

Welcome to the  
DOW BAY AREA FAMILY YMCA

## CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER PROGRAMS



**Policies/Rules are subject to change at any time.  
You will be given as much notice as possible when changes are made.**

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## OVERVIEW

Welcome to the YMCA Child Development Program. This parent handbook provides valuable information about your child's activities, the Center's philosophy, policies, and general information about our program. Parents and the director will look at this together before a child's admission to the Center. Any questions parents have about this manual are referred to the Center Early Childhood Director.

## YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

We put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

## PHILOSOPHY

The YMCA Child Development Center is geared to the individual needs of children. Our definition of quality is formed using standards established by the YMCA of the USA, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and most importantly the needs of the individual children and parents we serve. Each room provides a play-centered environment with a wide range of materials and developmentally appropriate activities, which allow children to manipulate, discover, explore, make choices, and create according to their interests. Each child is recognized and valued as a unique individual with a capacity for growth and development. Through group and individual activities, each child is encouraged to develop emotionally, socially, creatively, and intellectually, at his/her own rate.

The essential component of our childcare program is our staff. Staff are trained in child growth and development and set age-appropriate expectations. Staff guide and direct children with warmth, concern, acceptance, approval, and respect, enabling children to develop a strong, positive self-concept. A warm responsive atmosphere is provided to foster trust and autonomy and encourage cooperation, communication, and respect for others.

Another component of our philosophy is that families should not be turned away due to an inability to pay for quality childcare. To this end, we have financial assistance available to assist parents in affording YMCA childcare. Donations are also welcome. Additionally, we accept DHS subsidies from the State of Michigan for childcare.

The YMCA believes strongly that quality childcare is only possible when parents are involved in the make-up of the program, directly or indirectly. Varieties of options are available for parents to participate in some way.

### **Strengthening Families Philosophy**

We believe in and follow the Strengthening Families Initiative. We strive to engage families in activities that foster leadership, enhance understanding of child development and growth to promote a better line of communication between homes and our YMCA programming. This philosophy is based on the following protective factors: Parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and social/emotional competence of children.

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY PLAN

The Y is made up of people of all ages and from every walk of life working side by side to strengthen communities. We work together to ensure that everyone, regardless of gender, income, faith, sexual orientation or cultural background, has the opportunity to live life to its fullest. We share the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility – everything we do stems from it. We recognize that there is diversity within our childcare and the larger community. We strive to provide a culturally competent classroom and embrace the unique aspects of each child and their family. As such, our care area uses items in the classroom to show differences and promote equity to our kids. Some examples: trying ethnic foods that represent diverse cultures, illustrative books, singing songs, learning Spanish, etc. In childcare, we seek to create and promote innovative opportunities which reveal the natural potential in every child. We desire to help them gain a better understanding and admire the cultural differences in their relationships with one another. Our staff aim to lead by example as they continue to work effectively in cross-cultural situations to promote respect for all.

Our plan to create an environment which promotes cultural competence in our learning, growth, equity, and acceptance for all children, staff, and families will include the following strategies:

- Ensure that all individuals are treated equally and with kindness and respect at all times.

- Welcome all family members to meetings, happenings, and events.

- Work diligently with children, staff, and families to remove any biases and promote understanding and tolerance.

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Wherever possible, incorporate individual home cultures and traditions into the program and incorporate that into our curriculum.

Get to know our children and families and find out what is culturally important to them.

Encourage staff (and implement in our yearly PD plan requirements) to attend (online or in person) professional learning opportunities in cultural diversity and competence/anti bias.

Work with families to develop and achieve goals with families.

Display family pictures.

Encouraging a child's/family's first language to be spoken

Implement a "cultural celebration" which could include a show and tell time to share traditions/cultures.

Encourage staff, children, and families to share traditions and cultures as they wish.

Stock each classroom with educational materials which reflect diverse languages, ethnicities, and cultures (i.e. puzzles, puppets, music, dramatic play materials/clothing, utensils, books, manipulatives, food).

## CURRICULUM

The YMCA of the USA believes learning takes place as children touch, manipulate, and experiment with things and interact with people daily. At YMCA Child Development Centers, children's play is an essential component of our curriculum and through their play and experiences and projects which are developed to guide our daily activities and interactions. The YMCA of the USA has embraced Creative Curriculum as its curriculum of choice.

The Creative Curriculum has ten core content areas: literacy, mathematics, science, and technology, physical, language, cognitive, social/emotional, language acquisition, social studies, and the arts. The YMCA has identified additional content areas: healthy habits and social, moral, and spiritual development.

By using the Creative Curriculum as our framework, we focus on

1. How children develop and learn
2. The learning environment in which children learn
3. What children learn
4. The role of the teacher
5. The role of the family

Our program uses the Creative Curriculum (COR Advantage) individual assessments and child portfolios to assess the children's developmental progress annually. The teaching staff and families discuss the results of the assessments and plan for continued growth throughout the year, (formally at conferences and informally whenever is needed)

## LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Play is a vital part of a child's growth during the preschool years. Children learn best through play. Play is crucial to the development of their social, emotional, language, physical and cognitive skills. Play is their work!

