



## PARENT HANDBOOK

### Welcome to YMCA Child Care!

The YMCA is pleased to welcome you and your child to our Child Care program. We are the largest and most trusted providers of high quality Child Care services in the Province of Alberta. Our Child Care programs deliver stimulating learning experiences in a safe environment that will enhance your child's social, intellectual, physical and emotional development.

We stimulate children's natural curiosity and encourage personal expression so that they develop into confident, caring, happy individuals. Children need role models. They model themselves after their parents first, their peers second, and their teachers third. Your child needs to know that you have confidence in us, so that we will also have their confidence.

This handbook will provide you with program information and regulations regarding Child Care services. If you require further information please feel free to contact your Centre Director.

Thank you for becoming part of our YMCA family!

### Contents

YMCA Child Care Introduction .....	2
Getting to Know Us .....	4
Registration and Fees .....	6
The Daily Routine .....	9
Programming .....	12
Policies .....	14
Feedback .....	17
Resources .....	18



# YMCA Child Care Introduction

## YMCA Mission Statement

The YMCA of Northern Alberta creates life enhancing opportunities for the growth and development of all people in spirit, mind and body.

## YMCA Child Care Objectives

- to provide a warm caring environment which will develop your child's potential creative, intellectual, emotional, social and physical skills
- to provide a safe environment that is a natural progression from home to school
- to ensure that your child is cared for and is supervised at all times
- to hire educators that are experienced and well trained to provide the best care and enrichment for your child
- to provide a communication system that ensures parent to educators contact throughout the program year
- to set fees that allow the Centre to operate at a full cost recovery basis

## YMCA Child Care Values

- YMCA Child Care is available to everyone regardless of race, sex, religion or economic circumstances
- Parents have the right to pursue work or education with peace of mind, and children have the right to a secure, safe and developmentally appropriate program.
- YMCA Child Care families can access additional programs and services that the YMCA provides to support them
- Parent participation is important to YMCA Child Care

## YMCA Quality Statement

Parent evaluations, current research, and over 20 years of experience in delivering child care programs have helped us to define our Quality checklist:

- Children are happy and involved
- Educators have a caring attitude
- Centre, equipment and toys are accessible, clean & safe
- Children participate in small groups in stimulating activities with teachers
- Food is nutritionally balanced
- Parent-educator communication is promoted and parents feel welcome in the centre
- Sufficient play materials are available
- Outdoor play activities are taking place in well maintained play areas
- Educators are good role models and have ongoing and appropriate training
- Parents have regular feedback about their child

## **Licensing**

Every child care centre in Alberta is regulated by the Provincial Licensing Standards. Centres are required to meet the mandatory regulations, and are visited regularly by a Licensing Officer to ensure they are in compliance. Reports from these visits are posted in your centre, and are available for parents to view. Any recommendations from these reports are used as an opportunity to improve the centre.

## **Accreditation**

The purpose of Accreditation in Alberta is to raise the standard of Child Care in the Province and improve best practices in Early Learning and Child Care Services. Accreditation is a voluntary process, and involves great dedication on the part of the educators and the centre.

The benefits of an accredited centre:

- Attracts families who are looking for a high quality centre
- Attracts educators who are looking to work in a quality centre
- The educators receive support funding

All of our centres participate in the Accreditation process. Preschool Accreditation was implemented in 2004, and School-Age Accreditation was launched in 2009. Our centres are at varying stages in the process. Please ask your Director for more information.

## **Playing to Learn**

*YMCA Playing to Learn* is a national curriculum that helps children in YMCA licensed early years programs discover learning through creative play. This curriculum combines three decades of experience in child care delivery, with the latest body of knowledge on how the brain develops and how children learn. We believe YMCA Playing to Learn is the best approach to ensure a child's continued enthusiasm and capacity for life-long learning. Educators in your child's classroom will develop activities based on the children's interest which will provide them with the foundations of language & literacy, mathematics, science & technology, and the arts, including music, visual arts and dramatic arts. Through this curriculum, your child will develop knowledge, skills and attributes which will help facilitate a smooth transition into the school age environment. Please speak with your centre Director for more detailed information on this exciting curriculum.

