



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT[®]
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA OF MEMPHIS & THE MID-SOUTH CHILDCARE SERVICES



Dear Parents, Guardians, School Aged, Campers, Friends and Families:

Welcome to the YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South School Age Childcare Programs (Before/After School, Holiday Camp, Summer Day Camp). Our program is regulated by the Department of Human Services and is offered in collaboration with your child's local school district for before/after school programs. We follow these same rigorous guidelines for our summer camp program as well.

We offer a wide variety of exciting and enriching programs for you and your family. YMCA Child Care programs are tons of fun but also instructive for life. Our staff provides activities that have a positive, life-long impact on your child through:

- Developing self-confidence and independence
- Communicating core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility
- Encouraging learning and exploration in a supportive environment
- Infusing fun and good health into activities each day

Our childcare programs teach important values such as caring, respect, honesty, responsibility and faith.

Positive relationships among kids, staff and parents are critical for each child's healthy development and social growth. In our quality programs, staff is upbeat and interacts with children using warmth, patience, understanding and equality. In addition they:

- Are responsive to kid's feelings, needs, cultures, abilities and languages
- Encourage leadership skills by letting them offer ideas to expand or enrich an activity and suggest and initiate activities
- Allow children, as a key part of learning, to make and learn from their own mistakes

We also make sure that there are positive relationships among staff. We know the children look to Y staff as role models, watching and learning as they cooperate, communicate and solve problems with each other.

This handbook is provided to help answer any questions regarding policies and procedures for the operation of our childcare centers. Your child's safety and well-being is our primary concern. If you should need further explanation or have any questions or concerns, our office and childcare staff will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Martin

President and CEO

YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South

***PLEASE NOTE: YMCA Childcare employees are not authorized to waive, make changes to, or create agreements outside of established agency policy. Likewise, an employee error will not negate the policies and procedures of the YMCA. The YMCA reserves the right to make changes and/or corrections to the Parent Handbook at any time.**

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PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

OUR CAUSE . . . YMCA OF MEMPHIS & THE MID-SOUTH

To strengthen the foundations of Community. We are for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

YMCA OF MEMPHIS & THE MID-SOUTH MISSION STATEMENT

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

YMCA Child Care programs will stimulate a child's physical, social, intellectual and emotional development. We use small group experiences that are developmentally appropriate.

Special Needs

Please note that we make every reasonable effort to accommodate children with special needs. However, our program is a youth recreation program and is not equipped to handle children that require one on one attention on a regular basis. All of our before/after school sites are licensed under the supervision of the Department of Human Services and we meet or exceed all licensing requirements. Our Day Camp program follows the same rigorous guidelines as the before/after school program.

Dietary, medical, personal, behavioral and/or physical special needs must be reported on the registration form. Verbal follow-up is appreciated. Our staff will make every effort to accommodate these needs. In order for the YMCA to provide the best experience for your child, we ask that, prior to registration, you consult with the Childcare Director regarding any special needs of your child. Due to the fact that there are some medical treatments and procedures that legally the YMCA staff is not trained nor qualified to perform, children will be enrolled on an individual basis.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

All people are welcome at the YMCA regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, political ideology or abilities. Children and parents who have limited English language ability will be assisted with the translation of written information or with an interpreter. Contact the Childcare Director to make necessary arrangements.

In our efforts to promote an awareness and understanding of the world around us, lessons about customs and celebrations of other cultures are a part of our curriculum. YMCA Child Care will reflect and respect the diversity in our community. Religious education is not part of our program.

The YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South is committed to providing developmentally and culturally appropriate programming that respects, reflects, and supports children and families, cultivates an understanding among children and staff, and incorporates an anti-bias approach to curriculum. We are committed to a gender-balanced, non-stereotypical curriculum where all children are allowed and encouraged to participate in all activities, free from conflict and that are consistent with the YMCA values. The YMCA staff respect all cultures and belief systems and encourages children to talk about their thoughts in an open and honest way that promotes interactions. Our program encourages families, extended families and the community to share interests, hobbies, cultural information and activities. The YMCA is committed to inclusion of all people in our community.