Visit our preschool & childcare classrooms at any time and you will see the children engaged in many different kinds of play:

- When you see a child working hard to put a puzzle together, they are learning how to problem solve and enhancing their fine motor skills.
- If you happen to see a child dressed up making dinner in the dramatic play area, they are learning how to take care of a family and a home.
- If you see a child dancing with a brightly colored scarf, they are building their large motor development and using creativity.
- If you happen to see children playing a game together, they are learning how to take turns and cooperate.
- You may see children building large barns with blocks or a fenced in area for the animals, as they play, they are learning to develop a sense of ownership and pride in something they have created.

The YMCA Early Childhood Programs provide a terrific opportunity for your child to enhance their value of play. Whether by themselves or in a group, your child's play is created when there is a connection, exploration, or something that has captured their interest. We invite you to visit our classrooms and see the children learning through play each day.

## **TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE** (younger/older toddler, preschool)

From time the Center opens

7:00 a.m. Arrival/Child Choice/Morning Snack

8:00-9:00 a.m. Breakfast/table toys

9:00-10:00 a.m. Small group/group meeting  
10:00-11:30 a.m. Choice time/outside/gross motor  
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Lunch  
12:30-2:30 p.m. Rest time/quiet activities  
2:30-3:30 p.m. Snack/table toys  
3:30-4:30 p.m. Small group/group meeting  
4:30-to the time the center closes Choice time/outside/gross motor/departure

*Please note, this is a typical schedule. Each classroom will have a personalized daily schedule to guarantee children's developmental needs are being met.*

To assure that the changing developmental and individual needs of each infant are met, the program will permit infants to eat and sleep on demand and will not be required to function as a whole group. Teachers will plan developmentally appropriate activities based on the age of the child.

## OUTDOOR TIME

Outdoor time is considered an integral part of our program. All children will be expected to go outside daily. Our daily schedules allow for each class to go outside at least 30 minutes, 2 times a day. Extreme temperatures may determine limited play. In case of severe in-climate weather, we will use our gym. It is assumed that if the child is well enough to attend the center, he/she is well enough to go outside. Physical exercise is a critical factor in each child's overall well-being and development. PLEASE dress your child for the weather. On occasion, we will be using the green space in the park across the street from the Y.



### YMCA Childcare Weather Outside Guidelines

- \*20 degrees and above – Outside Time
- \*11-19 degrees or below - Abbreviated Outside Time (15 min)
- \*10 degrees or below – Stay Inside

## ASSESSMENT AND SCREENING POLICY (Parent Teacher Conferences)

The Bay Area Family YMCA Child Development Centers conduct assessments on all children at least twice annually (generally fall and spring). This ongoing process documents and assesses children's knowledge, behaviors, and then plans for their learning. The YMCA uses the COR Advantage assessment tool for childcare/childcare preschool and TS GOLD for the GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program) program as the framework for monitoring children's development throughout the year. Through these intentional observations and anecdotal notes, the teaching staff can glean a comprehensive picture of the developmental needs of the individual child as well as the classroom, which will be the basis of planning for small, large group, and classroom environment planning. In addition to the assessment, the YMCA staff utilize the Ages and Stages Screening Tool as another form of assessment and monitoring children's development. This will be conducted upon enrollment and throughout the year as deemed necessary. Anecdotal notes are notes taken by teachers throughout the day and help the teaching team understand the developmental level each child is currently at and how they can scaffold their learning to a higher level. The teaching staff will conduct formal parent-teacher conferences with families (once or twice per year or as needed) to discuss the child's progress and together create a plan based on the child's individual needs. If you are concerned about any developmental or social issue with your child, you may meet at any time for an informal conference with your child's teaching staff. If the teaching staff and/or the parents feel there is a need for further formal assessment or assistance based on our evaluation, the YMCA will provide additional resources or refer the family to the appropriate agency. All results of the assessments are kept confidential.

## CLASSROOM TRANSITIONS

With regular assessments of your child's overall development, we can determine when your child is ready to move up to the next classroom. When they are ready to move up, the lead teacher in your child's classroom will start to discuss

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the transition with you. The Early Childhood Director will give you a "transition" letter full of information regarding a successful transition. Children visit the classroom environment often before transitioning (parents can too!) before moving up, so they are comfortable and secure with the transition. The staff in the new room will get to know your little one too as they will be fully involved in the transition. In our preschool classroom, many of those children will transition to kindergarten at the end of each year. We will engage them in many transitional activities at the end of the school year to ensure a successful transition to kindergarten. We will also provide a parent enrichment night and provide lots of useful kindergarten readiness information and activities for a more successful transition.

