



YMCA OF METRO NORTH

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Parent/Caregiver Handbook
for
Early Learning Programs
Serving
Infants, Toddlers & Preschoolers

2017-2018

We build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities.
Corporate Office: 2 Centennial Park Peabody, MA
978-775-3701 www.ycametronorth.org



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Dear Caregivers/ Querido Padres,

Welcome to the YMCA of Metro North's Early Learning Programs. We are delighted that you have chosen one of our programs for your child(ren). We are committed to providing a safe and nurturing experience for your child with plenty of opportunities for growth in spirit, mind and body.

Children spend a tremendous amount of time in Early Education programming, during which time significant developmental impacts and milestones occur. In all settings attitudes are formed, ideas of self-worth are developed, relationships with peers and adults are experienced and young bodies grow strong and competent.

Our programs are designed to provide each child with a variety of positive, healthy and engaging activities throughout each day. The staff are trained and experienced in working with children. Many of them are working towards a degree in education or in the human service field. The YMCA provides them with ongoing trainings, meetings and support throughout the year. All of our staff must comply with the Department of Early Education and Care's requirements for the position they hold, and are trained in first aid and CPR as well.

This handbook is designed to assist you in better understanding the philosophy, policies and procedures for our Early Learning Programs. We encourage you to review this booklet and retain it for future reference. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to talk to us. We are very much interested in your comments, questions and feedback regarding our program.

Thank you for choosing the YMCA of Metro North to meet the needs of your family. You have chosen a quality program for your child with safety as our number one priority. As a team we can work together to assure your child a successful experience in our program. We are glad to have you as part of our YMCA family.

Introduction

YMCA Program Purpose, Philosophy, and Goals

Mission Statement: The YMCAs of Metro North, as a community based organization with a commitment of service to the community, will utilize its staff, volunteers and facilities to respond to community and individual needs by providing quality recreational social and educational experiences in a Judeo-Christian atmosphere for everyone regardless of sex, age, nationality,

religious belief or income level. The YMCAs of Metro North Child Care Programs are built on the concepts of family, child, community, and accessibility.

The Family: YMCA child care is family-centered care, which means that caregivers must be included in the process. The goal of our programs is to support and assist the whole family; to strengthen caregiver-child relationships, and to increase the importance of the family unit. This concept is central to our National Philosophy, which is what makes YMCA child care different from programs that may look similar.

The Child: Children today can face tremendous obstacles to their successful development. Many of them spend a significant amount of their childhood in our program. Our programs provide caring role models and age appropriate experiences that nurture children's growth, encourage positive behavior, and help them develop into happy and healthy individuals. Early Learning and Out-of-School Time Programs, more so than almost any other programs, offer great potential for the achievement of the YMCA mission and objectives in the lives of the children and families served.

The Community: The YMCA is not new to the role of advocate for America's children and families. The family, the school, and the neighborhood have always played a central role in the design and delivery of YMCA programs. Each YMCA assesses the need of its community and responds with programs to meet those needs, helping to make the community a healthier, safer, and better place to live. Each YMCA designs and delivers its child programs according to the specific needs of families in the neighborhoods it serves.

Accessibility: The YMCA believes that safety and care is a birthright of all children and that it is the responsibility of caregivers to provide their children with full-time care from birth through adolescence. It is the responsibility of people of conscience to help provide the resources so that all caregivers can ensure their children are well cared for. More than ever before, children, caregivers, and families need help in carrying out this responsibility. Quality care must be available to all who need it, not just to those who can afford it. Many YMCAs have a policy that no one should be denied access to YMCA child care programs because of an inability to pay full fees.

General Information / Policies

Licensing Authority The YMCA of Metro North Child Care Programs are licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and is mandated to uphold all of the regulations pertaining to group day care and school age licensing. The program must make available any information requested by the DEEC to determine compliance with any regulations governing the program, by providing access to its facilities, records, staff and reference. The program must maintain a copy of the regulations, Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Group and School Age Child Care Programs, on the premises of the center and must make them available to any person upon request. If you have a question about any of the regulations, please ask the program director to show them to you. The website for the EEC is www.mass.gov/eec or you can call our Licensor, Karen Gale, directly at the Northeast Regional Office for any information at 978-826-1307. Caregivers can request a copy of any program's compliance history.

Statement of Non-Discrimination The YMCA does not discriminate on the basis of race in administration of its educational policies, sports, and other child care administered programs. Based on Christian principles, the YMCA's policies are to provide opportunities to all people regardless of religion, race, sex, marital status, disability, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation or ability to pay.

Children with Special Needs/Disability The YMCA of Metro North will request and review information given by the caregiver related to the child's participation in the program. Identification of specific accommodations required to meet the needs of the child, which would include a change or modification in the child's participation in regular activities, would be reviewed. In addition, identification of any special equipment, materials, ramps or aids will be discussed. If such accommodations will cause undue financial burden on the YMCAs of Metro North, the caregiver will be notified in writing, which would include reasons for the decisions. Caregivers may contact the Department of Early Education and Care to review the decision.

Registration and Enrollment Procedures

The following forms must be filled out and brought in before the child may start in the program.

- ❖ Application Form
- ❖ Emergency First Aid & Authorization Form
- ❖ Off-Site Activities Permission Form
- ❖ Physical & Immunization Record
- ❖ Documentation of Lead Screen for children ages one year and older
- ❖ Developmental History Form/Ages & Stages Questionnaire
- ❖ Transportation Plan

Other forms that may be needed are:

- ❖ Infant Sleep Policy
- ❖ Medication Consent forms/Individual Health Care Plans
- ❖ Enrollment Policies Contract
- ❖ Signed receipt for Caregiver Handbook

Personal Items and Clothing Children at the YMCA are active and involved. They should wear clothes that are comfortable, practical and wash easily. **SNEAKERS EVERYDAY PLEASE!** All belongings should be labeled with the child's name. **The YMCA of Metro North is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal belongings.** The program will maintain a Lost and Found. We recommend that children do not bring any toys or items of any value with them to the YMCA, as we cannot be responsible for these items. Please ensure that your child has an extra set of clothes and pull-ups if they are still toilet training as accidents sometimes occur.

Pick-up Authorization All individuals that a caregiver authorizes to take their child from the program should be identified on the application prior to the child's enrollment in the program. If a child is to be picked up by someone other than an authorized person, the program must be notified in writing. This written authorization may be a note or completion of the One Time Release Form. A verbal consent **WILL NOT BE TAKEN OVER THE PHONE**. For the child's safety, we will not allow a child to leave the site without an authorized person. **Picture identification is required** for any persons picking up a child at all times! Please ask caregivers to let us know if there are any custody issues that we should be aware of. Staff will not force a child to leave the

program with someone that is unfamiliar to the child. Staff will not release children to adults appearing to be under the influence of alcohol and or drugs.