YMCA Team Members

The quality and effectiveness of our program is directly related to the skills and personal characteristics of our staff. Therefore, we look for the very best when we hire. All applicants are required to "audition" as part of the hiring process. Members of the YMCA Childcare Staff Team are chosen for their ability to model the YMCA values, leadership, patience, the ability to laugh at themselves, and experience working with children. Our staff is also chosen for their creativity, energy and sensitivity to the individual needs of each child. We conduct criminal background checks, central registry checks, pre-employment and random drug testing and motor vehicle report checks on all of our employees. Rest assured that your child is in good hands while they are in our program.

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

Registration Fee and Deposits

All registrations are done online at www.ymcamemphis.org

Enrollment for the Before & After School program must be for the entire school year. Online registration is set up with checkmarks by each week of enrollment and should not be altered in any way. Payments are due regardless of attendance. Child can be withdrawn from the program anytime with a one week's notice.

Weekly Payments/Late Payment Fee

All fees are weekly. There are no daily rates. No payments will be accepted at the sites. If weekly fees are paid late, there is a \$20 late fee per child charged. Children may not attend our program unless their payments are current. There is no second child discount.

Returned checks must be paid in full, along with the \$30 service fee. Should your child's account have two returned EFT's, we will no longer be able to accept EFT's as payment. Returned EFT's must be paid by debit/credit card only.

Cancellation Policy

All withdrawals are submitted online at www.ymcamemphis.org. You are required to give a one week's notice. If you register for weeks that are unattended, you will automatically be drafted a \$10 administrative fee.

Refunds

Your fee pays for direct operating costs such as staff, snacks and materials. All of these must be available each day for your child. When you enroll, you are reserving the time, space, staff and provisions for your child, whether the child attends or not. We cannot deduct days missed from your fee.

A full refund will only be given if the YMCA cancels a program. Weeks will only be prorated if the school is out for three days or more. Registration fees are non-refundable. For YMCA members whose registration fee is waived, the first week's fee (up to the amount of a program participant registration fee) is non-refundable. Weekly fees are not refundable if your child is suspended/expelled from our program. Refunds can take up to 30 days for processing. Refund requests should be made within 30 days of withdrawal from the program. Refund requests that are submitted past the 30 day limit will not be accepted.

Inclement Weather

If the school closed due to inclement weather, we will not hold after care. Parents must pick up their child at the school. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the school with pick up information. No credit, refund or payment transfer is given for closings due to inclement weather, emergency situations, or acts of God.

If the school is closed for inclement weather and the YMCA is open regular hours, we will offer holiday camp at no cost to families already enrolled in our program.

Fee Assistance

The YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South serves all incomes, all ages and all abilities. Fee assistance/scholarship applications are available on the YMCA website. All inquiries and assistance are strictly confidential. Those not able to pay the full fee may be awarded a partial scholarship or assistance based on their demonstrated ability to pay, and the YMCA's ability to fund the subsidy. You are required to turn in proof of income within 30 days or assistance will be forfeited. Fee Assistance is made available through the Annual Giving Campaign.

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Program Hours

Our program hours have been established to accommodate as many families as we can within the limits of our resources. Check our hours to ensure our program is right for you and your child. Most of our program locations are open from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm. Check with your site location for specific hours.

Swimming at Summer Camp

Campers will swim every day except for field trip day. Lifeguards are present at all times. All inquiries regarding summer camp swimming lessons should be directed to the YMCA branch location.

Sign In/Out Procedures

All children must be signed into our programs by an adult 18 years or older. No child, regardless of circumstances, will be allowed to leave the care of the YMCA staff with an unauthorized person. Your child will only be released to the people you have listed on the Registration Form. We will not release your child to anyone else unless we have written authorization from you. Phone calls/faxes will not be accepted as verification for pick up. In the event of an emergency and you are unable to provide written authorization, you must contact childcare services at (901) 505-0959. The safety of the child is more important than any inconvenience to the parent. If a non-custodial parent has been denied access to a child by a court order, you must submit documentation to that effect (within 24 hours of registration) and we will comply with it accordingly. Anyone picking up your child must be at least 18 years or older and must show a valid picture ID. You are required to show your picture ID at every pick up.

Late Pick Up Policy

Children must be picked up by 6:00 pm, the time the site closes.

If an emergency arises and you are unable to reach the site by close, please contact your site location or childcare services to let us know when we can expect your child(ren) to be picked up. The YMCA is required to notify the Department of Children's Services or the police when children are left in a program without notification from families and when no contacts can be reached to pick up the child.