## PARENT/FAMILY COMMUNICATION

We are always available to communicate with you about anything! You can reach our Early Childhood Director by calling 989-895-8596 (YMCA front desk) or through her direct line, 989-778-3457. She can also be reached via email at [wplewa@ymcabaycity.org](mailto:wplewa@ymcabaycity.org). You can communicate with each classroom teacher via email or in person at drop off or pick up. However, please note that if contacting a teacher during the day, they are instructed NOT to have their phones with them as they are providing direct, quality care for your children. They will get back to you during down time (like at quiet time). If you need to talk to someone right away, please contact the Early Childhood Director directly, and she will relay your message to the teaching team. We want to provide you with as many communication modes, so please tell us which is most convenient for you, and we will do that. If there are other people in your family (grandparents, stepdad/mom, aunt, etc.) that you need us to communicate with, let us know and make sure those people are listed on your child's emergency card. We also use ClassDojo for parent/teacher communication.

We also encourage 2-way communication by: inviting families to informal gatherings, offering parent/family nights, collection of survey responses and implementing changes, conducting parent teacher conferences and homevisits (GSRP), providing monthly newsletters with classroom information.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Dow Bay Area Family YMCA Child Development Center maintains confidentiality and will respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information (including health and assessment information) and intrusion into family life. However, when we believe a child's welfare is at risk, we will share confidential information with agencies and individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members, program personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality shall require familial consent (except in cases of child abuse and/or neglect).

## LICENSING NOTEBOOK

- Notice of the availability of the center's licensing notebook. **(CENTER MUST CHECK ONE)**
  - The center keeps a licensing notebook containing a summary sheet, all licensing inspections and special investigation reports, and related corrective action plans for the last 5 years. The licensing notebook is available to parents/guardians during regular business hours. Reports from at least the past three years are available at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).
  - The center does not keep a licensing notebook, but internet is available onsite. Reports from at least the last three years are available at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

## ADMISSION

**We require each child to be in attendance for 3-5 days minimum each week.** Each spot is considered a full-time spot (you pay a flat weekly rate whether your child comes to care 3-5 days). Children will be enrolled first come first serve, regardless of nationality, race, gender, or creed. It is the policy of the YMCA to accept enrollment with special needs on a trial basis if needed. Every attempt will be made to serve children with a variety of needs.

Before a child can begin attending the program, the parent/guardian is obligated to submit to the center the following items:

- **Bank draft agreement**
- **Enrollment packet forms**
- **Child information card**
- **Health appraisal form (physical) along with immunizations**
- **Immunizations Waiver (if applicable)**
- **Birth Certificate/Proof of residency/Proof of income/GSRP enrollment forms (GSRP program)**

## WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

If you are planning to leave the center, you are responsible for giving two weeks' advance written notice to the Early Childhood Director. The family is responsible for paying for the full two (2) weeks. If a parent withdraws a child without two weeks' advance notice, the family is responsible for paying for two full weeks.

## GRIEVANCE POLICY FOR PARENT/GUARDIANS

This organization believes parents/guardians have valuable thoughts and insights to share regarding our operations. Accordingly, this organization encourages parents/guardians to share opinions, suggestions, concerns, questions and/or grievances about our policies, personnel, and/or other matters impacting the organization.

In general, the best person initially to bring opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to is Wendy Plewa, Early Childhood Director. However, to the extent the concerns relate to Wendy Plewa, Early Childhood Director or to the extent a consumer or parent/guardian believes Wendy Plewa, Early Childhood Director did not fully address a matter, parents/guardians may direct their opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to the next level of management or directly to the CEO.

To remedy concerns that appear to have been ignored or unresolved after initial reporting, utilize this formal grievance procedure. This procedure provides for a timely, thorough and objective investigation of the following concerns:

Inappropriate Behavior by Employees/Volunteers;

Inappropriate Behavior by Consumers;

Retaliation; and/or;

Whistleblower complaints.

Written Complaint Required for Formal Process (See Wendy Plewa for Grievance Form)

Verbal complaints are encouraged, particularly for issues that may be easily and expeditiously resolved, but a written complaint is required to initiate this grievance process.

To ensure a timely and effective response, complaints should include the following information to the extent possible:

- 1) The name(s) of individuals(s) involved;
- 2) The date(s) the behavior occurred;
- 3) The name(s) of any known witness(es);
- 4) A summary of the conduct meriting the grievance including:
  - a. The behavior complained of and/or the alleged policy or legal violation(s);
  - b. Direct quotes when relevant and available; and
  - c. Any relevant documentation.
- 5) The remedy sought by the individual making the complaint.

Timeline

Parents/guardians who themselves have a complaint or who are aware of behavior meriting a complaint, must provide the above described written complaint via email to Wendy Plewa, Early Childhood Director at [wplewa@ymcabaycity.org](mailto:wplewa@ymcabaycity.org) within 10 business days as the purpose of this policy is to timely and objectively resolve complaints. Wendy Plewa, Early Childhood Director will meet with the parent/guardian to hear their concern and attempt to resolve the complaint within 10 business days.

