returned payments, an updated EFT form with new banking information must be submitted. Excessive returned payment fees may result in termination from the program.

### ***Field Trip Fees & Vacation Week***

Field trip fees are not included in our program rate but will be communicated on the permission slip. Fees must be paid before the date of the field trip.

To sign up for a field trip, accounts must be current at the time of registration. Deadlines set to turn in permission slips with payment are strictly enforced to account for ticket confirmation and staffing ratio. Exceptions will not be made.

Generally, field trips are planned for December, February and March vacation weeks. Permission slips will be passed out at the site in which your child attends.

**Due to COVID19 and the regulations set by the Department of Early Education and Care all field trips have been temporarily discontinued.**

### ***Special Event Fees***

On occasion, individual programs may host extracurricular activities or events at their sites. Parents may be asked for a small monetary or material donation to supplement the activity.

### ***Late Pick-up Fee***

The YMCA After School program closes at 5:30 PM, pick-ups made between 5:31 PM and 5:45 PM will result in a \$7.00 late fee per child. An additional \$13.00 late fee will be charged per child beginning at 5:46 PM and will continue to be charged every 15 minutes thereafter.

If we are unable to reach a parent, guardian, or emergency contact; and the child is still in our care at 6:30 PM, we will contact the Child-At-Risk Hot Line as required by the Department of Children and Families.

While we understand that emergencies arise, we request that parents notify us should there be one. The Y reserves the right to terminate enrollment for more than two late pick-ups in a span of a month's period time.

All penalty fees must be paid through EFT on the next draft date. If the fee is not paid, the YMCA of Greater Springfield reserves the right to deny participation from programs until payment is received in full.

### ***Special note:***

Please ensure that the YMCA has an up-to-date telephone number where you can be reached during program hours. Please also have an emergency number for an alternate person to be reached in the event that you are unavailable. Should the contact information need to be updated at any given time, please submit the change in writing to the Youth Development Center.

### **Delinquent Payments**

Outstanding balances due to delinquent payments of more than two weeks will result in termination. Terminated accounts with outstanding balances will not be allowed to participate in any other YMCA programs until the balances are paid in full.

### **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.

### **Drop Off & Pick Up**

The YMCA will only offer curbside drop off and pick up. Parents may not get out of the vehicle for any reason, unless instructed by our staff. Drop off will begin at 8:00 a.m. and will end 8:50 a.m.

We will not be accepting any participants after 8:50 a.m. unless a doctor's note is provided.

Parents are required to sign their child in with a staff and complete the verbal daily health screening. Parents that refuse to complete the screening will not be permitted to drop off their child(ren). Not signing in with a staff may result in an absence, excessive failure to sign in may result in termination.

## Daily Health Screening

The Department of Early Education and Care now requires a verbal health screening at the time of sign-in:

Today or in the past 24 hours, have you or any household members had any of the following symptoms?

- Fever (temperature of 100.0°F or above), felt feverish, or had chills?
- Cough?
- Sore throat?
- Difficulty breathing?
- Gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhea, nausea, vomiting)?
- Fatigue? (Fatigue alone should not exclude a child from participation.)
- Headache?
- New loss of smell/taste?
- New muscle aches?
- Any other signs of illness?

In the past 14 days, have you had close contact with a person known to be infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Please allow enough time for screening during check-in. Please be advised that masks will be required during pick-up and drop-offs for your safety and the safety of our staff. Parents and staff must sign written attestations daily regarding any household contacts with COVID-19, symptoms, or administered fever reducing medication. Individuals who decline to complete the screening will not be permitted to enter the program space.

## Authorized Releases

Children in the care of our programs will only be released to the parent/legal guardian(s) or persons authorized and identified on the Child's Authorization for Release Form. **A photo I.D. is required and will be asked for upon release of your child.**

Should you need a relative or friend not listed on the Child's Authorization Release Form to pick up in your absence, please provide the Youth Development Center a written notice in advance. If an emergency or unexpected need should arise for an unauthorized person to pick up, precluding advance written notification, a telephone call from the parent/legal guardian(s) must precede the arrival of the unauthorized person. Identification from this person will be required.

In the event that only one parent has custody of the child, the custodial parent must provide the program a certified copy of the Court Order/Restraining Order confirming that the non-custodial parent does not have the right to pick-up nor have access to information regarding the child. 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 provide the YMCA with a certified copy of the notarized Court Order confirming the change in custody.