Caregiver Rights We strive to involve caregivers of the children in our care in visiting the program, meeting with the staff and receiving reports of their children's progress.

Caregiver Involvement

Caregiver involvement within the Programs takes the following forms:

CAREGIVER CONFERENCES

Meetings with Caregivers Directors will meet with all caregivers prior to admitting their child to the program. Caregivers shall have an opportunity to visit the program's classrooms at the time of the day or anytime that is convenient. They are encouraged to bring the child to visit the program and meet the staff before enrolling them to see if they are comfortable with the new surroundings.

Caregiver Conferences The Director of the program can make arrangements for individual conferences with staff at a caregiver's request. The program also holds caregiver conferences twice a year to give caregivers written information on their child's progress.

Each Program holds a Family Event each month. Examples of events for the year include:

September – Fingerprint ID Program & Back to School Night

October -- Halloween Celebration

November – "Giving Thanks"

December -- Sharing of Holiday Traditions

January – Potluck Hot Soup Night

February – Parent/Caregiver Training

March – Pot Luck Supper

April -- Clean Up Day

May -- Teacher Appreciation Week

June – End of Year Celebration

July: Enjoy your Summer

August: Enjoy the end of the Summer

Progress Reports Program staff will bring special problems or significant developments to the caregiver's attention as soon as they arise.

Caregiver Visits/Open Door Policy You have the right to visit the program at any time while your child is present. Please be aware that if you need to speak with a teacher it is a good idea to make an appointment as they are first and foremost needed in the classroom. In addition, monthly meetings are offered. Our educators can meet with you face to face, via phone calls or by emails. Please let us know how best we can support you with this.

Confidentiality of Children's Records All information contained in a child's records is privileged and confidential and cannot be released without a caregiver's written consent. Authorized representatives from the Department of Early Education & Care have the right and responsibility to review all records upon request. Caregivers must be notified if a child's record is subpoenaed.

Access to a child's record Caregivers are entitled to have access to their child's record at reasonable times on request. They must have access to the record within five (5) business days of their request unless they consent to a longer time period. They must be allowed to view their child's entire record, even if it is maintained in more than one location.

Amending a Child's Record: Caregiver's have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant material to a child's record. They also have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in a child's record. If they believe that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in their child's record, they have the right to a conference with the program director to make their objections known. If they have a conference with the director, the director must inform them in writing within one week of their decision regarding the caregiver's objections. If the director decides in the caregiver's favor, they must immediately take the steps necessary to put the decision into effect. When the child is no longer in our care, we can give the caregiver the child's record or any other person you identify, upon their written request. We would not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in a child's record.

Registration Information Changes Any changes in registration information concerning a child must be arranged in advance through the Program Office (Change in pick-up authorization, addresses, work or home phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc.) A form for changing information, adding or subtracting information can be obtained from the program Office.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect on a Caregiver or Guardian All YMCA child care staff are mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect of a child directly to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or to the program's administrator who would then in turn report to DCF. We have extensive written policies and procedures for reporting including reporting on a staff member. If you would like a copy please request one from the program director.

Notification of Injury We must notify a caregiver or guardian immediately of any injury, which requires emergency care i.e. transportation to the hospital, CPR, etc. We must also notify the caregivers, in writing, within 24 hours, if any first aid is administered to their child.

Line of Authority In order to more efficiently serve the needs of all caregivers and children and ensure the smooth flow of the program it is recommended that you follow the chain of command in addressing issues or concerns that you may have about any issues pertaining to the YMCA. If for some reason you feel you have not been heard or that issues are not being resolved, the Director and the Association have an open door policy and would be more than happy to sit down with you to discuss your concerns. If you still feel you have not had your concerns validated or addressed you may set up a time to review your concerns with the Director of Y Child Care Services.

Research and Experimentation/Unusual Treatment. No licensed program shall conduct research, experimentation, or unusual treatment involving children without the written, informed, consent of the affected child's caregivers or guardian, for each occurrence. In programs where observations of children (by other than caregivers of the children in the program) are common, a general caregiver consent may be obtained in writing. Observation shall mean that there is no interaction between the child and the observers and no identification of the individual child. In no case shall the licensee allow a child to be harmed during research, experimentation or unusual

treatment. Research and experimentation shall not mean program evaluation or data collection for purposes of documenting services of the program which do not identify individual children.

Unauthorized Activities Licensed programs shall not allow children to participate in any activities

unrelated to the direct care of children without the written, informed consent of the caregiver(s) or guardian. "Activities" shall mean, but not be limited to:

(a) fund raising (b) publicity, including photographs and participation in the mass media.

Registration Changes Any changes in registration information concerning a child must be arranged in advance through the program Office (ie Change in pick-up authorization, addresses, work or home phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc.) A form for changing information or adding or subtracting information can be obtained from the Program Office or Program Director.

Tuition/Enrollment Policies

Enrollment Criteria Each licensed program component (Infant, Toddler and Pre-School Care and School Age Care) have different criteria for enrollment. Please refer to the different program directors for specific details regarding each program.

Screening and Phase-In As part of the enrollment process families will be asked to fill out the Ages & Stages Screening Questionnaire. This information will allow us to better serve your child and to see how your child adjusts to their classroom.

Tuition Fees Tuition fees are charged to the families account weekly. All fees must be paid IN ADVANCE of a child arriving in the program for that week. Payments are due before the child enters the building on **Monday** of each week.

Late Payment of Fees Caregivers whose payments are more than two weeks late may be given a 2 week notice to pay in full or child care services will be terminated.

Extended Illness Or Family Emergencies In the event of an extended absence due to serious illness and/or family emergency caregivers may request a 50% reduction in fees for consecutive weeks. Such reductions must be in writing and are at the discretion of the Director of Y Child Care Services and the Billing and Contracts Manager. Additional documentation may be required.

Bounced Check or Bank-draft The YMCA of Metro North will administer a \$20.00 fee to a family's account in the event of a returned check or bank-draft.

School Closings If school has been cancelled due to snow or other inclement weather the YMCA will make every effort to open. In the event the Governor has declared a **state of emergency** ALL programs will be CLOSED.

Holiday Closures If a Holiday in which the programs are closed falls on a day that a child is scheduled to come to the program caregivers are still responsible to pay for that days tuition fees.