Following that meeting, Wendy Plewa, Early Childhood Director, a Dow Bay Area Family YMCA Director, and/or the CEO will provide a brief written response to the parent/guardian who brought the complaint no later than 10 business days, which will include brief written findings on the issues raised and relief sought.

If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the written response, the individual who brought the complaint may submit an appeal to the CEO no later than 10 business days. The CEO will meet with the parent/guardian to hear their concern and attempt to resolve the complaint within 10 business days.

Following that meeting, the CEO will provide a written response to the parent/guardian who brought the complaint no later than 10 business days that includes brief written findings on the issues raised and relief sought.

The CEO is the final arbiter of grievance matters at this organization.

Investigation

Wendy Plewa, Early Childhood Director, a Dow Bay Area Family YMCA Director, and/or the CEO will thoroughly investigate the issues raised in the grievance and will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties involved to the extent possible by law. All parties must cooperate with the investigation.

If the organization determines a violation of policy or law has occurred, the organization will

take appropriate action, up to and including termination and notification of external authorities.

#### Retaliation

This organization strictly prohibits retaliation against consumers and/or parents/guardians for reporting, filing, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by the organization or a federal or state law enforcement agency or court. Consumers and/or parents/guardians should report any suspected retaliation to Wendy Plewa, Early Childhood Director, a Dow Bay Area Family YMCA Director, and/or the CEO immediately after becoming aware of it. Any report of retaliatory conduct will be objectively, timely and thoroughly investigated. If a report of retaliation is found to be valid, the organization will take appropriate remedial action, up to and including discharging the individual(s) responsible. This organization will not retaliate against any consumer or parent/guardian for raising a complaint and will not knowingly permit retaliation by management or other employees.

#### Publication and Communication to Parents/Guardians

This Grievance Policy must be shared with parents/guardians annually and must be included in any organization handbook or manual. Any changes to this policy will be communicated in writing to parents/guardians via email on file.

## ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT

Each family must have a signed enrollment agreement on file. Upon signing this agreement, the parent is held responsible for all charges detailed in the agreement. Any changes to the enrollment agreement must be in writing with two (2) weeks' notice.

### **Registration Fee**

A non-refundable registration fee of \$70 is required per child. (For fee structure by class, please ask the director).

### **Multi-Child Discount**

A family will receive a discount for each additional child enrolled in the center. The discount will be applied to the lowest tuition rate(s).

## HEALTH PLAN

Our health plan is extremely important to keep our staff and all the children and families in our care safe. Physicals and immunizations must be updated regularly (yearly for infants/wobblers/tykes and every 2 years for explorers/early preschool/preschool). We will keep track of when your child's physical/immunizations need to be updated and let you know. You will need to make sure this is updated as soon as possible. Failure to meet these basic requirements, as set by the Michigan Department of Public Health, in absence of a valid waiver, requires the childcare program director to exclude the child from any childcare program. Local health departments may set requirements that exceed and take precedence over these minimum requirements. Parents are required to update the center with the child's immunization and physical records annually.

### **Termination Clause**

If for some reason the center feels that we are not the right fit for your child or if the child has a problem adjusting or is not comfortable with us, we may suggest an alternative option for your child and/or terminate our enrollment contract with you. The director may need to call a meeting with the parents to create a family plan and/or as a last resort, the child may be asked to leave the center. If **you** choose to leave the center, the withdrawal procedure will need to be followed. **Two weeks un-notified absence will be considered self-termination.**

## HOURS OF OPERATION / HOLIDAYS

The YMCA child development center will be open Monday through Friday from 7am-6pm (except the closing days listed below).

The center will be closed on the following days:



*Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Day After Independence Day (July 5th)  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Friday after Thanksgiving  
Christmas Eve  
Christmas Day  
New Year's Eve  
New Year's Day*

The Center will try to remain open despite adverse weather conditions. In the event of severe weather, closings will be posted on local TV and radio stations. Parents will still be charged their regular rate if the center does close due to holidays, severe weather, or any other unforeseen occurrence. (Exception: On weeks that include a federal holiday, which results in care being provided for 3 days or fewer in the week, the weekly rate will be discounted by 20%).

## **FEES / PAYMENTS**

See separate fee sheet attached. Parents will be aware of the amounts of their payments and payment due dates upon signing the enrollment agreement. We do not deduct absences, sick days, childcare days off, or holidays from your fee.

We are a pre-pay center so accounts will be charged every Friday (for the next week of care). All childcare tuition payments will be made via bank/credit card draft. There is a \$25 charge for all returns or declines. Any outstanding accrued account balance over \$100 will need to be paid as soon as possible (or payment arrangements made -- \$25 minimum per week). Any large account balance not paid in full, or arrangements not made could result in your child not being able to come to care until it is paid in full, or a payment arrangement is made. IF your child is approved for DHHS payments, we will need to have a copy of your approval letter BEFORE they start coming to care. DHHS only pays a portion of the bill; parents are required to pay what DHHS does not cover.