## Income Tax Credit

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 childcare expenses to document your childcare costs for tax purposes.

## 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
11. COVID Release: understanding policies and procedures

### **Schedule/Record Changes**

All changes that need to be made to your account must be submitted in writing. Any changes over the phone will not be accepted. There is a \$25 fee for every request made after the first change made to the account.

### **Conclusion of the Program**

On the last day of the program, we ask that all medication be picked up by the parent/guardian. Any medication that has not been picked up will be brought to the YMCA of Greater Springfield and will be discarded accordingly after one week.

### **Medical and Drug Administration**

\*\*Children with chronic medical conditions that require either an Epi-Pen or inhaler to manage the condition are required to have an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) signed by a licensed health care practitioner, as well as the necessary medication, on site prior to the child starting care.

Medication for temporary illnesses will only be administered under the following guidelines:

- Prescription medication will not be administered to a child without written permission of a physician. The label on the prescription medicine is acceptable as the written consent. There must be instructions stating specific dosage, number of times per day, and criteria for the administration. Standing orders for medication are valid for one year from the date signed. No medication will be administered if the product is expired.
- A parent must give consent to administer the prescription by completing an Authorized Medication Form which must be signed and dated.
- Medication must be given to a staff member upon the child's arrival at the program. All medication is secured within a locked area.
- \*Please note that not all Before/After School sites have access to refrigerators. If your child's medication requires refrigeration, please speak to the Site Administrator prior to the start of the program to be sure accommodations can be made.
- All medications will be administered by the Site Coordinator or designated person.
- All medications must be in their original containers; no medication will be accepted in baggies, or unlabeled prescription bottles.
- Any unused medication is to be taken home that day unless other arrangements have been made. If any meds are left at a site, staff will call the MA Dept. of Health to receive proper instructions on how to dispose of medication.

- The medication you wish your child to receive must have been previously administered. This is to ensure your child does not have an allergic reaction to the product.
- If the staff does not have written consent from both a physician and a guardian, they will not administer any medication to a child. There are no exceptions.
- All staff will be trained in how to properly administer medication and will periodically be evaluated by the Child Care Director to ensure proper procedures are being followed.

## **Over the Counter Medication**

Non-prescription medication will not be administered.

## **Sunscreen and Bug Repellant**

Authorization forms for sunscreen and bug repellant are available upon request and must be completed and signed by a guardian before they will be administered. Parents or guardians must supply their own product.

## **Child Injuries**

All School Age Child Care staff is required to be certified in First Aid and CPR. If an injury is minor and can be taken care of by a staff person, appropriate treatment will be administered, and an injury report will be completed for parents to sign. If a staff member feels an injury may require additional medical treatment (but not emergency care), parents or guardians will be notified immediately to pick up their child and decide if they wish to seek medical attention. In the case of an injury that requires immediate medical treatment, the following steps will be taken:

An ambulance will be called.

The parent or guardian will be notified.

A School Age Child Care staff will accompany the child to the hospital

A YMCA staff member will remain with the child until a parent or guardian arrives

An incident report will be filled out on all injuries and a copy will be made available to the parent.

### ***Special note:***

Please ensure that the YMCA has an up-to-date telephone number where you can be reached during program hours. Please also have an emergency number for an alternate person to be reached in the event that you are unavailable. Should the contact information need to be updated at any given time, please submit the change in writing to the Youth Development Center.

*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 incidents 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.

## **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 may be offered), and when necessary, quiet time not 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 ensuring the safety of the group always.

Care will be taken in that all rules and limits are clearly explained to the children frequently, so that the child understands them 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 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 licensed childcare programs to use discipline techniques that require the use of any physical restraint.
- Children will not be confined to a swing, highchair, 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 childcare.
- 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 School Age Administrators.
- 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; these procedures will follow:

The staff will:

- Log 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 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 upon 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.

*\*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 result we do 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 reporters. In the event a staff member witnesses an act of bullying, they are to immediately intervene and notify their direct supervisor. If the incident is reported to a staff member, the staff is to notify the parent or guardian of the minor alleged victim/aggressor, their immediate supervisor, and an investigation will take place within 24 hours of notification.