Each center follows these guidelines in response to a late pick-up:

1. If family is late for pick up, immediately after 6:00 pm staff will try to call the family to ensure that someone is on the way to pick up the child. If the family is not reachable, staff will notify emergency contacts and ask for pick up.
2. If the family and emergency contacts cannot be reached within 30 minutes, staff notifies the DCS and police.
3. A late fee is charged. This fee is \$1 for every minute the parent is late with a \$10 minimum that will be automatically drafted with your weekly fee for the upcoming week of service.
4. If your child is picked up late on three occasions, your child's participation in the program may be suspended or terminated.

We will follow these steps:

a. **1st time late:**

- The Site Director reinforces the closing time and documents in the child's file the late pick up and gives the family a copy of Late Policy.

b. **2nd time late:**

- Staff will provide written notification about being late, listing the 1st and 2nd time being late on the notification form. The Site Director will notify the Childcare Director.

The Childcare Director will contact the family either by phone or in person to problem solve this issue.

3rd time late:

- The Childcare Director will work on progressive discipline (may include suspension or termination of care).

Late pick up policy is strictly followed and enforced.

SAFETY, HEALTH AND SUPERVISION

Behavior Management

Discipline is necessary for an effective program. We understand that, at times, children do have "bad" days or behavior problems. Children occasionally refuse to listen to program leaders, use inappropriate language or have other behavior issues. Our staff will work with your child as much as possible but there will be times when we have to address certain issues. Children count on the wisdom of adults to set reasonable limits for them. Limits are necessary to maintain safety, protect health and guard the rights of others. Only constructive methods of discipline will be used.

Our behavior management policy is designed to promote the development of self-direction, self-control and self-behavior. This is accomplished through sensitivity, consistency, firmness, fairness and follow-through. YMCA staff implements positive discipline including the use of natural and logical consequences, redirection, the setting of limits and the giving of choices. We consistently reinforce positive behavior, and keep in mind the extreme importance of a child's self-esteem. All consequences must be reasonable, related to the behavior, age appropriate and respectful to the child. We do NOT use corporal punishment as a means to discipline a child.

Discipline Action Steps

1. Verbal warning
2. "Personal Time" – removal of child from a situation for up to 5 minutes so they can regain control of their behavior
3. Verbal or written communication to parent/guardian regarding behavior – Behavior Observation Form
4. Behavior Write Up – three (3) behavior write ups may result in the child's suspension from the program for up to three (3) days
5. If the child is reinstated (returns after 3 write ups on zero tolerance) and receives a fourth behavior write up, the Childcare Director will suspend the child immediately and termination from the program may result. The child will not be eligible to participate in future YMCA programs. No refunds are given if a child is suspended/terminated from the program.

The following behaviors are not acceptable, and could result in immediate suspension or termination from the program:

- Endangering the health or safety of children or staff
- Habitual use of profanity, vulgarity or obscenities
- Possession or use of illegal substances or paraphernalia
- Possession of any weapon

When breaches of rules and regulations occur, it is the responsibility of YMCA staff to work with the children and parents/guardians to help the child correct their behavior. When determining the response for a specific infraction, the childcare staff will consider the nature of the act, the child's age and maturation, any mitigating circumstances, and the effect of his or her actions on the welfare of the YMCA. The fact that a particular violation of good conduct is not specifically mentioned in the following is not a satisfactory defense for any improper conduct. It is impossible to list every action which is inconsistent with good character values and citizenship. We expect all children in our program to form the habit of not only observing the rules contained in this handbook, but also the general rules of good conduct and common sense acknowledged by the community in which we live.

Behaviors that may result in disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

- Fighting
- Habitual use of profanity, vulgarity or obscenities
- Shoving, pushing and/or other aggressive acts
- Disrespect for another person and/or property
- Harassment (verbal, physical, sexual)
- Bathroom misbehavior (i.e., water throwing, climbing on toilets or hanging on stalls)
- Vandalism
- Stealing
- Continual program disruption/refusal to follow program rules
- Possess or use of illegal substances, paraphernalia, or weapons
- Endangering the health or safety of children or staff

Depending upon the severity of the offense, a child may be immediately suspended or permanently removed from our program upon the first offense at the staff's discretion. In the event of a major infraction of the rules, the childcare staff will contact a parent/guardian to discuss the issue and, if warranted, make arrangements for the child to be sent home immediately. Continuous discipline problems will result in the child's removal from the program. No refunds will be given if a child is asked to leave our program. If this occurs, the child is not eligible to sign up for camp or childcare again in the future at any YMCA location. If the child is suspended, the parent will still be responsible for paying the weekly fee.