Each childcare family is eligible for one tuition free week in the calendar year (Jan 1st-Dec 31st, must be a full time child, attending all year, and in care for at least 6 months and in good financial standing before requesting the tuition free week). A full week must be taken; no adjustment for a portion of a week will be made. The Early Childhood Director must be notified, in writing, 30 days prior to date of the planned tuition free week for the credit of tuition to apply.

**Spot Holding fee:** If you are not yet ready to enroll your child but would like to guarantee a spot in any room, you will need to pay a spot holding fee of our regular tuition fee per week. We offer YMCA scholarships (if needed). No discounts are applied for this fee.

## **LATE PICK-UP FEES**

We request that all children be picked up on time. A late fee of \$1.00 per child for every minute after the center closes (6:00p) will be charged to your account. We understand that an emergency can occur, or some special problem may arise occasionally. If this should happen, late fees will still be assessed, but a courtesy call is appreciated. After 15 minutes past closing, the emergency contact people on your card will be contacted. After one hour, Child Protective Services will be notified.

## **STAFF RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN OUTSIDE OF THE YMCA PROGRAM**

Staff may not be alone with children they meet in the YMCA programs outside the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to the staff's home.

## **DROP OFF / PICK UP**

Drop off time is between 7-9 am and pick up time is between 4-6 pm. Parents must always accompany their children into the center. Currently, we are asking parents to please stay on the rug (or just inside the door) to drop off/pick up their child. Siblings are not allowed in the room. There is an attendance sheet where staff will note the date and time of arrival and who dropped off. When the child is picked up, the same information will be noted. No child will be released to a parent unless they come into the center. No child will be released to a person not noted on the child's information card. If someone other than a parent is to pick up, parents should notify the center of this change.

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Anyone picking up a child needs to be 18 or over. If someone other than a parent is dropping off or picking up your child for the first time (until they become familiar), we require them to show their PHOTO ID.

## **NUTRITION PLAN/FOOD SERVICE**

\*\*\* WE ARE A NUT FREE CENTER! \*\*\* Our Childcare Program is always striving to encourage the best possible nutrition and physical activity to keep our bodies healthy. We appreciate support from all our parents and families in promoting healthy eating and exercise habits. Our staff is committed to accommodating medically based diets, food allergies, or other dietary needs. Please talk to the Early Childhood Director or lead teacher about how we can best accommodate your child's dietary needs, if needed. We support healthy eating with all staff joining in during all eating times. I will also be sending home articles on nutrition and healthy eating throughout the year. Parents will provide breakfast/lunch/am and pm snack. (Unless the YMCA has a grant for food service in which we will provide breakfast/lunch and parents provide the snacks. (We also provide all the meals/snacks if your child is enrolled in the GSRP preschool program). WE DO NOT USE A MICROWAVE TO WARM UP FOOD. When providing meals/snacks, please warm the food prior to coming to care and you can use a thermos to keep things warm or provide cold foods. Please provide all the utensils needed for the meals and snacks. Also, please provide a water bottle so your child can access water all day long. Please also tell me if you have difficulty providing any food for your child, and I will be happy to assist you.

If the YMCA provides the meals, the menu will be sent to you via email and also posted in the classroom. Children with special dietary needs, such as those with allergies or those from vegetarian families, will work with the Early Childhood Director to accommodate such needs. All food allergies must have a written doctor's statement of the allergy.

Mealtimes allow children the chance to make choices, develop relationships, practice self-help skills, and learn the fine art of conversation. Meals at the YMCA Child Development Center have a relaxed atmosphere, and attractive physical set-up. Children participate in helping with meal set-up, as well as serving their own food. Adults are facilitators helping children learn how to eat a variety of foods, pour and scoop, butter and cut.

Meals are primarily served family style with an adult sitting with and supervising children. Children clean up their own spills (with help from their friends) fostering independence.

From the end of the BCPS school year through to the beginning of the next school year (summer food program), we have the Bay City Public Schools Summer Lunch program here at the Y. Any child under the age of 18 is eligible for the breakfasts/lunches, the Y provides am and pm snack. Every summer a meal calendar will be provided, and the teachers just ask that you notify them if your child will be taking advantage of this program, as a count is given to the BCPS lunch program each day. This service is provided free of charge.

**Infant Room Care: Parents** will provide all formula or milk and all food (breakfast, lunch, snacks, etc.) plus all utensils for the child to drink or eat with. Please use a lunch box to bring in all meals or snacks AND label the box with your child's first and last name. Please also label ALL your child's food items with your child's first and last name to avoid mix-ups. Each child will have their own place in the fridge for bottles/lunchboxes. Children will always wash their hands with soap and water before enjoying a meal or snack. PLEASE provide healthy food for meals and snacks. NO candy or pop, please!

All bottles need to be premade. Any unused portions in bottles will be discarded one hour after opening and will not be used again. Each bottle and nipple will be used only once and sent home at the end of the day. Any bottle liner used will be used once and discarded after use. Smaller infants will be held when fed. PLEASE label all bottles with your child's first and last name and date.

