

2026 FAMILY HANDBOOK

YMCA LEARNING CENTER
at the Southeastern Indiana YMCA



**LEARN
GROW
THRIVE**

**>> Infants –
Preschool/Pre-K**

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Nothing without JOY!

Welcome to our YMCA Learning Center! Since 1995 we have been providing quality care and early learning to the children in our community. We pride ourselves on fostering curiosity, confidence, compassion and creativity in children. We protect childhood by allowing children to be playful investigators that direct their own learning and balance the day with teacher-led inquiry and intentional planning.

Our talented staff are selected for their knowledge of child development as well as their interpersonal skills; they are the strength of our program! When visiting our program, please take the time to look, listen, and observe this enriched group.

We understand that the early years of a child's life are crucial to their future, and it is a privilege to be a part of their journey. It is my role to make each of you feel welcome in our center and our community. I look forward to partnering with you to make your child's experience here a successful one.

Respectfully yours,

McKenzie Callahan

Childcare Director

Educational Philosophy

The YMCA Learning Center uses a developmentally appropriate approach to caring for and teaching young children based on the most recent research and evidence-based practices. We also use our emerging understanding of brain research to support our practices. Our program offers opportunities for your child to explore, to make discoveries, and to use his/her senses and physical movement. Through a hands-on, constructivist approach, where children gain knowledge of the world by experiences and reflection, children learn and develop at their own pace. Our center recognizes each child as an individual, expanding where they are, not where we want them to be. Through play, we lay the FOUNDATION for higher learning by encouraging problem solving, imagination and curiosity.

We foster an understanding of diversity among people by expecting and modeling behavior based on mutual and unconditional respect for self and others. We pursue every available opportunity to celebrate and explore individual and cultural diversity, and whenever possible we incorporate family language into a child's language acquisition and communication development. All children are accepted without regard for race, color, religion, sex, creed, ancestry, national origin, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical challenges. We have no religious affiliation, and we respect each child's right to observe his/her faith.

We believe that children in our center are influenced by three components: The family, the teacher and the environment. The family is the first teacher and knows the child best. The teacher is responsive to the child's interest and is a co-researcher in the classroom. And finally, the environment is intentionally prepared to be warm, welcoming and interesting to the interest of the child. Materials are provided for purposeful exploration.

Mission

Our mission at the YMCA Learning Center is the same as the Southeastern Indiana YMCA organization as a whole. It is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Our Learning Center program teaches respect and self-confidence to build a healthy spirit. We do this by modeling respect and teaching children to be the best version of themselves. We nurture a healthy mind by developing the whole child to grow academically and socially. Finally, we build healthy bodies by focusing on nutrition and making movement a priority.

Center Administration and Operations

The YMCA Learning Center is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors representing our YMCA community. The contact information for our Center's leaders is as follows:

McKenzie Callahan	812-932-1415	mcallahan@siymca.org
Becky Harmeyer	812-932-1415	bharmeyer@siymca.org

Currently the center's operating hours are Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m. We will be closed on the following holidays. If any of the days fall on a weekend, the day of closing will be posted in advance. We reserve the right to adjust hours of operation. The adjusted holiday hours will be posted in advance.

New Year's Day
Labor Day
Christmas Eve

Memorial Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

Independence Day
Day after Thanksgiving

We are licensed to operate by the Indiana Division of Family and Social Services. State teacher to child ratios are as follows:

Infants	1:4
Toddlers	1:5
2 years	1:5
30-36 months	1:7
3 years	1:10
4 years	1:12
5 years	1:15
6-12 years	1:20

Should there be a time that a classroom has too many children to meet these ratios, a member of our administration team or another qualified staff member will step in to correct the ratio at the earliest moment possible.

Policies and procedures may change without prior notice.

Paths to QUALITY™

Paths to QUALITY™ is Indiana's statewide rating system for early care and education programs. It is a free resource to help families make informed decisions and to help early care and education providers improve the quality of their programs. The YMCA Learning Center is a Level 4 site, the highest rated level in Indiana. Level 4 Programs have demonstrated a commitment to professionalism in quality early care and education and achievement of a nationally recognized accreditation.

Coaching and Support

We are proud to work closely with Building Blocks (Indiana's childcare resource and referral agency) to provide family and community outreach and quality improvement activities. SPARK Learning Lab, Indiana's statewide early childhood technical assistance provider, supports early childhood and out-of-school programs in meeting regulatory requirements, in addition to supporting programs' individual quality improvement and professional development paths.

Our Staff

Our childcare staff are experienced, trained professionals chosen for their warmth, creativity, experience with children, and commitment to excellence. We employ people who are nurturing, who understand child development, and who respect each child as an individual. We seek employees who value working as a team with families, colleagues, and volunteers. Our staff environment encourages mutual respect for each individual's personal characteristics and teaching style, opportunities for shared leadership, and provision for providing professional growth. Per state licensing regulations, the lead teacher of each program has or is in the process of obtaining a CDA credential or higher degree in Early Childhood Education.