## Getting to Know Us

### **Caring, Qualified Educators**

Our dedicated educators are carefully chosen and have the appropriate educational background to ensure quality care. They have personal qualities of friendliness, warmth, and the ability to relate openly to children and adults.

Continuous evaluation of educators and programming ensures the ongoing high quality care for your children. All educators are screened using reference checks and Police Security Checks.

### **Parent Participation and Communication**

At the YMCA we believe strongly that Child Care must be a shared responsibility between parents and Child Care educators. A variety of opportunities will be provided to ensure effective communication between you and our educators.

### **Family Events**

You are encouraged to visit and participate in our program whenever possible. This could be as simple as staying to read a story, or as exciting as joining us on a fieldtrip. We encourage participation at a level that you feel comfortable with.

Families are encouraged to participate in special events throughout the year. Many of the centres host seasonal events, which include food and entertainment for the whole family. Ask your Director about upcoming celebrations.

### **Parent-Educator Sharing**

YMCA Child Care educators have a commitment to provide an environment that fosters your child's growth and learning. If you have suggestions on how we can better meet your child's needs, we encourage you to share with your child's educator, or the Centre Director.

### **Group Care**

While we strive to ensure that all children who attend YMCA programs are happy and comfortable in their surroundings, it is important to recognize that group care is not for everyone. If we find that your child may require additional supports to be successful in our program, we will work with your family to identify the best way to access the necessary resources. We are committed to working with families to provide the most appropriate care for your child, and are happy to make recommendations and referrals.

### **Newsletter**

Each centre distributes a monthly newsletter by email containing information of interest to families. This may include special events, fieldtrips, program planning, community events and other interesting tidbits. Your suggestions and comments are always welcome.

**Parent Evaluation**

Each year, parent evaluations are provided to all our families. These evaluations help us discover what you value in a Child Care program, and ask you to rate and comment on several areas. Your input and comments are important to us. Evaluations can be completed online, and are anonymous. Results and comments will be posted, and used to improve our programs.

**Parent Focus Group meetings**

Each Centre will hold a minimum of 2 Parent Focus Meetings annually to discuss issues of importance pertaining to Child Care. The meeting will also provide parents with the opportunity to offer feedback regarding the operation of the program. An agenda will be distributed to families prior to the meeting.

**Strong Kids**

The YMCA mobilizes people to build better communities by giving something back through philanthropy- the giving of time, talent, treasure and trust.

The YMCA strives to make programs, services and facilities available to all. Individuals and families from all areas of our community benefit from programs that help them grow in spirit, mind and body.

The Strong Kids Campaign raises money for our Opportunity Fund, which is then used to make our programs and facilities accessible to everyone in the community. Donations to the Strong Kids Campaign help over 15 000 people access YMCA facilities and programs each year.

Families can participate in the annual Strong Kids Fundraising campaign at their Child Care Centres. Your Program Director will be happy to explain how you can get involved and make a real difference to your community.

## Registration & Fees

All YMCA Early Years Centres which offer preschool care are licensed for children ages 19 months to 6 years of age. Certain centres may offer infant care (care for children under 19 months), ask your Director for details.

YMCA School Age Care Programs are licensed for children ages 5 – 12 years. Children must be school attendees to participate in a school age program. Certain centres may only offer care for children in grades 1-6.

Children can make the transition from Early Years care to School Age Care upon entering Kindergarten in September. Please check with your centre Director prior to registering your child in kindergarten to determine which component of care will be available at your location. In order for us to adhere to provincial licensing standards, children will remain in our Kindercare program until they enter Grade 1 the following September.

Part time care is available on a very limited basis, and is vulnerable as the Centre reaches capacity. To ensure financial viability, the Centre's part-time registrants may be given the choice of taking full time care or forfeiting their space, when a demand for full time care is experienced. Part time care is not available at our Early Years facilities.