Breast milk may be supplied in a multi-day supply and kept in the refrigerator for up to 4 days or kept in the freezer for no more than 2 weeks and MUST be labeled with first/last name/date.

WE DO NOT USE A MICROWAVE TO WARM UP FOOD. When providing meals/snacks, you can use a thermos that will keep the food warm until eating. All food that your child brings for mealtimes needs to be in the original container or covered and labeled as to the contents, date of opening, and child's name. Food untouched by saliva can be stored for up to 36 hours. All other food will be discarded. We cannot wash and reuse any plate, cup, or utensil, so please provide enough plates, cups, and utensils for multiple feedings throughout the day.

**Nursing Mothers:** The Y supports nursing mothers in our facility-YMCA members, guests, and staff. Mothers are welcome to nurse their children in any areas which are open to the public at the Y. Designated nursing rooms are also provided at all centers and are identified by signage for the comfort and privacy of nursing mothers, if desired.

## **CARING FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (Policies/Plans)**

Childcare programs provide public accommodation and therefore must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Childcare programs should be committed to meeting the needs of all children, regardless of special health care needs or disabilities. As the number of children with chronic health conditions such as asthma, allergies, and diabetes increases, as well as the number of children with emotional or behavioral issues, the ability of programs to plan for and include all children is critical.

Inclusion of children with special needs has been shown to enrich the childcare experience for all staff, and children and families of enrolled children. The Dow Bay Area Family YMCA is committed to serving parents and helping young children with special needs achieve success in our childcare and preschool programs. Our programs provide opportunities for children with special needs to interact with peers, develop self-esteem, learn in the least restrictive environment and, most importantly, be a child first.

1. Children with special needs will be accepted into our program under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
2. All families will be treated with dignity and with respect for their individual needs and/or differences.
3. The Dow Bay Area Family YMCA will be responsible for ensuring that confidentiality about special needs is maintained for all families and staff in the program.
4. Children with special needs will be given the opportunity to participate in the program to the fullest extent possible. To accomplish this, the YMCA may consult with the local Intermediate School District, Community Mental Health, Catholic Charities, and the Department of Human Services as needed, provided parental permission is granted. Inclusion of program staff on IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) and IEP case conferences is desired to ensure the YMCA childcare program provides the most supportive environment possible.
6. All staff will receive general training on the benefits of inclusion of children with special needs and training on specific accommodations that any child in their classroom may need.
7. The individual written plan of care for children with special care needs will be followed in all emergency situations.
8. Accommodations will be made to the environment, schedule, and materials as needed and as possible
9. Transitions of children into and out of the program will be planned in advance.
10. We will work to make the physical environment as barrier free as possible.
11. All children will be screened annually and will be referred to the local ISD if needed.

## **MEDICATION**

All medication, including ointment, sunscreen, bug spray, aspirin, dietary supplements, or individual special medical procedures will be administered to the child only with prior written permission from the parent. All medication must be in the original container. Prescription medication must have a pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, instructions, and name and strength of the medication. This medicine will be given in accordance with those instructions. Parents are responsible for providing liquid measuring syringes or measuring spoons for administering medication. If using a syringe, please mark the appropriate amount. The center will maintain a written record of the time and amount given, who administered the medication, and the child receiving it for all medications. If your child has a medical condition that requires injection medications (epi-pen, insulin shots, seizure medications), families must submit an emergency action plan signed by your child's physician. Key childcare staff have annual training on how to administer medication, including injections.

## **SICK STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, AND CHILDREN**

It is the policy of the center to temporarily exclude staff, volunteers, and children from the Child Development Center who may be infectious or who demonstrate physical symptoms that require continual one-to-one care. (Please see COVID sickness plan for updated information).

### ***Guidelines for excluding sick staff, volunteers, and children from the Child Development Center***

1. Fever over 100.4 degrees
2. Recurring vomiting

3. Diarrhea (more than 3X)
  4. Eye discharge (conjunctivitis is extremely contagious)
  5. Excessive cough and/or nasal discharge (green or yellow in color)
  6. Any unidentified rash
- R 400 8155(5)**

### **WHEN A CHILD MAY RETURN TO THE CENTER**

1. The child's temperature has been below 100.4 degrees for 24 hours without Tylenol or aspirin.
2. The child has been diagnosed as having a bacterial infection and has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
3. It has been 24 hours since the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea without medication.
4. The nasal discharge is not thick, yellow, or green.
5. Eyes are no longer discharging, or the condition has been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours.
6. The rash has subsided, or the physician has determined that the rash is not contagious.

Occasionally a written note from the child's physician will be required by the center for a child to be re-admitted. Please call the center and let us know if your child will not attend on a scheduled day. If your child becomes ill while at the center, you will be called to take your child home. We would like you to pick your child up within one hour of the phone call. We strongly suggest that you have an alternate plan of action for childcare to cover these situations.  
R 400.8146 (1) (h)

### **Toileting**

It is our policy to begin toileting independence when the child is ready, but not before 24 months. Research has shown that most children do not have sufficient bowel or bladder control before this age. Boys tend to be ready after 30 months and girls slightly earlier. If you feel your child is ready before that age, please make an appointment with the director. The center staff will work with you when your child is ready.