If, at any time, the child's behavior in any way threatens the safety of the other children or staff, the parents will be called immediately. Physical violence cannot and will not be tolerated. Behavior that is deemed extremely unsafe or violent may result in immediate termination from our program. The YMCA reserves the right to immediately terminate program services in cases of extreme misconduct that may endanger others. If the YMCA is unable to meet the child's needs, alternative childcare arrangements will need to be made by the parents/guardians.

Day Camp Field Trips/Transportation

All branches will take off-site, day long field trips each week if scheduling and transportation permit. There is no additional charge for field trips. Destinations vary according to children's ages. Children must attend field trips on their designated days due to age appropriate activities and/or staff ratios. Children do not have the option to stay at the YMCA if they do not want to go on the field trip. Campers must wear their camp shirt in order to attend the field trip. If your child does not wear the official camp shirt, the parent will be required to purchase a shirt for

\$6.00. This will automatically be charged to the account on file. Please do not send money with your child on field trip day. All fees are included in your weekly rate.

During the summer, we lease school buses for transportation. All YMCA Day Camp drivers are required to hold a valid driver's license with endorsements for the specific type of equipment being driven. In addition, we expect our drivers to:

- Drive safely, carefully, and courteously
- Obey all traffic laws and heed posted signs – especially speed limits and parking restrictions
- Exercise extreme caution and good judgment when boarding or dropping off children
- Account for every child scheduled to ride the vehicle and ensure that every child on board sits properly in the seat and does not extend arms, legs or head out of the vehicle.

Bus Rules- OBEY THE BUS DRIVER

No authorized items on the bus. (No weapons, tobacco, combustibles, pets, large items, etc.)

- Be nice and courteous
- Keep the bus clean
- No profanity and NO FIGHTING
- Keep all body parts inside the bus
- Do not throw anything, anywhere
- Stay in your seat. Driver may assign seats.
- No eating or drinking
- Do not distract the driver through loud talking or misbehavior
- Report any problems you may have to the driver as soon as possible
- Be sure to collect all items before exiting the bus.

At any time a child has broken any of the "Bus Rules" or YMCA policies, he/she may be subject to suspension or expulsion from transportation services.

Accidents/Emergencies

We work very hard to anticipate and prevent injuries. If your child is injured, we will:

- Administer Band-Aids and comfort in large doses for small hurts (minor cuts, scrapes and bumps)
- Contact you or your emergency contact if any injury may require medical attention including bee stings, moderate cuts, sprains, and injuries to joints or possible fractures. You may then decide what you want done.
- Secure medical treatment immediately in the event that a parent or emergency contact cannot be reached or if the injury warrants fast action. The Y reserves the right to contact emergency care.

Health and Safety

Please notify us immediately when there is a new home or work phone number, if you have moved, etc. If your child is sick or injured, it is important for us to be able to reach you right away.

Children must be healthy enough to participate in the program's daily routine. We do not have the facilities to care for sick children and, therefore, do not allow them to attend the program. For the safety and comfort of your child, keep him/her home until he/she feels better and no longer presents the danger of passing on the illness. When your child has a fever, make sure they remain at home 24 hours after their temperature has returned to normal. Children with lice must be nit free before returning. We may require a physician's release for any medical or health condition.

If your child becomes ill while at our program, you will be required to pick up your child when called. Please remember that we have the health of all children and staff to consider. If your child becomes sick during school hours and attends our After School Program, you will need to contact the YMCA to let us know of your child's absence. The school will not communicate to us if a child has been picked up early.