Parents are requested to arrange an appointment for an initial visit and interview at the Centre. During the visit, parents will receive a personal orientation and registration package. Prior to registering your child in care, it is very important that you share with us any individual needs that your child has. This will allow us the opportunity to work with you to develop a plan on how we can best work with your family to meet these needs. All forms must be returned before your child's first day. It is absolutely essential that all information be completed, including Health Care number, immunization record, All About Me form and an emergency contact person to ensure the safety and security of your child. The first month's fees, as well as the registration deposit must also be paid prior to your child's first day.

While we try and accommodate all families to the best of our ability, we cannot guarantee a continuation of care should you wish to transfer between centres.

If your child will be transferring from an Early Years program to a School Age Care program for the start of kindergarten in September, you must confirm this with the School Age Centre Director by March 1<sup>st</sup>. This gives children priority for registration, but does not guarantee a space. Confirmation of space will be given by July 1<sup>st</sup>, to allow time for arrangements to be made.

### **Free Child Membership**

All children registered for full time care will be given a free child's membership at one of our Health Fitness and Aquatic Centres. This allows children to access swim lessons, drop-in programs and other unique opportunities

### **Hours of Operation**

YMCA Child Care Centres are open Monday to Friday, 6:00 am to 6:00 pm unless otherwise stated. We are closed on statutory holidays, and will poll parents for care required on other non-stat holidays  
Updated 7/29/2015

(examples: Easter Monday and Christmas Eve). Should less than ten children require care on such holidays, you may be offered care at another facility on that particular day. All parents will be notified in this instance.

If your child attends a school other than the one in which the centre is based, please notify the Director of your school's PD day schedule as soon as possible. We may be unable to provide care for the full day on those occasions.

YMCA School Age Centres operate every school day for care before and after classes. On non-school days we provide care for the full day. There may be an additional charge for these days for those not registered in full time care. Non-school days will be enhanced with fieldtrips/outings; special visitors; workshops/courses or events and/or additional programmed activity times.

All of our Early Years centres, and the majority of our School Age centres run for 12 months of the year. If you are wishing to take your child out of care, you may be required to continue to pay fees to hold your space. This may be necessary if your centre is currently at capacity, or will be at capacity prior to your return date. Please speak with your Director to ensure that your child will continue to have the care required.

## **Fees**

Fees are charged on a monthly basis and payment must be made on the first day of the month, or split equally between first day of the month and the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Your child is not officially registered for that month until payment is scheduled. NSF payments are subject to an administration charge.

If payments are returned as NSF more than twice, you will no longer have the option of splitting payments. All payments will need to be made on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. Should payments go NSF following this change, care will be terminated.

Full fees will be charged for weeks with statutory holidays and for children who miss any part of the week due to illness or vacation time.

In order to keep your registration current we require families use a pre-authorized payment plan. The YMCA is able to accept payment by Visa, Master Card or Automatic Bank withdrawal.

Consistent default on payment of fees will result in termination of care.

For all of our programs which run 12 month of the year, you may be required to pay full or partial fees, or leave a deposit to retain a space during a prolonged absence. Please speak to your Director prior to making arrangements.

In order to continue providing consistent quality and service, the YMCA implements an annual fee increase. A market assessment is completed prior to finalizing the increase amount. Families will receive written notice, at least 30 days prior to the fee change. Increases are effective January 1<sup>st</sup> of

each year. School Age care operates at an increased rate in July and August to cover the costs of fieldtrips, bussing and additional programming.

### **Registration Deposit**

All families enrolling in YMCA child care programs are required to pay a refundable registration deposit for each child. This will be applied to the final month's fees when your child leaves our care, provided one month's written notice is given.

### **Withdrawal**

YMCA Child Care is a shared experience for everyone to enjoy. The YMCA holds the right to discontinue services if the health and safety of others is at risk (as outlined in our Child Guidance Policy).

The YMCA requires one month written notice to withdraw from care. Should you choose to withdraw your child from our care, we ask that you provide your Director with written notice one month prior to your leaving date. Notice must be given prior to or on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. Your registration deposit will then be applied to the final month's fees. We will be unable to return a deposit without one month's written notice of withdrawal.