## **INJURIES/ILLNESS/INCIDENTS/ACCIDENT PROCEDURES**

In the event a child is hurt in any way or becomes ill, staff will initiate the response process by assessing the situation and executing the appropriate emergency procedures.

**Illness:** If a child becomes ill while in care (high fever over 100.4, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, any prolonged discomfort, change in child's health, etc.) staff will call parents to pick up and isolate the child in a safe and comfortable place to wait to be picked up.

**Incident/accident/Injury:** Parents will be notified immediately upon notification of incident or awareness of incident, by a phone call, and staff will call 911, if needed, for serious or potentially serious **accidents/injuries** (exp. head injury, excessive bleeding, broken limb, visible bruising, scratch, bite mark, seizure or **incidents**, (i.e. inappropriate discipline, lost child or unsupervised child, inappropriate touching by another child or staff).

We will also notify our licensing consultant, if applicable, and verbally report the incident/severe injury/accident, fill out the appropriate licensing form, and submit. Any minor injuries/incidents (exp. scraped knee, fall with no mark that does not involve the head, etc.) will be logged in our communication binder and verbally reported to parent at pick up.

## **CHILD DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The YMCA Early Childhood Program has been developed to provide a warm, positive, loving environment which meets the children's daily needs. The classrooms are laid out to encourage fewer problems through visual aids and boundaries. We teach and encourage the children to use "conflict resolution" techniques to work problems out themselves, with us as facilitators. However, there are times when they are not able to work it out themselves and other discipline problems may occur. The following discipline guidelines have been developed in support of this environment.

Our staff will always use positive methods of discipline (Conscious Discipline techniques) which will encourage self-control, self-direction, increased self-esteem, and cooperation. NO TIME OUTS. The staff will explain to the child why certain behaviors may be inappropriate and help the child know and understand what he/she should be saying or doing. We will also employ the following steps to reach a resolution:

### **6 STEPS IN RESOLVING CONFLICTS (HIGHSCOPE)**

- **Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.** Place yourself between the children, on their level.

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- **Acknowledge children's feelings.** Say something simple such as "You look really upset."
- **Gather information.** Ask "What's the problem?" Do not ask "Why" questions.
- **Restate the problem.** "So the problem is..."
- **Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together.** "What can we do to solve this problem?"
- **Be prepared to give follow-up support.** Acknowledge their accomplishments (e.g., "You solved the problem!") Stay nearby in case anyone is not happy with the solution and the process needs repeating

These steps will be followed until the discipline problem is followed through to a satisfactory resolution. We feel that each child has the right to work out a discipline issue with us, the staff, to the best of their ability before parents/guardians get a phone call. You will not get a phone call unless a discipline problem is violent (hurting themselves, others, or things), is a continual occurrence, or is very disruptive to the other students and/or staff.

If student behavior is still disruptive or inappropriate on a continual basis, the parents will be contacted so we can work as a team to create a positive discipline plan. Feel free to share specific management ideas that you use at home that work for your child.

**(Childcare) Expulsion:** Our staff is committed to working with all children and their parents to improve any behavioral difficulties we may encounter in a positive, nurturing manner. Children will not be excluded or expelled because of the need for additional development, medical support, or toilet assistance. However, if the behavior exhibited poses a health or safety risk for the child, other children, parents or staff, the YMCA reserves the right to expel any child from programming immediately without following the discipline policy actions listed in the handbook. At our discretion, we may consider a child for reapplication into a YMCA licensed program on a probationary basis providing that the parent/guardian can show professional counseling or behavior modification techniques that have been successfully implemented. There will be no refunds issued (including registration fees) when a child is suspended or expelled from a childcare program.

### **Conferences/Consultations**

Just as a parent may be concerned about the care a child receives, the childcare staff may have concerns about our ability to meet the needs of a particular child. If a child indicates through behavior that she/he has needs that are not being met, parents or staff may initiate a parent/teacher conference. A child who consistently acts out or for some reason needs one-to-one care and attention will necessitate a series of conferences or outside consultation.

## **PARENT PROGRAMS (Family Involvement – Parent Resources)**

The YMCA intends to maintain close, positive relationships with the parents of the children in our program.

We offer many ways to involve parents at the center, such as newsletters, family events, volunteer opportunities and programs. We also encourage parents to volunteer or visit at any time in the classroom. We also love parents who are willing to share their hobbies with us. You can also make playdough for the classroom or join us for outdoor play or walks. There are lots of ways to get involved and stay involved. While we recognize that this may be impossible for some parents, we hope that many will be able to take part in classroom activities. All parents are welcome to become involved in the **Parent Surveys** (parent board) that will be distributed two times a year. The evaluation is developed to assess the program and give advice on relevant issues to the director, assist in fundraising for the center, and reviewing proposed changes. We may also provide Parent Enrichment Nights (2-3 times a year) which will include an educational topic discussion or information (such as Learning through Play, Kindergarten transition, Creative Curriculum, child discipline, etc.) and a take it/make it activity which will be age appropriate for you to enjoy with your child.