MEDICATIONS

If your child is taking prescription medication that must be administered during camp or extended care hours, please complete the medication treatment form with the name, dosage and time your child will need the medication. We cannot administer any medication without written parental/guardian consent. All medication will be collected by the Site Director/Camp Director at the beginning of each week of camp and administered as prescribed by the doctor. **Medications must be in the original container with the appropriate dosage indicated.** Unused medications will be returned to the parent at the end of the week. It is required that only one week of medication will be stored at camp. Campers who use asthmatic inhalers or medications for allergic reactions (i.e., an Epi-Pen) will be kept by a counselor in their group and campers can only administer it to themselves under supervision of a counselor/adult.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

Camp takes place in an outdoor setting. **Campers are outside 75% of the time.** Some minor injuries that could occur during the course of a normal camp day includes sunburns, minor scrapes or cuts, slipping, falling, splinters, bumps, bruises, insect bites, ticks, and poison ivy. In the event any of the above or similar conditions occur, YMCA staff will treat these according to basic first aid guidelines (soap, water, ice, bandages). The parent will be notified and an incident report completed.

If illness or injury results in a more serious condition than described above, YMCA Camp staff will contact the parent or guardian to make arrangements for care and/or contact 911. For the camper's safety, it is essential to provide the YMCA with two additional emergency numbers in the event of an emergency. **Campers do not always inform camp staff of scratches, rashes, insect bites, etc.** Please do a daily health check of your child.

YMCA COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

Each Camp Director has been trained to identify the signs and symptoms of illness. Should a camper exhibit any symptoms of illness, the parents will be called to arrange for immediate pick-up. Examples are:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within 24 hours)
- Severe coughing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis
- Temperature of 100°F or higher
- Untreated, infected skin patches
- Stiff neck
- Unusual spots of rash
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Vomiting
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infection

A child exhibiting signs of illness will be isolated until they are picked up by the parent or other authorized adult. Any camper who has been diagnosed with a communicable illness will only be allowed back into camp with a doctor's release.

Immunizations

All program participants must be current with age appropriate immunizations. If your child's YMCA childcare program is not located at their elementary school (where immunizations records are kept on file), a copy of the child's current immunizations may be required.

MISCELLANEOUS

What to Bring To Camp:

- Swim suit (appropriate for a family environment) and towel on scheduled swim days – some branches require one piece swimsuits for all girls
- Water bottle. Must have a no leak sealed top.
- Sunscreen – SPF 15 or higher. Campers may keep sunscreen with them during camp hours. Please mark all your sunscreen with a permanent marker and cover the name in clear tape; this will keep the name from rubbing off. **YMCA staff are not permitted to apply sunscreen to any camper.** Please teach your camper how to apply sunscreen before they attend camp.
- Sack lunch – We hope that you will partner with us in promoting healthy lifestyles by packing a nutritious lunch for your child. All campers should bring a non-perishable lunch and a beverage to camp daily unless otherwise notified. Please do not include candy or soft drinks. Lunches cannot be refrigerated; therefore, we ask that you send lunches that contain food items that will spoil if not kept cold. Please do not provide your camper with food that will need heating, refrigerating or microwaving as the YMCAs are not equipped to do this. Camp staff is not responsible for food preparation or pre-heating meals. Please mark all lunches with the camper's first and last name.

What to Leave At Home

- Our program is fun enough – don't bring your own toys
- All electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, iPods, video games, etc.
- Chewing gum, candy, soft drinks
- Squirt guns, large water toys (such as floats) unless otherwise notified
- Anything deemed "too valuable to lose"
- Grouchy attitudes!

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the director/staff for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the staff should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy. If the parents fail repeatedly to enforce this policy with their children, the staff will call the parents and require that they come to the camp and remove the toy.

What Campers Should Wear

- Each day, children should dress for active/OUTDOOR play.
- Comfortable clothing and shoes made for running and climbing are a must. No sandals, flip flops, crocs or other open-toe shoes are allowed. No midriff/belly shirts, please.
- Since children will be outdoors most of the day and using water, paint, and other messy materials, it is best if children do not wear expensive or dressy clothing.
- The YMCA is not responsible for clothing that may become stained or dirty while at day camp. Its camp...dress for a mess!
- Camp shirts must be worn on all field trips. Camp shirts allow us to easily identify our campers in public situations and keep your child safe. For this reason, if a child is not wearing their camp shirt on their field trip day, he/she will not be allowed to go on the trip. Please note – Children must attend field trips on their designated days due to age appropriate activities and/or staff ratios.