### **Financial Assistance**

If you require a fee subsidy please speak with your Director for information. The application for Provincial subsidy can be found online at <http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/1153.cfm>. It is the responsibility of families to have their subsidy in place prior to registration. Should the centre not receive confirmation of subsidy approval, families are required to pay full fees. Should the approval be backdated, we will credit your account for the subsidy amount. Should your child not attend the required hours (100 hours for Early Years, 50 hours for School Age), you will be responsible for paying the balance owing. Your Director will contact you to make these arrangements.

### **Tax Receipts**

Child Care fees are tax deductible. An official tax receipt will be given annually prior to Federal tax deadlines. Please retain this receipt for your records, as if you require a replacement, it will be issued with a \$25 administration fee. If you will be leaving the centre prior to the receipts being made available, please contact the centre to arrange pick-up of receipts, or to have them mailed to your current address.

### **Late Fees**

All of our centres close at 6:00pm. If there is an emergency and you are going to be late, we require that you call the Centre to notify us. Late fees will be charged in these instances. Continued late pick-ups may result in termination of your child care services.

Late Fees: \$1/minute per child

If we are unable to contact you at 6:00pm, we are required to follow our Abandoned Child procedures. All guardian and emergency contact numbers listed on your registration package will be used to try to arrange a pick-up for your child prior to contacting Social Services.



## Daily Routine

You are invited and encouraged to bring your child for a visit during the week prior to their first day. This gives him/her an opportunity to become familiar with the Centre, our educators and to meet the other children in the program. You must remain with your child during this visit, as they are not yet registered in our program.

During the initial period of adjustment, tears are a very natural occurrence for our younger children. Our educators have specialized skills to help your child over a difficult time. Our educators can assist you both as you say good-bye.

A routine that is consistent from day to day gives children a specific way to understand time. Once your child has participated in the sequence of the daily routine a number of times, he/she will begin to understand time as a predictable sequence of events without depending upon an adult to tell what happens next.

Our daily routine includes active and quiet times, time with friends and time to play alone. Many opportunities are given for your child to interact individually or as part of a group. Arts and crafts, music, science, language activities, dramatic and outdoor play ensure a well balanced day that combines learning with fun.

Outdoor play is a mandatory part of our daily programming. Please ensure that your child comes with appropriate outdoor wear each day.

### Items from Home

All personal items from home (Eg. Hats, mitts, jackets, blankets, sippy cups, bottles ...), must be labeled with your child's name in order to prevent cross contamination.

Each centre has developed guidelines surrounding toys from home, please check with your Director for information at your location. Please also be aware that any toys brought from home are the responsibility of the child and not the centre.

### Open Door Policy

The YMCA has an open door policy for parents but it is important that parental presence does not interrupt the daily routine. While we appreciate that you want to spend time interacting with your child in the child care environment, too many adults in a room can often be distressing for children. We suggest that you take 5-10 minutes and settle your child into an activity, say good-bye and then leave.

If you would like to spend more time with your child while at the center, you can discuss the possibility of an extended visit with your child's educator. However, if your child's educator feels the daily routine is interrupted, you may be asked to shorten your visit.

### Arrivals and Departures

To ensure the safety and security of your child while attending YMCA Child Care we require that:

- **Parents escort their child to an educator on duty and sign him/her in and out. Our responsibility begins when you inform us that your child has arrived.**
- Parents must notify the Centre if someone other than themselves will be picking up the child. A child will not be released to anyone without your authorization. That person will be asked for picture identification and must be 14 years of age or older.

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- In the best interest of the child, YMCA Child Care educators are reluctant to release a child to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In this situation the Director will:
  - advise the person that the child should not be released and offer assistance to the person
  - call the child's emergency contact to arrange pick-up
  - notify the police if the child or their family is at risk of personal injury or harm.
- Some of our sites have a policy where the doors are locked at all times. This is dependent on the school/building policy. The YMCA does not have influence over the decision to lock/keep doors open, as we are tenants to most of these buildings. If your site has a keypad, you will need to get the security code from your Director. Other sites will often have doorbells located near the YMCA entrance.
- If your child will not be attending the program, you are required to notify the centre. In School Age care, should you fail to notify the centre, and we are unable to contact you, we will need to follow lost child procedures.