**Parent Resources:** We are here to help you find resources throughout our community. We have a comprehensive list of community-based programs, mental health services, dental/health services, food banks, etc., which we can refer you to for your needs. The list is in our childcare lobby for your view. If there is something else needed for you or your family, please let the director know and we can find a resource for you.

## **STAFF / VOLUNTEERS**

### **Staff**

In all staffing decisions every attempt will be made to hire the most competent and qualified people to work with children. Thorough screening and interviewing procedures will be consistently followed. All childcare staff will be required to submit to a comprehensive background check prior to offering of employment being made, which includes

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in and out of state felony and misdemeanor checks, sex offender clearance, and reference checks. Staff will also be required to submit a negative TB test. In addition, all new staff will complete an online Health and Safety training/refresher. All staff are trained in infant/child/adult CPR/AED and First Aid. Staff will be trained and complete 16 hours of PD yearly in early childhood development so that they are knowledgeable and able to intervene in situations involving safety using a developmental approach. **Consistent caregivers in each classroom: It is also important to us and for the best care of your children that we maintain the same consistent caregivers in each classroom.** This helps to foster a deeper relationship between the staff and your children so children feel very comfortable, safe, and secure that the same caregivers will always be in their room every day. There may be occasions when we need to call in a sub for one of the regular caregivers, but our goal is to always have the same caregivers with your children always.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers, including parents, are welcome and much appreciated at the YMCA Child Development Center. They are required to attend training sessions (if applicable), to show proof of a negative TB test (if volunteering more than 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks), submit to a criminal background check, and have an updated PSOR on file before they can volunteer in childcare. They are always supervised by the classroom teacher and/or director. Volunteers are a vital part of the childcare program, and their help is appreciated.

### **YMCA MEMBERSHIP / PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES**

Each YMCA offers a variety of programs for family members as well as memberships for individuals and families. We encourage childcare families to take this opportunity to plan healthy, fun activities together. Through fitness/wellness activities, families can become healthier and grow closer when the family comes to the Y together. **All children enrolled in full-time childcare are eligible for a free youth membership.** See Joslyn Jamrog, our Membership and Marketing Director, for more details.

### **CHILD PROTECTION LAWS**

The YMCA staff is mandated by the Child Protection Law of Michigan to report to the Department of Human Services any "suspected cases of abuse, neglect, child sexual abuse or sexual exploitation."

### **PESTICIDE APPLICATION**

When needed, pesticides are applied after program hours. You will be notified in advance when/if pesticides are applied in program areas.

### **Questions and Comments**

Thank you so much for choosing us to care for your precious children! Please contact Wendy Plewa (Early Childhood Director) at 989-895-8596 (YMCA front desk), 989-778-3457 (direct line), or by emailing [wplewa@ymcabaycity.org](mailto:wplewa@ymcabaycity.org) if you have any questions, comments, or concerns about any part of our childcare program.



### Great Start Readiness Preschool Program Information

Parent Expectations: Parents are an important part of the success of our program. Your involvement is important to us. Some main responsibilities are volunteer in the classroom, attend parent/family activities when applicable, be available for 2 home visits and 2 parent/teacher conferences, read our monthly newsletter, open communication with staff and Early Childhood Director, complete all forms before enrollment and throughout the year, when necessary.

Children will not be expelled or excluded because of the need of additional development, medical or behavioral support, or toileting assistance. If a situation arises which requires additional support for your child, we will work with you on a plan to help support your child. We will reach out to the ISD for information on mental health supports for children who are in need and follow the process set by the ISD to obtain the help needed.

Program runs Mondays-Thursdays 7:30a-2:30p (We follow Bay County ISD common calendar so there are some days off throughout the year and summer childcare may be available if needed)

ALL meals/snacks provided Mondays-Thursdays

Program Calendar of events (events throughout the year) will be given in a timely manner

FREE Swim lessons offered every Friday (for those children signed up for Friday childcare)

#### Optional:

Wrap around childcare available: Mondays-Thursdays 7a-7:30a AND 2:30-6:00

AND Fridays 7a-6p (Flat fee \$135 per week for care)

Parents sign up for wrap around/Friday care (if needed) by Wednesday of previous week

Wrap around/Friday payments due Friday for the next week

Parents can apply for Y scholarships (up to 50%)

If signed up for Friday care - Parents provide meals/snacks for Friday only

Parents provide blankets for rest time (will be sent home weekly for cleaning)

Parents provide a water bottle and a backpack is recommended

TO start the enrollment process, you will need to fill out an intake form.

Go to [www.BayArenacPreschool.com](http://www.BayArenacPreschool.com)