- A cap or hat for sun protection is advisable
- All clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name
- **SUNSCREEN** Campers may keep sunscreen with them during camp hours. Please mark all your sunscreen with a permanent marker and cover the name in clear tape; this will keep the name from rubbing off. **YMCA staff are not permitted to apply sunscreen to any camper.** Please teach your camper how to apply sunscreen before they attend camp.

Lost and Found

All items brought to our program should be clearly marked with your child's name. While keeping up with their own belongings is the responsibility of the child, we do realize that sometimes things get misplaced. We will do our best to reunite lost belongings with the appropriate owners. However, due to limited storage space at most YMCAs and school sites, the Lost and Found is usually disposed of on a weekly basis.

Helping Your Child Get the Most Out of Our Program

Our childcare programs provide your child with a unique opportunity to learn and grow, to create and explore. In this child-centered environment, he/she can test skills, gain confidence, meet new friends and learn to share with and accept others. All this and fun too!

Here are some suggestions that will make your child's experience even better and allow some fun and learning to carry over at home.

1. Show an interest in what your child has been doing in our program. Take time at dinner to talk about what was seen and done during the day.
2. Any award or recognition given is an acknowledgment of individual accomplishment. Everyone's self-confidence can use a little boost!
3. If a certain activity or event sparks your child's interest and enthusiasm, encourage further exploration at home and with the family.

Our childcare programs offer many opportunities for new experiences. There are also some events and activities that include parents and family members. We invite you to join us for lots of fun. Days and times for special activities and events will be announced in newsletters.

SPECIAL NOTE TO PARENTS

To make sure your child remains safe outside of YMCA supervision and to protect our staff and volunteers, the YMCA encourages your cooperation in the following areas:

- It is a violation of YMCA policy for a YMCA employee to baby-sit, host sleepovers, or spend time one-on-one with your child outside of YMCA programs.
- Do not leave your child at the YMCA facility, school, playing field, etc. unless a YMCA staff member is there to receive and supervise your child.
- Talk to your child about the importance of telling you if someone does or says something that makes them feel uncomfortable. Emphasize that adults should not ask them to keep secrets from you.
- Explain to your child that he/she has a basic right to privacy and that no one should touch them inappropriately or make them touch someone else inappropriately.
- Instruct your child to always remain part of the group. Stress safety in numbers.
- Be concerned if your child suddenly becomes withdrawn or balks at attending certain activities or being around a certain person. Gently seek to find out why.
- Report any actions by YMCA staff or volunteers that you deem to be inappropriate to the Childcare Director or Executive Director of the YMCA branch. If these actions involve suspected child abuse, contact

the Child Abuse Hotline immediately. There are two toll-free numbers and they are operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The numbers are 1-877-54ABUSE (1-877-542-2873) and 1-877-237-0004.

Mandating Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of the YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of the YMCA are not required to discuss their suspensions with parents prior to reporting the matter to appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at the YMCA take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of the YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith"

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school/camp over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

CHARACTER COUNTS AT THE YMCA

High Five & Character Counts Communication Tools

We will use High Five Reports to communicate with you when your child has exemplified Y Values or as a way to reinforce positive behavior and choices. When children demonstrate behavior that is incongruent to our Y Values, we will use a Character Counts Form to communicate with guardian. These behaviors may include being disrespectful to other children or staff, dishonesty, destruction of property or failing to carry out responsibilities. Families will receive written Character Counts Reports for behaviors recorded by staff in conversation with your child. The Character Counts are sent home and a copy is placed in the child's records. If a child receives one to three (dependent upon the offense) Character Counts Reports, the Center Director, child and parents will have a formal conference to determine a plan of action.

Through our values based programs, we expect all our participants to uphold the YMCA values of respect, responsibility, caring, and honesty. We are aware that children sometimes copy the behaviors of other children. Therefore, in order for a child to understand the seriousness of their actions, any child engaging in behavior that is inappropriate at the YMCA, will receive disciplinary action. This No Tolerance Policy along with the Character Counts Reports will provide more effective communication regarding a child's behavior.

Any problems your child may be having at home may affect his/her behavior in the Y program. Please keep the Center Director informed so that we can be sensitive to your child's needs. Any information of a confidential nature will be shared only with those who need to know.