Closure Dates for 2017-2018

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|----------------------|-----------|--|
| SEPTEMBER 4, 2017 | MONDAY | LABOR DAY |
| OCTOBER 9, 2017 | MONDAY | COLUMBUS DAY |
| NOVEMBER 10, 2017 | FRIDAY | VETERANS' DAY (observed) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY |
| NOVEMBER 23, 2017 | THURSDAY | THANKSGIVING |
| NOVEMBER 24, 2017 | FRIDAY | DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING |
| DECEMBER 25, 2017 | MONDAY | CHRISTMAS |
| JANUARY 1, 2018 | MONDAY | NEW YEAR'S DAY |
| JANUARY 15, 2018 | MONDAY | MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY |
| FEBRUARY 19, 2018 | MONDAY | PRESIDENT'S DAY |
| APRIL 16, 2018 | MONDAY | PATRIOT'S DAY: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY |
| MAY 28, 2018 | MONDAY | MEMORIAL DAY |
| ***JULY 4, 2018 | WEDNESDAY | INDEPENDENCE DAY (***Early learning Programs, DPH camps) |

Temporary Closings Substitutions or refunds of days cannot be made for temporary closings of programs due to weather conditions, or loss of power, heat, or water. Payment for these days is still due. Closing announcements will be made on the answering service of the YMCA by 6:00am.

Tuition Rates for 2016-2017 school year: \$37.65 daily fee

Late Pick-Up Policy The YMCA of Metro North's Programs all have the same designated closing time which is **6:00pm**. There are two exceptions to this rule... **Christmas Eve** (December 24th when it falls on a week day) All programs will close at **1:00pm** & **New Year's Eve** (December 31st when it falls on a week day) All programs will close at **1:00pm**. In the event the program must close because of environmental or facility emergency caregivers will be notified with as much notice as possible. We will designate an appropriate closing time and communicate that to all caregivers. All program staff schedules revolve around the above closing times. All children must be picked up at or before these closing times. In the event a child is not picked up by these times caregivers will be charged a late fee according to the following schedule:

- ❖ \$10.00/per child 6 minutes after designated closing time; an additional
- ❖ \$10.00/per child 10 minutes after designated closing time; an additional
- ❖ \$10.00/per child 20 minutes after designated closing time

If after **60 minutes** from the designated closing time children have not been picked up, a maximum of \$60.00/per child will be charged to the family's account, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) will be notified, and a 51A report will be filed against the caregiver(s)/guardian(s) for child abandonment. All late fees charged will be added to your family's account and must be paid within 5 days of accrual. The clock at the front desk at the YMCA will be used to determine late fees. Please take a moment to synchronize your own clock with the one located at the site. If caregivers are sending another authorized person to pick up their child, and the authorized person is late to pick up their child, late fees will still be charged and will be the responsibility of the caregivers. Forms for late fee notification are in the program office and must be signed by the program director.

Collections: The YMCA of Metro North reserves the right to refer any accounts more than 30 days past due to a collection agency for further collective action. If an account has been sent to a collection agency they must deal directly with the branch billing manager/administrator.

Attendance Policy If children will not be attending the program on a scheduled day you must notify the program at least **one and one half hour (1.5)** before the child's scheduled time of arrival. If a child does not attend on a day they are scheduled, caregivers are still required to pay tuition fees for those days. As many of our children arrive on program buses, it is helpful for the staff to know in advance who will not be attending so time is not wasted looking for children that are not coming. In order to provide access to quality care, it is necessary to make the best possible use of resources.

**THE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE & YMCA OF METRO NORTH'S
SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION AGREEMENT**

All children who receive EEC child care subsidies, or YMCA Access (financial aid) are expected to attend the early education and care program, in accordance with the terms of the child care authorization. Child care educators/providers are required to make every effort to ensure that each child care slot is filled or each voucher is used at all times.

EEC regulations and policies only allow payment to providers for 30 absence days within a six month period or 3 consecutive unexplained absences:

- EEC defines an “absent day” as any day a child does not attend a scheduled day of care, whether or not the day was explained or unexplained; and
- EEC defines “unexplained absence” as a day that a child does not attend the program and the parent/guardian fails to contact the program on the day the child did not attend.

The attendance period starts on the first day of the child(ren)’s authorized placement. For example, a provider serving a child who starts a subsidized program on September 1st may only bill EEC for up to 30 absences through February 28. On March 1st, the absences for the month of September will be dropped and a new six month period will be extended through April 1st.

Excessive absences may result in the termination of your child care subsidy. The Massachusetts subsidized child care regulations and policies define excessive absences as:

- More than 30 non-attended days in a six-month period, explained or unexplained. Parents/guardians are expected to give a reason for non-attendance due to a child illness or medical condition, death in the family, emergency circumstances, religious holidays, and up to 10 vacation days in a 12 month period;

OR

- More than 3 consecutive **unexplained** absence days; this is when the child does not attend care and the parent/guardian fails to contact provider to confirm the child will not be in attendance. *To reiterate, explained absences are children’s absences due to the child’s illness or medical condition, death in family, emergency circumstances, religious holidays, and up to 10 vacation days in a 12 month period. **ALL other absences are considered unexplained.***

Families exceeding the 30 days allotted may be issued a Notice of Termination. Your child care services will end on the date listed on the notice. You will then need to contact EEC to have your case reviewed.

To ensure that you do not lose your child care subsidy for excessive absences, you must:

1. Ensure that your child attends the program in accordance with the terms of your child care application and fee agreement;
2. Immediately notify the child care program to explain your child’s absence; and
3. Provide at least a 2 week advance notice if you plan to (1)remove your child from the child care program (2) request an approved break in service, which allows a parent to un-enroll their child from EEC financial assistance for a specified period of time not to exceed 90 days; (3) change your child’s schedule or placement to accommodate regularly occurring appointments or activities (including, but not limited to extra tutoring, counseling, therapy, extracurricular activities, etc); or (4) remove your child so he or she may attend alternative care or non-custodial visits.

Children who will not be attending the program on a scheduled day must notify the program at least **one and one half hour (1.5)** before the child’s scheduled time of arrival. If your child does not attend on a day they are scheduled, you are still required to pay tuition fees for those days. **As many of our children arrive on program buses, it is helpful for the staff to know in advance who will not be attending so time is not wasted looking for children that are not coming.** In order to provide access to quality programming it is

necessary to make the best possible use of resources. Providers are required to make every effort to ensure that each child care slot is filled at all times. Whenever a child leaves care, the provider must move quickly to make that slot available to another child who is waiting for care. This policy allows for children's absence due to illness, emergencies, and a maximum of two weeks' vacation per year (explained absence). ***Caregivers are still responsible for payment during ANY and ALL absences from the program.***

Withdrawal from the Program Withdrawal from the program must be given to the program office in writing with 4 weeks/20 business days' notice. Please be advised that caregivers will be responsible for payment of the **20 days** whether or not the child attends.