## **Termination Policy**

The YMCA reserves the right to terminate childcare services immediately, if and when the health, welfare and/or safety of a child, other children, or staff are at stake. Parents/guardians will receive written documentation of the termination. Possible reasons for suspension and/or termination from the program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Overdue payment(s)
- Inappropriate physical and/or verbal behavior by a child or parent
- Chronic tardiness during pick-up hour (i.e. 3 offences of more than 10 minutes within a two-week period)
- A danger to him/herself
- A danger to others in the classroom
- Refusal to participate in the program
- Inability to benefit from the program
- Excessive and repeated disruption towards others
- Unable to follow the rules and expectations of the program
- Repeated use of offensive or obscene language (this also applies to parents/guardians)
- Repeated damage towards program property and/or materials
- Abusive to others
- Inappropriate parental behavior towards staff or any program participants

## **Protocol for termination:**

The YMCA commits to the following protocols prior to termination:

- Implement regular child guidance policy
- Schedule a parent conference to discuss concern
- Review the situation
- Describe what steps have been taken to help the child
- Solicit input and suggestions from the parent
- Briefly suspend from program
- Provide suggestions for parents, if appropriate
- Follow Referral Policy
- Inform parent of possibility of termination if no progress has been made during a specific time frame.
- 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 withdrawal from the program. Parents who fail to do so will be responsible to pay for the two-week period.

## **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.

Please see the following protocols that will be taken for disruptive behavior:

- The monitor or driver will redirect the child regarding 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 1<sup>st</sup> offense. Bus Behavior reports will be dealt with in the following manner:

1<sup>st</sup> Report: Transportation Coordinator or Site Coordinator will speak with child

2<sup>nd</sup> Report: Coordinators will speak with parent

3<sup>rd</sup> Report: Suspension from all YMCA programming for 1-3 days

4<sup>th</sup> 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 YMCA 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.

## **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 childcare, 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 childcare, small group and school age and large group and school age childcare 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 childcare, small group and school age and large group and school age childcare. Additional requirements for family childcare are found at 606 CMR 7.08(9). Additional requirements for small group and school age and large group and school age childcare 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.

## **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 plans.
- 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 to schedule a meeting.

Remember, you are your child's advocate. You should tell the staff if your child is having any difficulty at the program. If your child exhibits inappropriate behavior while in our care, the Director and staff need to be informed. Keep a transparent line of communication and inform staff of any changes that may be occurring at home that can potentially affect your child's mood or behavior. We would like to hear positive feedback as well.

## **COVID-19 Protocol**

### **Entry to Program**

Drop off and pick up of children must be outside the entrances or curbside.

### **Daily Screenings**

Daily screenings will be required and must be signed by a parent/guardian.

### **Physical Distancing**

Children and staff will practice physical distancing.

### **Hand Washing**

Children will be required to wash and sanitize their hands upon entering the center.

### **If Your Child Shows Symptoms of Being Sick**

Children with any symptoms related to being sick in any way will not be allowed to attend.

### **If Your Child Gets Sick While at The Center**

Any child that gets sick while at the center will be separated into a designated isolation area.

The parent/guardian will be contacted and must pick up the child immediately. The child will only be able to return after being symptom-free for 72 hours.

### **Cleaning Procedures**

In addition to our regular cleaning and sanitizing procedures, we are implementing more stringent cleaning policies as outlined by EEC. Staff will frequently disinfect/sanitize regularly used surfaces throughout the day and everyone will be washing hands multiple times a day.

### **PPE for staff**

Staff will wear a cloth face covering whenever six feet of social distancing is not possible. Children over the age of two will be encouraged to wear a mask.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding of our new and necessary procedures. We will continually keep parents/guardians up to date with any changes or new procedures that may be required to ensure everyone's safety.

### **Masks**

All School Age children are required to wear a mask. Parents/Guardians are required to provide masks for their children. In the case of an emergency, the YMCA of Greater Springfield will have kids mask available. Children will receive a couple mask breaks throughout the day.

### **Food**

Participants may bring their own lunch. Peanuts and tree nuts are not allowed. Please be advised that refrigeration will not be provided, so we ask that all food be shelf stable or kept cold with an ice pack. In Addition, microwaves will not be provided, we ask that you heat the food up at home and bring it in a thermos.

Food cannot be shared amongst participants nor will we accept any food from outside vendors or participants for any reason. The YMCA will provide free breakfast, lunch, and snack to all that qualify and have returned a completed meal form. All meals provided will be sealed in a sanitized container from the distributor. Food that has not been purchased through our facilities will not be allowed for general consumption on the properties.

If you have any questions, please contact the Youth Development Center at 413-739-6955 or email [schoolagereg@springfielddy.org](mailto:schoolagereg@springfielddy.org)