### **Clothing and Possessions**

Children should be dressed in casual, comfortable clothing that allows them to explore and play without fear of getting dirty. Please ensure that clothing is appropriate for the weather.

Accidents can happen, so we require that you keep an extra set of clothing at the Centre. To help keep everything organized and to minimize losses, please label all of your child's possessions.

We also require that all children have a pair of appropriate indoor shoes to leave at the Centre. Due to health and safety requirements, we require that you do not send your child with flip-flops or backless shoes.

### **Nutrition**

All of our centres provide a morning and afternoon snack. All snacks follow Canada's Food Guide, and are monitored by government standards. We encourage children to try each type of food, but the amount they choose to eat is up to each child. Our goal is to help children develop a taste for a variety of foods. When families do provide food and drink, we encourage them to follow the recommendations of the *Canada Food Guide*.

As we are committed to healthy eating, please do not send candy or other sugary foods to the Centre. Children will not be allowed to substitute those snacks for the ones provide by the Center. If a child's snack/lunch from home does not meet recommended standards, the Center will supplement with food from the *Canada Food Guide*.

In the event that there are severe allergies in your child's centre, restrictions to food will apply. For this reason, some centres are nut aware-please check to see if this applies to your Centre.

A detailed menu is posted in each location. Should your child have a documented allergy which does not allow them to participate in this menu, please speak with your Director to make alternate arrangements.

Children's birthdays will be acknowledged and a monthly birthday cupcake day. Please join us if you are able to.

### **Rest Period**

We provide all children with the opportunity to rest or have a quiet time each day. Infant and toddler rooms have scheduled rest periods, and we encourage all of our children to have a quiet time to recharge. Preschool classrooms may also have a scheduled rest time, and alternate activities are provided for wake-up children. Centres may provide a blanket for each child, or you may be asked to bring a small blanket from home. Due to limited storage space, we are not able to accommodate large quilts, pillows or other sleep items. As children get ready to move up to older age groups, we work with them to establish rest routines which will prepare them to participate fully, and eventually, to ensure that they are ready to enter the school system. Please check with your centre for specific rest time routines.

### **Fieldtrips**

Throughout the year we take trips to special places of interest. A permission form will be available in advance of the excursion informing you of the destination, time and date, and requiring your signature. Parents who choose not to send their children on field trips will be required to make alternate arrangements, as care at the centre will not be available. The permission form must be completed to ensure your child's participation. The YMCA covers all fieldtrips and entrance fees, but from time to time additional fees may be asked for special treats or lunches. These items would be optional rather than mandatory.

Children must be dressed appropriately for these occasions, wearing clothing which protects them from the weather, both warm and cool.

Each child must be at the centre 30 minutes before the scheduled departure time to ensure participation.

During our fieldtrips we try to have additional adults with us to enhance the ratio, and to provide a safe and enjoyable outing for everyone. You are always welcome to join us at these times, as we encourage parent volunteers on all field trips. All parent volunteers must complete a Volunteer package, including a Police Security Clearance prior to working with the children. Please ask your Director for a package. Should we find that our number of volunteers, educators and children is above our transportation capacity, you may be required to make your own way to the fieldtrip location and to contribute any entrance fee.

## Programming

Our program at the YMCA Child Care Centre concentrates on active learning on the part of the child, both physically and mentally. Our curriculum is based on children's self-directed exploration and discovery. Through play, real work and building relationships children gain a sense of self as powerful and competent. Our educators provide a child-responsive curriculum which emerges out of experiences in the lives of children, families, and educators in our program.

Children have ample opportunity to explore and experiment at their own level of knowledge. Their activities are both interesting and satisfying to them, and educators are aware of their need for challenge and success, and for room to grow. Full involvement in, and satisfaction from one's work is of prime importance for social and emotional growth.