At the YMCA, this means more than just activities. Character development and values emphasis is a big part of what makes the YMCA different from other programs. We believe character development is an important challenge for all of us – staff, volunteers, members, children and parents – to accept and demonstrate the positive values of caring, respect, honesty and responsibility. We will conduct activities implementing values emphasis throughout our program. These activities can range anywhere from thoughts for the day, an inspirational message or “appreciation” stories.

The following four values will be stressed in every YMCA program:

Caring

- We care about each other’s feelings, we do not tease or make fun
- We take care of the YMCA games and equipment so that others may enjoy them
- We care for the school and YMCA property by cleaning up after ourselves
- We care for our bodies: NO smoking, drugs or alcohol
- We care for others by keeping our hands and feet to ourselves
- We do not hit, kick, punch, push, spit, bite or pinch others

Respect

- We listen to our counselors and other staff members
- We follow directions the first time they are given
- We speak to each other nicely
- We ask before taking or touching someone else’s belongings

Honesty

- We try our best to always tell the truth
- We treat each other fairly
- We are honest with ourselves, and ask for help when we need it
- We try to “do the right thing” without being asked or told

Responsibility

- We come to the YMCA program prepared by bringing what we need
- We leave unnecessary items at home
- We only talk about appropriate topics and use appropriate language
- We stay in the program area where the counselors can see us and know where we are at all times
- We ask permission if we need to leave for any reason

Rights and Responsibilities of Children

- Every child enrolled in a YMCA program has the right to:
- A safe and reliable environment
- Use all equipment and space on an equal basis, to find equipment where it is intended and in functional condition
- Have their ideas and feelings respected
- Discipline that is fair, equal and respectful to them
- Express their creative ability
- Have a safe environment free of hazards
- Voice their opinion of rules and activities
- Have staff members who care about them, enjoy being with them and who will help them grow

Each child needs to be responsible for:

- Learning to take the consequences of their actions
- Respecting the rules that guide them during the program
- Controlling their feelings so their actions do not harm anyone
- Sharing equipment and facilities with all children in the program
- Treating equipment and facilities with care and respect
- Remaining with the staff members at all times
- Respecting the staff and other children in the program
- Coming to the program immediately
- Returning equipment and materials to the place they found them
- Carrying out an activity in which they have committed themselves

Parental Code of Conduct

Parents have a right to:

- Know that their children are in a safe environment where they are free to select from a variety of activities
- Share their concerns with the staff
- Know if their child is misbehaving, and to spend time talking with the staff concerning a solution
- Voice special concerns and considerations not covered in the manual
- To discuss special issues where occasional exceptions may be made from the rules set forth in the manual

Parents have a responsibility to:

- Let the staff know if their child will not be attending
- Observe the rules and policies of the program
- Listen to concerns that staff may have about their child's behavior and assist in resolving the issue
- Replace any equipment that their child is responsible for misusing
- Sign their child in each morning and out at the end of each day
- Pay fees in full, on time
- Pick their child up on time

All parents, children and employees of the YMCA have the right to be treated in a manner that is professional, respectful and safe. Any parent, guardian or staff who jeopardizes the safety of others may be prohibited from participation in the YMCA or any of its activities. Everyone at the YMCA is expected to follow our Code of Conduct. This applies to members, program participants, guests, parents and staff. The YMCA also expects that all participating parents/adults act as positive role models while at a YMCA site. Participants, guests, and parents are expected to behave in a civilized manner towards one another and towards YMCA employees and volunteer staff at all times. Parents and others who exhibit inappropriate behavior will cause their child to be asked to leave our program.

While it is rare that extreme incidents occur with adults relating to our childcare program, the YMCA reserves the right to immediately terminate program enrollment due to extreme hostility or misconduct demonstrated by adults/parents. If you observe a problem with our program or with a staff member, please contact a YMCA Director and/or put your complaint in writing. By doing this, we avoid any unnecessary confrontations that might be uncomfortable for the children, other parents and staff.

Separated/Divorced Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians that are separated or divorced will need to provide copies of a signed court order if there are restrictions regarding their child. Without a signed court order, staff will be required to release the child to either parent/guardian or whomever they authorize to pick up the child.

Staff cannot get involved in personal matters. To avoid putting staff in a difficult situation, please do not share personal information unrelated to the childcare program with staff.