Financial Assistance The YMCA has many different resources available for caregivers who require financial assistance in paying tuition fees. The YMCA currently has a contract with the Department of Early Education and Care to write Income Eligible contract slots for working caregivers, caregivers seeking paid employment, and for caregivers that are currently enrolled in full time education or job training, foster caregivers, grandparents with custody, and/or teen parents. The YMCA of Metro North also accepts vouchers from Child Care Circuit. The YMCA of Metro North also takes children through referral from DCF. For Caregivers that do not qualify for a state subsidized slot, the YMCA of Metro North through its "Access" program, can offer reduced rates to individuals and families who cannot afford the full price.

Cellular Phone Use

Cell phone use is NOT permitted beyond the lobby area of the Program. No photographs of children may be taken without written caregiver consent.

Health and Safety Policies

The YMCA of Metro North concern for all children will not be limited to learning but will encompass the physical and emotional sides of his/her development. We ask from all caregivers complete cooperation in accepting the rules we have made for the health and safety of each child, and in turn we pledge as staff our diligence in maintaining good practices. If at times caregivers are inconvenienced, we ask you to remember that in protecting someone else's child you will also help maintain a safe environment for yourself. If you would like a copy of the complete Health Care Policy please ask the program director.

Emergency Numbers Posted by every phone located in each program.

First Aid Materials First Aid Staff in the program must be certified in the basics of first aid and CPR. Only staff that is certified in First Aid and/or CPR will perform First Aid on a child. If a child requires First Aid of any kind the staff in the program must notify the caregiver with a written report within 24 hours. A portable first aid kit will be carried with staff anytime children leave the classroom, are out of the building (playground) or off the property. Location of the first aid kits will be posted conspicuously in each space each program uses

Each Program and/or Site of will maintain its own first aid supplies and materials. Each Program/Site will maintain at least but not limited to: Adhesive tape, Band-Aids, Gauze pads,

Gauze roller bandage, Disposable non-latex gloves, Instant cold pack, Scissors, Tweezers, Disposable Thermometers and 1-way CPR masks.

Standard Precautions In all cases of providing first aid or cleaning up blood or bodily fluids, staff must follow the universal precautions at all times. All staff shall be provided disposable gloves to be used for the clean-up of blood spills and bodily fluids. The affected area shall be disinfected. Used gloves shall be thrown away in a lined, covered container. Bloody clothing shall be sealed in a plastic container or bag, labeled with the child's name and returned to the caregiver at the end of the day.

Administration of Medication

MEDICATION POLICY

Programs strictly adhere to the following Medication Policy:

Medication will be stored, handled, and administered only according to this policy. The necessary authorization form for handling medications at the Program is available from the office or your classroom teacher. Any staff member that administers medication will have successfully completed the Medication Administration Training required by EEC. The administration of medication must be reliably controlled and documented as follows:

1. **Prescription Medications** will only be administered when delivered to the program in the current prescription container and labeled by the pharmacists with the child's name, etc. The program must also receive Medication Consent Form from the physician with specific instructions for administration, including length of course, any allergies, and possible side effects. The physician's name and telephone number must be provided.
2. **Children on antibiotics or beginning ANY medication therapy (i.e nebulizer treatments) whether prescription or over the counter, may not return to the Program until they have completed 24 hours of medication. Children may not receive their first dose of medication at the Program.**
3. **Non-prescription medications** (e.g., Tylenol, Dimetapp, etc.) will be administered and stored by the Program with a Medication Consent form. This form must be completed by Physician and accompany each medication given in original package. We cannot dispense non-prescription medication on an "as needed" basis.
4. **Topical, non-prescription medication** (e.g., Balmex, Desitin, Aquafor, etc.) may be administered to a child with the written permission of a caregiver. Such permission shall be valid for no more than one year from the signature date. If the Program notices an adverse reaction to such a medication, the Center reserves the right to require a physician's written order to continue to use the medication at the Center. The Program will not administer any such medication contrary to the written directions on the original container unless directed to do so by a physician's written order.
5. **Sunscreen:** Caregivers who want their child to wear sunscreen are asked to put on the first application before coming in each day. Teachers will reapply sunscreen once before going outdoors in the afternoon. Caregivers must supply their own bottle of sunscreen with their child's name and instructions clearly marked.

6. Children with special needs or chronic conditions will be assessed individually in consultation with caregiver and physician. Caregivers may provide written permission from their child's health care practitioner to train staff in implementation of their child's individual health care plan. Such special needs would include, but not be limited to, the use of inhalers, Phenobarbital, or Dilantin.
7. All medications must be handed to a Teacher or Director. No medication will be accepted when left in a diaper bag, lunch box, cubby, etc. No medication should be mixed in a child's bottle or into other food, unless specified by the physician as the proper form of administration. In that case, the medication must be mixed at the Program. The Program is not responsible for replacement of spilled medication or for those left beyond the expiration date. Unused medication will be returned to the caregiver.
8. All medication should be clearly labeled with the child's name and/or current prescription label. All **prescription** and **non-prescription medication** will be stored in a locked box in the classroom or refrigerator. **Topical medication** may be stored in the classroom changing area on a shelf inaccessible to children. Appropriate authorization forms must be stored with any medication and updated as medication is administered.
9. The individual administering the prescribed medication must always be precise when measuring or distributing each dose. If there is any doubt about the accuracy of the indicated dose, it is imperative to recheck with the physician. The caregiver must supply any special device such as a dropper or a calibrated cup for proper administration. Medication will be returned to caregiver for caregiver to dispose of remaining medication properly. Staff will not dispose unfinished medication.
10. Each dose administered is recorded on a central medication log by the teaching staff who administered it. The record indicates the name of the child, medication, dose, time, and the name of the person who administered the medication.
11. When administering medication, no attempt will be made to restrain a child or to use unusual force if the child is upset or uncooperative. A caregiver will be called immediately if such a problem occurs.

Illness or Emergency In the event a child should become ill or injured while at the program. The center staff will notify the caregivers immediately. In the event a caregiver cannot be reached the staff will contact an authorized emergency contact as listed on the enrollment application. In the event a child requires further assistance from medical personnel and the caregivers and/or emergency contacts cannot be reached the program will transport the child by ambulance to the nearest medical care facility to the discretion of the Paramedics. A cell phone will accompany all field trips and the same procedures will be followed as stated above.

Allergies / Chronic Health Conditions There is a space on each enrollment application for caregivers to list and describe any allergies, chronic health conditions, or other medical, physical, or emotional conditions their child may have. This information is very important to the success of your child in our program. Some caregivers tend to be nervous when including this information for fear that their child may be labeled or discriminated against. Please be assured that this information will be kept absolutely confidential and will only be used so that we may better serve your child(ren). All caregivers of children with an allergy or chronic health condition

(such as asthma) must also fill out an Individual Health Plan if their child requires medication for the chronic condition. The physician/medical practitioner must sign and date this form; stamps or attached action plans are not sufficient.