### **Parents as Partners**

We believe that your child's care is a partnership between home and the centre. In order to increase this communication we provide a family friendly assessment tool which will allow both parents and educators to see areas of developmental growth. This tool will be shared annually, and is also available by request from your Director.

### **YMCA Character Values**

We build strong kids, healthy families and thriving communities through programs that teach the values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, diversity & social inclusion. These five values are interwoven with all of the programs occurring within the Centre and are often highlighted in specific activities. We encourage all of our educators and participants to use the five values as they relate to activities and relationships they participate in.

### **Outdoor Environment**

We believe that outdoor play should be a natural part of the daily activities of children. If dressed appropriately, there is much to see and do in any kind of weather. Please ensure that your child is always prepared with outdoor wear which allows for them to stay comfortable during their time spent outside. School age children will be spending 30 minutes outside each day, and Early Years children will be out for 60 minutes of play and exploration.

Outdoor play offers many advantages over indoor play, including tolerance for noise and spills, freedom to run and move, and a way to connect with nature. We offer children a variety of opportunities and experiences which allow them to explore and extend their understanding of their environment.

Many of our Early Years centres have designated play areas, which we have set up as natural play areas. Natural playgrounds allow children to develop skills and behaviours beyond physical skills. These include social skills, cooperation and the ability to solve problems. In addition, natural playgrounds stimulate a child's imagination and creativity more than a traditional playground. Natural playgrounds also help children to connect to nature and learn about their environment.

## **Child Guidance**

The goal of YMCA Child Care is to develop partnerships with families while providing consistent quality child care. We want children in our care to understand and accept responsibility for their actions. Children must be able to recognize behavior which conflicts with the YMCA Character Values of *respect, responsibility, caring, honest, diversity & social inclusion*. Children will be encouraged to make appropriate choices. For those occasions when children make choices that are not acceptable, a guidance process has been developed, and a behavior contract is entered into with all of our families.

### **Methods for Behavior Management:**

- Redirection: guiding a child into acceptable options when engaged in an unacceptable activity
- Logical and Natural Consequences: staff will ensure children are aware of the results of their actions or choices
- Limit Setting: boundaries are developed by the educator for the children as a group and for individual children according to each situation
- Modeling: demonstration of appropriate ways of interacting
- Providing Choices: appropriate choices are outlined and children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves
- Anticipating Trouble: planning and preparing the environment
- Emphasizing positive behavior: giving inappropriate behavior less attention
- Positive Reinforcement: use of encouragement

Upon registration in a Child Care centre, you will be provided with a complete Child Guidance policy. Please refer to this for further information.

### **Suspension and Termination of Care**

Should there be ongoing serious incidents at the centre, the following steps will take place:

- Meeting scheduled between your family and the centre Director to put in place a plan to work with your child to reduce/eliminate the cause of the incidents, or to create a plan to cope with the situation. At this time, your family may be asked to access additional supports to secure funding which would allow the centre to have a ratio enhancement position to support your child during their time with us.
- Should another incident occur, you will be called, and your child will be given a one day suspension from care
- Upon return to care, should another incident occur, your child's care will be terminated immediately.

### **Assessment**

At the YMCA, we are committed to providing quality care for all our families. While we strive to provide a happy and comfortable environment for each child, we recognize that group care may not be suitable for everyone. If our educators notice your child having difficulties in our programs we will work closely with you to determine the most appropriate course of action. We will keep an on-going record of your child's behaviour, meet with you regularly to discuss appropriate behavior management strategies and, if necessary, offer a referral to a community organization that could provide the most appropriate means of support.

# Policies

## Health & Illness

To ensure a good standard of health in the Centre, we maintain constant awareness of the children’s health requirements. If a child’s illness prevents him/her from participating or being comfortable in normal program activities, or if educator cannot provide the care required, the child will be considered too ill to attend Child Care.