Staff is not allowed to give out copies of documents (i.e. incident/accident reports). Any issues related to the child will be expressed to the parent or guardian that picks him/her up that day. Separated/divorced parents will need to come up with their own method of sharing information.

Payments are posted under the child's name and are due for the week in advance. We cannot get involved in situations where one parent picks up a child and the other parent is supposed to make payment.

Any written or e-mailed information mailed out from the YMCA will be sent to the individual that registered the child in our program.

Parental Involvement/Communication

Parents are an important part of our program. The YMCA and parents are partners in helping each child have a fun-filled, enriching and safe experience in our program. We want parents to communicate needs, problems and concerns as well as great experiences. You can write a note to your child's counselor, Childcare Director, e-mail us, or call us. We encourage you to share your talents, hobbies and/or profession with your child's group. We invite parents to visit our program any time during the hours of operation. Parents should feel free to observe and interact with their child. When arriving to visit, have lunch or observe, we ask that parents notify the YMCA staff of their presence. We do encourage parents to be respectful of their child's program schedule or activities.

YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South

CODE OF CONDUCT

At the YMCA, we expect staff, members and guests to behave in accordance with our mission and values at all times, respecting the rights and dignity of others.

At the YMCA, we demonstrate Caring, Respect, Honesty and Responsibility by:

Speaking in respectful tones; refraining from the use of vulgar or derogatory language; and dressing appropriately.

Resolving conflicts in a respectful, honest and caring manner; never resorting to physical contact or threatening gestures.

Respecting others by refraining from intimate behavior in public; abstaining from contact of a sexual nature.

Respecting the property of others; never engaging in theft or destruction.

Creating a safe, caring environment; never carrying illegal firearms or devices.

Participating in programs to build a healthy spirit, mind and body; never engaging in the use, sale, dispensing or possession of illegal drugs or narcotics, or the unsanctioned use of alcohol on YMCA premises.

Adherence to the YMCA Code of Conduct is essential. Noncompliance may result in suspension or termination of YMCA membership/program privileges.

ADA COMPLIANCE AND SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

The YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South seeks to serve all people. It is our intention to include people of all abilities in our programs in the most integrated setting and wherever it is reasonably possible to do so. This includes individuals with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, individuals with a record of such impairment or individuals who are regarded as having such impairment. We hope that many of the changes we make to accommodate disabled individuals also will provide us with facilities and services that will better serve all people, not just those with disabilities.

Despite our best efforts, it may not be possible in certain circumstances for the YMCA to accommodate the disability or special needs of a particular child. This occurs in two circumstances:

- The individual's disability or special needs present a significant risk to the health or safety of others and such risk cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level; and
- The required accommodation would require a fundamental change to the YMCA's youth programs or otherwise would present an undue burden for the YMCA.

For some children, special accommodation needs may appear later, or may change over time. The YMCA will make ongoing assessments of your child's needs, and will require the parent or legal guardian's involvement in this process. Failure to share information about your child that identifies special care, accommodations or supervision needs may jeopardize the placement of or continued participation by your child in the program. All children are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct or stated behavior expectations.

YMCA staff members are encouraging, patient and helpful in paving a pathway for children with mild to moderate disabilities to succeed at YMCA Programs. We are not equipped nor staffed to work with children who need significant assistance with personal care, constant one-on-one support or have great difficulty in managing their behavior in a group setting.

If your child has a significant health issue or a special need, please contact the Childcare Director to discuss appropriate accommodations.

COMMUNICATION

Parent Night/Open House

During this time, you will receive your camper's t-shirt and information for your specific camp. You will find out the awesome activities your children will participate in over the summer and even participate in games and activities during the meeting. You and your camper(s) will meet and learn about your counselors for the summer and share ideas. This pertains to Summer Camp only.

Newsletter

The newsletter is available every Friday at the camp desk. The newsletter will also be e-mailed to those that sign up to receive it. This pertains to Summer Camp only. There is a monthly newsletter for the Before/After School program that is e-mailed once per month for those who sign up to receive it.

Email

Weekly e-mails and/or texts will be sent to the e-mail and/or phone number given at registration. Please check frequently for updates and important information.

Social Media

Please check out our Facebook page and Twitter for pictures, updates and important information.

Thank you for choosing the YMCA for your childcare needs and services!