Plan for Evacuation In the case of a national disaster or situation (chemical spills, bomb threats) necessitating the evacuation of the building: The staff and children will follow the emergency evacuation plan posted in each classroom to exit the building. Staff will bring attendance records and emergency cards any time the programs must evacuate the building. Please see program specific plans attached as addendum.

Fire Drill / Fire Alarm Each program must hold monthly fire drills to ensure that staff and children are familiar with evacuation procedures. These drills will be held without notice and will occur at least monthly per the regulations of the Department of Early Education and Care.

Mildly Ill Children if a child is not feeling well they should remain home for the day to rest and get better. However if during the day a child should become mildly ill the YMCA will provide a quiet area for the child. The area will be equipped with a cot, or mat, blanket and is away from the other children. Caregivers will be notified that their children are not feeling well and given the option of picking up the child or letting them rest away from the group.

Children with Possible Infection In the event that a child with an infectious or contagious illness presents him/herself at the Program the Director or other appropriate personnel will be notified and a decision will be made as to whether the child will be sent home. If a child is determined to be possibly infectious the child will be removed from the classroom away from the rest of the children until such a time as they may be picked up. If a child is sent home for a possible infection the caregivers will be asked to seek medical advice and the child will not be allowed to return to the Program unless accompanied by a doctor's note clearing the child to return to the program. The program reserves the right to contact the physician to ask pertinent questions if there is reason to be concerned with the well being of the staff and children in the program.

Medical Exclusion of Children from the Program

A child with any of the following signs and symptoms will be excluded from the classroom environment until such a time as the child no longer has the signs/symptoms, and/or a doctor's note has been presented.

Signs of Dehydration: dark yellow urine; decreased frequency of urination, dry mouth, thirst, decreased activity, or lethargy.

A diagnosed contagious illness: Strep Throat, Bronchitis, Flu etc.

Abdominal Pain

Difficulty in breathing/wheezing

Fever: 101 degrees OR any fever above 98.6 and accompanied by a stiff neck, lethargy, irritability, or persistent crying. Children may not return to the program until they have been fever-free for 24 hours **without** the aid of medication.

Chicken Pox: for five days after the onset of the rash or when all lesions have dried and crusted, whichever is later.

Diarrhea: (More than the child's normal number of stools, with increased stool water or decreased form) that is not contained by diapers or controlled by toilet use, or stools that contain blood and/or mucus.

Mouth Sores: in a child who cannot control his or her saliva, unless the child's physician or local health department states the child is noninfectious.

Mumps: for 9 days after onset of gland swelling.

Pertussis: until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic therapy has been completed.

Pinworm: for 24 hours after treatment was begun.

Undiagnosed conjunctivitis: (pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep, and eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye), for 24 hours after treatment has begun.

Rash: any unidentified rash, until a physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease.

Ringworm: until after treatment is begun.

Rubella: for 7 days after the rash appears

Scabies: until after treatment has been completed.

Strep Throat: for 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun and the child has a normal temperature for 24 hours.

Tuberculosis: until the child's physician or local health department authority states the child is noninfectious.

Vomiting: within the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.

Children do not need to be excluded for other minor illnesses unless they are too sick to participate comfortably in program activities. They need more care than the staffing level allows. They have unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible severe illness.

What to Bring

Each classroom has different requirements for things needed from home, but here is an outline of some if not all: **Remember to LABEL EVERYTHING!**

Infants

- ◇ Disposable diapers
- ◇ Wipes
- ◇ Topical ointment (with authorization form)
- ◇ Bottles (ready made in a lunch/bottle bag labeled with child's name and date)
- ◇ 2 portable sized crib sheets
- ◇ Beginning foods: breakfast and lunch
- ◇ Extra clothing (2 complete changes)
- ◇ Blanket
- ◇ Pacifiers

Toddlers

- ◇ Disposable diapers and or training pants
- ◇ Wipes
- ◇ Topical ointment (with authorization form)
- ◇ Sunscreen (with authorization form)
- ◇ Extra clothing (2 complete changes)
- ◇ Small blanket
- ◇ Crib sheet (standard size)
- ◇ Breakfast (if arrival is prior to 7:30 AM)

◇ Lunch

Preschool & Kindergarten

- ◇ Extra clothing (2 complete changes)
- ◇ Small blanket
- ◇ Crib sheet (standard size)
- ◇ Breakfast (if arrival is prior to 7:30 AM)
- ◇ Lunch

Reminder: Never put medication in your child's lunch box. Please give it directly to a teacher who will place it in a secure place or in the refrigerator if refrigeration is required. You must also fill out a Medication Consent Form prior to any staff member administering medication.

Transition Plan

Given your child's age and previous experience in group settings, transitions are different for each child. Be ready for the tears and anxiety, which accompany separation from caregiver and child (for both involved). The teaching staff has had much experience in helping caregivers and children through the separation process. Our best advice is to keep the "good-byes" brief. Staying too long makes the separation worse rather than better. Watch for the teacher's cue and follow their lead. Initially your child may scream and cry uncontrollably, but soon quiet down and be busy playing even before you've reached your parked car. Telephone the classroom when you have reached work and the teacher will provide you with an update on the progress made. It is rare that a child will cry for too long.

For those caregivers whose children don't cry, but the caregivers do, you are not alone. The teachers and Director are there for you too. Each day, it gets easier, we assure you. Don't be surprised if the initial adjustment to school happens easily, but one day later when least expected your child says to you: "I'm not going!" This is common for some. The teachers will help you with this as well.

Transitions from age group to age group

When children are ready to transition into the next program age group, caregivers will receive at least a two week notice prior to the transition. The current staff will introduce the caregiver to the staff in the next age group classroom. Caregivers will be given a transition letter indicating "what to expect" from the next classroom. Children will begin their transition visiting the "new" classroom with one of their current teachers. Children will begin to spend part of the day with the "new" classroom. Staff follow the child's lead as for how long the initial visits last, ultimately building up time to spend the full day in the "new" classroom.

Lunch and Snacks:

PLEASE NOTE: The Program IS A NUT AND PEANUT FREE ENVIRONMENT

The Preschool program will provide breakfast & lunch to the children every day during the school year, except when Lynn Public Schools are not in session. Another vendor will supply food during

the summer months. If your child has food allergies or is on a special diet please let the teaching staff know. Those allergies will be posted in the classroom. We will accommodate your child's needs as best we can. In those cases, if a child is celebrating a birthday with a special snack and it is something that is not safe for your child to eat, we suggest that you bring in a special snack that can be stored in the freezer so that your child will not be excluded.

Special Snacks for Celebrations: Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared, packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.