At the centre, if the child develops symptoms listed below, the Director or Educator will contact the parents or emergency contact immediately. If neither can be reached or refuse to pick up their child immediately, (within 2 hours), the YMCA will contact Child Intervention Services, their Regional Child Care office and the Child Care Manager. While the child is awaiting pick up, he/she is kept separate from the other children as much as possible.

<b><i>A child should not attend care when:</i></b>	<b><i>A child may return to care when:</i></b>
he/she cannot fully participate in all program components for the day (outdoor, swimming, field trips)	he/she is able to fully participate
he/she has a fever of 100 degrees (38.8 C)	his/her fever has remained below 100 degrees (38.8 C) for 24 hours without medication
he/she has 2 consecutive bouts of diarrhea	he/she has had at least one normal bowel movement
he/she has skin infections, undiagnosed rash, or signs of any contagious disease	he/she has been examined by a doctor and has received medical clearance
he/she has any form of untreated infestation (i.e. scabies, head lice, etc.)	he/she has been treated and has no eggs or nits
conjunctivitis (pink eye)	he/she has seen a doctor and 24 hours after first eye drops have been given
Vomiting	Symptom free for 24 hours
New or unexplained cough	Symptom free for 24 hours
He/she requires greater care and attention to be provided without compromises the care of the other children in the program	Symptom free for 24 hours or a physician note
Having or displaying any other illness or symptom the Educator knows or believes may indicate that the child poses a Health Risk to persons on the program premises	Written notice from a physician claiming the child does not pose a health risk to persons on the program premises

All children play outside each day. If your child is not well enough to go out, please keep him/her at home. If you are unsure if your child will require a doctor’s note before returning, please contact the centre prior to your child’s return.

If your child has been diagnosed with an illness, we ask that you provide your centre with full information regarding the condition. Failure to disclose an illness may result in your child being asked to leave our care until a doctor's note supporting a clean bill of health is provided.

Note: if your child is suspected to have a communicable disease, the public health nurse will be called and you will be notified. If a communicable disease is confirmed, quarantine regulations set by the Local Board of Health will be observed. These regulations are available on the Alberta Health Services website.

### **Medication Policy**

Our educators with Child Care First Aid certification will administer medication or herbal remedies when requested. A "Medical Authorization Form" must be filled out and signed by the parent indicating date, name of child, name of medicine, dosage, and exact time(s) to be given. For safety reasons, all medication must be in its original container with the prescription marked indicating date, name of child, prescribing doctor, name of medicine, dosage, and exact time(s) to be given. Non-prescribed medication or herbal remedies can be administered as long as the same "Medical Authorization Form" is filled out. Medication given must be in its original container and specify that it is suitable for the age of the child it is being given to. Educators will administer the medication as long as the parent's request does not exceed the recommended dosage as indicated on the bottle by either time or amount. Parents must also supply the necessary measuring equipment, such as a medical measuring spoon or syringe. Educators will be unable to administer any medication unless appropriate equipment is provided. Your child will be observed after medication is administered to ensure that there are no unexpected reactions.

Parents are to provide information in writing to educators about when medications and herbal remedies were given to the child prior to arriving at centre.

Non-emergency medication and herbal remedies will be stored in a locked container out of the children's reach and refrigerated when necessary.

All emergency medications will be stored out of reach of the children; but in an unlocked container for easy accessibility. For children requiring emergency medication, parents must provide medication to be kept at the centre.

All medication and herbal remedies will be returned to the family once the authorized period for administration is over.

If your child falls ill during the morning before the school day begins, please ensure that you pick them up from school as we will be unable to provide care during their regular school hours.

Should your child require ongoing medical supports, we will work with the family to ensure that the primary educator is trained in the proper method of administering the health care required. Families are required to have their child's doctor complete an Anaphylaxes or Asthma Information Form if necessary.

### **Distal Supervision Policy for School Age Children**

Distal Supervision is defined as intermittent, direct supervision by an educator when there is a planned, location specific, time-limited program activity.

For example, a child may have permission to do their homework in a given location. The child would be checked on every 15 minutes.