Lunch Bag Suggestions:

For older toddlers and preschoolers: A sandwich cut in four pieces (any variety taking into consideration the food groups). A piece of fruit, applesauce, raisins or sticks of fresh vegetables, and a small container of yogurt. Young Toddlers use a sippy cup for milk at meal times. Toddler will be seated at the table, not walking around room with sippy cup at meal times.

If your child is not a sandwich eater, here are other options: Crackers, cheese, and sandwich meat, a piece of cold pizza, macaroni, vegetable, and fruit salads.

For infants: Bottles make up the bulk of your baby's diet during the first half of the first year. Cereal is the first food introduced, mixed with either diluted fruit juice or formula. Then jarred fruits and vegetables accompany the cereal. It's always been thought fruit would be before vegetables, but introducing vegetables first reduces the risk of your baby developing a "sweet tooth". Due to the risk of an allergic reaction, all new foods must be tried at home before being brought to the center. Between nine months and one year, table food is introduced. This is when things get real messy, because now babies should begin to feed themselves. Mealtime in the Infant Room is a very social occasion with three or four babies eating at the same time. Suggestions: "casserole-like" mixtures work well and maintain a balanced diet. Mashed potatoes mixed with peas and soft, small pieces of chicken or mashed beef stew, tuna or macaroni salad, or ground beef mixed with noodles with gravy or sauce, and green beans. These are just a few of the many dishes your baby will love as they move from jarred to table foods.

While the YMCA of Metro North Preschool does supply children with a nutritious breakfast, lunch and snack during the school year. Please remember that the YMCA of Metro North only serves snack for all children and lunch for DCF Supportive slot children during the summer months and when the Lynn Public Schools are closed.

Tooth Brushing Programs will offer tooth brushing after meals. The Programs will supply tooth brushes.

DAILY ROUTINES

Arrival and Departure: All children and caregivers must wash their hands upon entering the classroom.

Caregivers must accompany children directly into the classroom. Maintaining accurate daily attendance records, including specific drop-off and pick-up times is imperative. Under no circumstances may a caregiver leave a child at the program: 1) prior to opening, 2) prior to the child's scheduled arrival time, without program approval, or 3) without making sure that

your child has been properly received by a teacher. **Children need to be accompanied by an adult at all times when in the Program.**

Caregivers must adhere to their child's scheduled hours. A ten hour maximum day is encouraged for the length of time a child is at the Program each day. When picking your child up from the Program, please come early enough to allow sufficient time for visiting before the Program closing time or before your child's scheduled departure time. Remember that teachers too have families, personal lives, and scheduled appointments. Please keep in mind also that your child's teacher must continue to monitor the rest of the class even though you may feel that you have something important to discuss. We have personal journals for each child, write important information in the journal for your child's primary teacher's reference. He/she will read it early on in the day. For extended discussion, you will always be able to arrange an appointment with your child's teacher or Director at a mutually convenient time. If you are going to be late and cannot make proper arrangements with the Program for late pick-up, it is your responsibility to contact your emergency pick-up person to make arrangements for timely pick up of your child.

Other than caregivers, only persons with prior written authorization will be allowed to pick up a child from the Program. Anyone who is unfamiliar to staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present identification before a child is released to them. Children are allowed to leave the facility only when accompanied by an authorized adult. Such authorization must be renewed at least every 12 months.

Program Plan

The YMCA of Metro North Child Care Programs use EEC's *Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers* and *Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences* for curriculum and learning. Teaching Strategies is used as our assessment tool. Activity time could consist of a developmentally appropriate arts and crafts project, circle games, story time, indoor/outdoor sports, or other games and projects. All activities and projects reflect a concentration on the development of the Kindergartner with specific concentration on Gross and Fine motor skills. As training opportunities arise all staff involved in the program are allowed time to attend.

Supervision of Children

All children are monitored by sight and sound when in our programs. Educators use Active Supervision. Active Supervision requires focused attention and intentional observation of children at all times. Educators position themselves so that they can observe all of the children: watching, counting, and listening at all times. They also use their knowledge of each child's development and abilities to anticipate what he/she will do, then get involved and redirect them when necessary. This constant vigilance helps children learn safely.

Transitions from activity to activity

Any time the children move from one location to another (i.e. classroom to playground) staff will conduct a name to face roll call of attendance. Staff will then count the children before proceeding to the next location. Staff will count children at each door as they transition to the next location.

When transitions occur within the day from one activity to the next staff will give developmentally appropriate warnings prior to transitions. For example in preschool staff would give children a 5 minute warning prior to clean up time.

***During Free Play** children have access to the classroom library/literacy space, the dramatic play/dress-up space, the sand table, the block area, and any of the age-appropriate materials/manipulatives on the shelves.

***Table activities** infuse the overall competencies that the differing age groups need to learn. These include literacy skills, math, science, fine motor,

***Circle Time** is used to promote Learning in the areas of: *Literacy* (Read Aloud/Letter Recognition, Singing/Music, Color Recognition, etc.) *Math* (Number recognition, beginning math, etc.) *Social/Emotional* (Group socializing, listening, speaking aloud, cooperative games, storytelling, etc.).

***Gross/Fine Motor and the need for Physical Activity** is supported by: *Outdoor play* in the age appropriate playgrounds. *Gym activities* are pre-planned and directed/facilitated by the classroom teachers.

Daily Communication

The YMCA of Metro North encourages daily communication between teacher and caregivers each day. Please inform us about any important changes with your child in order that we may better understand your child's behavior and meet his/her individual needs. In each classroom, either individual written notes or classroom events are documented for you to read. This will provide you with some basic information to begin to have a conversation with your child about their day. For example:

- ❖ The preschool curriculum is posted outside of each classroom. Their primary care teacher will send updates to caregivers via *kidsreports* (online software) to email addresses.

Children's Progress Reports are conducted several times throughout the year. Infants receive Progress Reports every three months (typically in March, June, September and December). Toddler and Preschool receive Progress Reports every six months (typically in December and June). For children who have special needs, progress reports are every 3 months.

Newsletters are published monthly from the Director. There is also a caregiver bulletin board located in the front lobby.

The Director's door is always open. Please call or visit the office with a concern or a compliment. Both are welcome.

Rest Period

A rest period of at least, but not limited to 45 minutes is required for all children who spend most of their day with us. This generally occurs during the first part of the afternoon following lunch. Rest period will always be implemented with regard for the individual needs of the children. No child will be forced to sleep or be expected to rest for an inappropriate amount of time. After a reasonable amount of time, alternative quiet activities will be available for children who have finished resting.

If your child is at the Program during rest period, you are expected to provide a crib-size sheet or cot-sized blanket labeled with your child's name. **(NO full-size pillows or quilts please,**

they don't fit in the cubbies.)) These items are to be laundered at home each week or more often if needed. Cots and mats are cleaned routinely. We know that some children don't rest or nap well, and may balk at having to comply with the resting rule, but the teaching staff work at making the resting environment as pleasant as possible. A variety of music is played from Classical to Broadway Musical Scores and Lullabies, with the lights turned down and noises at a minimum.

Clothing and Diapers

Two complete changes of clothes, including underwear and socks, should be kept at the Program at all times. All clothes sent or worn to the Program must be labeled with the child's name or initials.

Each child has a specifically designated spot for his/her personal belongings. The children are expected to wear shoes at all time, just in case of evacuation. When a child wears heavy boots to school in place of shoes, other shoes or hard-soled slippers must be sent to school for use indoors.

For Infants and Toddlers, please check your daily notes. Teachers will indicate the need for more diapers, wipes and extra clothes on those notes.

IMPORTANT: Please dress your child appropriately for the weather each day. Outside play is very important to maintaining good health within a child care environment. If the weather warrants a sweater, jacket, hat, mittens, boots, and snow pants, bring them along with your child in the morning. If the weather permits us to go outdoors, the program will go out to the playground. The rule of thumb is that the children will go outside if the temperature feels under 90° and over 32°.

Diapering and Toilet Training

Toilet training is done in accordance with requests of the child's caregivers and in a manner that is consistent with the child's physical and emotional abilities. Usually this occurs on or about the transition to Preschool (2.9 years). Our programs do not have diaper-changing tables in the Preschool classrooms. This makes changing diapers a challenging and difficult project and requires one staff person to the task exclusively. It is for this reason that the programs encourages some understanding and use of the "potty" before entering the three-year-old classroom. We won't exclude a child from our program for wearing diapers, but we will work with the caregivers to get toilet training underway. A new independent environment works wonders for children who are ready but have shown little initiative. Be patient and we will persevere together. Toilet training will never be coerced. All children will be allowed to use the bathroom when needed. Children will be supervised during toileting but allowed as much privacy as is appropriate. No child will be punished for soiling or wetting clothing. Children who learn to be self-sufficient in the bathroom will have an easier time if they wear clothing that can be easily pulled off and on independently. Sometimes "simple is best" when it comes to practical children's clothing. Sweats or elastic-waist pants prove to be a better choice over belts, snaps, buttons or buckles. Caregivers of children who are toilet training will receive written communication daily regarding their child's toileting progress. Again, speak with your child's teacher or the director for toileting progress.

For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent inner lining, completely contained within an outer covering made of water proof material that prevents the escape of

feces and urine, both the diaper and outer covering are changed as a unit. The caregiver must also supply a covered container to store soiled diapers.

All children wearing diapers will be checked/changed every two hours.

Behavior Guidance Policies

YMCA Core Values

- ❖ People are *responsible* for their actions
- ❖ We *respect* each other and the environment
- ❖ *Honesty* will be the basis for all relationships and interactions
- ❖ We will *care* for ourselves and those around us.

Behavior Guidance The YMCA of Metro North advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention and the development of self-discipline. At no time will the following disciplinary techniques be tolerated: Physical punishment, striking, kicking, biting, squeezing, shaming, withholding food, corporal punishment, withholding bathroom privileges, confining children in small locked areas, or verbal or emotional abuse or neglect. The YMCA Of Metro North's Early Learning Programs prime concern is the safety and well being of the children. With this in mind, we have established basic behavioral guidelines for the protection and well being of all the children in our program. We recognize that children want and need to know the behavioral guidelines, and that these guidelines will be consistently enforced. Our behavioral guidelines therefore are established with the children in a group setting. The agreed upon guidelines are posted at the children's level in the classrooms. Guidelines will use positive language such as "we walk in the building." Instead of "NO RUNNING." Children will be reminded often of the guidelines.

System of Behavior Guidance

- ❖ We encourage children to express feelings of anger or frustration in a verbal manner providing them with the language to use to solve disputes and problems on their own.
- ❖ We talk with the child about his/her inappropriate behavior and offer suggestions on how to deal with a problem in a positive manner.
- ❖ Children are invited to suggest alternative solutions and assist in implementing them.
- ❖ A child who needs to be temporarily removed from the group to regain control or for safety of the children and staff will be asked to sit quietly for a few minutes in a quiet area in sight of the staff.
- ❖ Staff will speak to children in a calm and positive manner and will encourage safe and appropriate behavior.
- ❖ Staff will work with individual children, keep a log as needed, and change schedules as needed to provide for the best opportunity for children to understand the routines and expected behaviors.
- ❖ If misbehavior continues despite all attempts mentioned above, the caregiver will be notified. The caregiver, staff, and Director will then discuss the situation to try to resolve the problem.

Severe behavioral issues are taken to the Program Director. The Director will contact the caregiver/guardian to set up a conference. A solution will be made together as to the outcome or disciplinary measures to take place. If a child is not able to follow the behavior management guidelines caregivers will be given a progress report at the end of the day indicating any incidents that occurred that day.

Children's Rights

Staff are responsible for ensuring that children

- ❖ Have a safe and reliable environment
- ❖ Have use of the equipment in functioning condition.
- ❖ Have their ideas and feelings respected.
- ❖ Have discipline that is fair, equal and respectful of them.
- ❖ Have the opportunity to express their anger, frustration, disappointment, joy, etc., in an appropriate manner.
- ❖ Have activities that allow participants to express their creative ability, as they explore and discover, while developing to their fullest potential.
- ❖ Have an environment that offers a variety of choices; physical, gross motor, quiet, indoor, outdoor, active and passive areas, creative dramatic play, and exploring.
- ❖ Have a right to voice their opinion on the rules and have input on activities offered.
- ❖ Have staff members that care about them, enjoy being with them and help them grow.

Plan to avoid Suspension/Termination Policy and Plan for Return

A child may be suspended and/or terminated from the program under the following circumstances/reasons for suspension can include but are not limited to:

- ❖ Fighting with other children.
- ❖ Excessive inappropriate language.
- ❖ Continued disrespect for program rules.
- ❖ Any physical attack on a staff member.
- ❖ Destruction of personal or YMCA property.

The YMCA of Metro North reserves the right to terminate child care services with a two-week advance notice to families.

When the health, welfare and/or safety of other children and/or staff are at stake, including but not limited to the behavior and/or actions of a child, caregiver or family member, the **YMCA reserves the right to terminate child care services immediately without advanced notice.** In a situation where a child's behavior is escalating to an unsafe level or is disrupting the classroom they may be required to be picked up early. Children may return the next day to try again. If the behavior continues or after excessive suspensions and/or progress reports a second caregiver conference will be requested to discuss if the program can refer that child for additional services or if the program can continue to meet the needs of the child and what the plan for return will be. A Plan for Return may, for example, include that the family must seek psychological and/or medical testing for the child prior to being able to return to the program.