An individual agreement will be drawn up between the Director, Parent/Guardian, and the child. Distal Supervision is for older school-aged children, whose parents and the YMCA educators are comfortable with this type of arrangement. Any failure to abide by the terms of the agreement will result in a loss of this privilege.

### **Fire drills and Emergency Evacuations**

Fire drills are held once per month, minimum, to prepare children in the event of fire or for any other emergency evacuation. The children are guided out of the nearest, safe exit and the educators will check washrooms and corners to ensure all children are evacuated. Attendance boards, child emergency information and first aid kits are brought along.

In the case of a fire drill or practice, the children will meet at the designated location. Attendance will be taken and amount of time taken to evacuate will be noted and recorded before the children are guided back inside the building.

### **Building Evacuation Locations**

Each centre has a designated site for both site evacuation, and area evacuation. Please visit your centres page on the website for the address and contact information for these locations. In case of an emergency, please proceed to this location to reunite with your child.

### **Daily Transportation Policy**

#### **Kindergarten**

Kindergarten children will be escorted to their classroom by a YMCA educator. Once the ECS teacher is present and has acknowledged the children, the YMCA educator will then leave to return to the YMCA program. At dismissal time, YMCA educator will meet the kindergarten children and escort them back to the YMCA program.

#### **School Age Care**

Children will be released from the YMCA program space to line-up with their class at first bell. Any children wishing accompaniment to their classroom will individually be walked to class. After school, children will proceed from class to the YMCA program on their own after the bell. YMCA educators will greet the children and mark attendance upon their entry.

#### **Bussed Children**

The YMCA does not provide transportation from our centres to schools in the area. If you wish to enroll in one of our programs, your child must attend the designated school. At YMCA Birchwood Child Care children are escorted to the front of the building and are put on the school bus by an educator(s). After school children will be picked up from the school bus by an educator(s) in front of the building and taken to the appropriate classroom.



## **Unexpected Absences**

Early Years children: For your child's safety, please ensure that you contact the centre by 8:45am to notify us of your child's absence.

School Age children: it is crucial that parents advise us of their child's absence by 8:15 am.

At the end of the school day, if a child does not arrive at the program within 10 minutes of the final school bell, and there has been no call from a parent/guardian indicating alternate arrangements, a YMCA educator will check with the school to confirm the child's attendance. If the child was in attendance, the YMCA educator will immediately contact the Director to notify them of the situation. Parents will be contacted immediately, and Missing Child Protocol will be followed.

## **Feedback Process**

In the event that families have a congratulation, concern or complaint, we encourage them to let us know by using the following process:

1. Contact the Director of the Centre your child attends.
2. If you require further information, you may contact the Child Care Senior Director. Contact information is available at your child's center.
3. If you feel your feedback was not sufficiently heard, you may then contact the Child Care Managers or General Manager, 780-429-9622.
4. Any further feedback can be directed to the YMCA of Northern Alberta President and Chief Executive Officer at 780 423-9622.

Any feedback pertaining to licensing concerns that families feel have not adequately been dealt with by the YMCA, can be passed along to the following:

Fort McMurray

Northeast Child and Family Services

8th Floor Provincial Building

9915 Franklin Ave

Fort McMurray, AB

T9K2K4

Ph: 780-743-7416

When a complaint is made to Child and Family Services:

- The identity of the caller will not be divulged to the license holder.
- The complaint will be investigated by a Licensing Officer.
- Complaints will be followed up by phone. Written confirmation will be received only if an investigation was conducted.

## Resources

### Subsidy Information and Application Forms

The application for Provincial subsidy can be found online at  
<http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/1153.cfm>

Mental Health Services  
Northern Lights Regional Health Centre  
7 Hospital Street  
Fort McMurray, AB  
T9H1P2  
PH: 780-791-6194

Alberta Health Services  
Public Health Centre  
113 Thickwood Blvd  
Fort McMurray, AB  
T9H5E5  
PH: 780-791-6247

**YMCA On-Line**  
[www.nothernalberta.ymca.ca](http://www.nothernalberta.ymca.ca)