Other possible reasons for immediate termination of a family from a YMCA program include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Inappropriate behavior on the part of a caregiver or family member
- ❖ Chronic caregiver/guardian tardiness at pick up time.
- ❖ Chronic absenteeism of the child with no valid excuse.
- ❖ Overdue fees (More than 2 weeks)

In all cases the YMCA will attempt to work with the child and family before a suspension or termination is issued. In the event child care services are to be suspended or terminated a written statement will be issued to the caregiver, explaining the reasons for termination or suspension. A caregiver child conference will take place prior to the suspension or termination. If a child is suspended or terminated from the program all attempts will be made to prepare that child in a manner which is consistent with the child's ability to understand. Please note that if a child is suspended from the program the caregiver is still responsible for fees on those days.

BUS Termination and Suspension Policy (Lynn and Saugus) The YMCA of Metro North wants to work with all children to ensure their successful growth and development. Foremost the Lynn & Saugus YMCAs want to do everything in their power to ensure every child's safety. Because of the risks involved behavior on the bus is taken very seriously.

Referral Plan and Procedures The YMCA of Metro North child care staff shall use the following procedures for referring caregivers to appropriate social, mental health, education and medical services for their child, should the center staff feel that an assessment by such additional services would benefit the child.

- ❖ Staff will document when they are concerned about a child's behavior or development. Such documentation will be kept in the child's file.
- ❖ Every attempt will be made to modify behaviors or develop skills including but not limited to: schedule changes, individualization, small group activities, providing materials, and including caregivers in the child's day.
- ❖ If after these changes have been implemented and there still is no change in behavior or staff is still concerned, the teacher and director will complete an observation report and review the child's record. The Director will keep a list of current referral resources in the community for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical services. This list includes the contact for Chapter 766 and Early Intervention Program referrals.
- ❖ The Director will schedule a meeting with the caregiver/guardian to notify them of the program's concerns, review the written report, and prepare a list of current referral resources. At the meeting the director will provide the caregiver/guardians with a written statement including the reason for recommending a referral for additional services, and any efforts the staff may have taken to accommodate the child's needs.
- ❖ The Director will offer assistance to the child's caregiver/guardians in making the referral. Caregivers are encouraged to call or request in writing an evaluation. If the caregivers need extra support, the center may, with written consent, contact the referral agency. The Director will also inform caregivers of their rights, including the right to appeal under the Chapter 766 laws.
- ❖ If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from a specific agency, or is ineligible to receive services, the Program staff will review the child's progress at the center every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.
- ❖ The staff will maintain a written record of all meetings reports and caregiver conferences including results. A referral checklist will be kept in the child's record.

The Child Protection Mandate

In order to grow and learn, children's basic needs for good nutrition, shelter, medical care, bathing, clean clothes, intellectual stimulation, appropriate discipline, love and a feeling of importance must be met. Children need a safe, nurturing environment that makes them feel secure and loved. Our commitment is to follow the Y's Mission and provide the best possible environment to support children's self-esteem and healthy development. To help us understand

your child's needs, we ask that you keep us informed about your child's health, well-being, illnesses, injuries, or situations outside of the program which might adversely affect your child. If, for any reason, you feel that the teaching staff is not meeting your child's needs, we encourage you to speak with the Director.

Should you have any difficulty in providing for your child's emotional or physical needs, you are encouraged to ask for help. The Director can provide you with resource and referral information within the community when you are experiencing a need for some additional support.

In the rare instance when we recognize that your child's basic needs are being consistently neglected, the Director will inform you and will assist you in finding ways to meet those needs. If you are temporarily unable or unwilling to meet your child's minimal needs, as listed above, the teaching staff is mandated by State Law to file a report with DCF. It then becomes the responsibility of the Department to work with you and your family.

In all cases of abuse, all YMCA employees including Program staff are mandated reporters under State Law. Our procedure is for staff to report their concerns to the Director who will assess the facts and assist the staff in making a decision to file a report with the Department of Children and Families, and notifying the Department of Early Education and Care. A decision is made about whether to notify the caregivers or guardian. In making this decision, risk to the children involved will be of the utmost concern.

Program staff will cooperate in all investigations of abuse and neglect. A copy of the YMCA's policy on child abuse and neglect is available to caregivers upon request. These procedures include but are not limited to, insuring that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member does not work directly with children until an investigation has been completed by the YMCA of Metro North, Department of Early Education and Care, and the Department of Children and Families.

Record of Referrals

The Program shall maintain a written record of any referrals, including caregiver conferences and results. Below is a sample list of local agencies. Additional resources are available from the Director.

*Department of Children & Families
Malden Area Office
22 Pleasant St, Malden, MA 02148
Phone: (781) 388-7100

Dr. Eugene Mickey, DMD
67 Montvale Ave. Suite 101
Stoneham, MA. 02180
(781) 279-2400

Physician Referral Resources
Winchester Hospital
41 Highland Ave.
Winchester, MA 01890
781-729-9000

DEEC (978) 740-3060
Child Care Circuit (978) 524-0012

Temporary Absence of Administrator In the event of the program Director's temporary absence from the program, a Program Lead Teacher and/or the Director of Y Child Care Services will take over the administrative responsibilities.

FOR FAMILIES RECEIVING SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE FROM CCR&R:

- All families adhere to “Drop-off and Late Pick-Up” Policy as outlined in the YMCA of Metro North ELP Caregiver Handbook on page 9.
- Families receiving CCR&R funding will not be charged late fees for late tuition payments as required under EEC Financial Assistance Policy Guide: Chapter 5: section 5.1.3. However failure to pay tuition for two consecutive weeks may result in termination in child care as outlined in the YMCA of Metro North ELP Caregiver Handbook page 10. Consistent Late Pick UP will also result in termination of care.
- Any fees/tuition charged beyond a voucher end date will be the full responsibility of caregiver/guardian. Fees will be subject to full daily published rate.
- Registration Fees and Security Deposit will not be collected from families receiving CCR&R funding.
- The YMCA of Metro North will notify CCR&R immediately of the following:
 - ~ if caregiver/guardian terminates voucher early education and care services before the authorized end date on the voucher.

~if a child is absent without explanation for more than three consecutive days

~if a child is absent (with or without explanation) for more than ten days in a thirty day period or is otherwise absent in excess of EEC’s allowable absences as set forth in EEC’s regulations and policies.

~any change in a family’s household size or compositions, activity, service need, income, and/or attendance that may affect a family’s eligibility for subsidized services and or the family’s caregiver fee level within ten business days.

Caregiver Handbook Receipt

I, _____, have received a copy of the YMCA of Metro North's Caregiver Handbook, and the policies and procedures within have been explained to me.

Signature of caregiver or legal guardian

Date