Each staff person has on file two or more written references. We require a Criminal Background Check, physical examination, drug screening and annual TB skin test. Our staff is trained in Infant, Child and Adult CPR and Bloodborne Pathogens. Pediatric First Aid (including management of a blocked airway and rescue breathing for infants and children) is recertified every 2 years. All staff are trained to use the AED. All childcare staff receive annual training in Child Abuse Recognition & Prevention, Nutrition and Sanitization regarding food handling and Teaching Children with Disabilities. All staff have new employee orientation prior to working alone with children.

Continuing education is an important part of working at our childcare center. All staff are required to participate in a minimum of 12 in-service hours per year. We also are a participant of the T.E.A.C.H. Early

Childhood Indiana enabling employees who work 30 or more hours a week to earn a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) and/or an Associate or Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education.

Our Early Childhood Programs (infant- age 5)

The YMCA Learning Center's Curriculum includes the use of Creative Curriculum which allows for learning through play and provides child-led discovery. This curriculum is based on the Indiana Early Learning Foundation framework (The Foundations). This document is aligned to Indiana's Academic Standards. The Foundations refers to the whole child and include the following domains: English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, student wellbeing, approaches to play and learning, creative arts, and physical health and growth. This provides a framework of specific skills children should achieve at various ages.

Classroom teachers use their general child development knowledge to develop lesson plans that fit each individual child, their culture, and the entire classroom's interests and abilities. Our Center believes in providing children with the opportunity to revisit experiences and concepts over time. This approach encourages deeper understanding and fosters curiosity. Children are empowered to explore and engage with these experiences at their own pace, with the freedom to make choices that align with their interests and developmental needs. By revisiting familiar concepts and experiences, children can build on their knowledge and make connections that enhance their learning journey. Teachers develop lesson plans with guidance from the Childcare Director. These plans are based on observations of the children first and then reassessed after implementation. The use of screen time is extremely limited and is used in conjunction with current topics and learning domains.

Continuity of Care

We believe that children should bond and maintain relationships with their caregivers for as long as possible. Our continuity of care policy encourages and attempts to keep infants through twos together with their caregivers for a period of nine months or longer.

Ongoing Assessment for Young Children

Assessment for young children is the process of gathering information from several sources of evidence and using the information to monitor the children's development and learning, guide planning, and decision making to determine the need for eligibility for special needs services. Assessment processes include observing, recording, and documenting what children do and how they do it. Assessment comes in many forms and takes into account families' needs, traditions, and language. Specifically, formal and informal. Both types of assessment yield benefits to the teacher in order to make adaptations and changes to curriculum for student growth. Formal assessments are typically used for reporting to others. Informal assessments can be in the form of photos, work samples and observational notes; it is not a single occurrence but an on-going process. A blend of these two types of assessment is best for young children.

Children are assessed both formally and informally by classroom teachers, administrative staff and other early childhood experts (as needed) while in our care. Our childcare center uses the Brigance® Assessment biannually as an assessment appropriate for children aged infant-60 months. The information is discussed during conference times, and written reports are provided to families at least two times per year. If questions or concerns arise with how the assessment method will meet their child's needs, please speak with the Childcare Director.

It is essential for families and teachers to work together to promote children's development. Assessment records are kept in the child's portfolio and are only available to the child's lead teacher, parents/guardians, administrative staff, and Childcare Director. The goal of documentation and assessment is to better understand and support our children's learning and development. Teachers use the information from the

assessments to set individual and classroom goals to meet the needs of all children as well as overall program improvements that may need to be made. Assessment is essential for identifying children who may benefit from special services. If it is determined that your child may need to be referred for a potential problem, your child's teacher will meet with you and assist with the referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated. When staff suspect that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, our program will provide the following:

1. Brigance ® Assessment documentation.
2. Suggested next steps for the family and the program.
3. Information about resources for diagnostic evaluation.

Lead teachers are trained in using the Brigance ® Assessment. Portfolio training is taught by the Childcare Director. Families can talk directly to the Childcare Director about providing input about the Center's assessment methods.

What to bring from Home

Infants:

- Sleep sack labeled with child's name (no blankets or other items are permitted in cribs due to the risk of SIDS) up until age 1 year
- Disposable Diapers-unopened and labeled with child's name
- Diaper Wipes-unopened and labeled with child's name
- Bottles-4 or more, including caps (drop-ins if applicable)
- Pacifier-if needed
- Diaper rash ointment and other medications-unopened accompanied with medication order form with doctor's signature
- Extra clothes-3 outfits and socks in a resealable plastic or cloth bag labeled with child's name
- Formula-unopened (if not accepting infant food program)
- Baby Food-unopened (if not accepting infant food program)
- Security items
- Photos of child and family

Toddlers:

- Disposable Diapers-unopened and labeled with child's name
- Diaper Wipes-unopened and labeled with child's name
- Diaper rash ointment and other medications-unopened accompanied with medication order form with doctor's signature
- Pacifier-if needed (For health reasons, we encourage children to only use their pacifier during nap time)
- Blanket and small pillow labeled with child's name
- Small stuffed animal for nap time, if used
- Seasonally appropriate extra clothes: two outfits in a resealable plastic or cloth bag labeled with child's name
- Photos of child and family

Preschoolers:

- Small soft naptime comfort item, if used
- Blanket and small pillow for naptime labeled with child's name
- Backpack
- Seasonally appropriate extra change of clothes in a resealable plastic or cloth bag labeled with child's name
- Swimsuit and towel for designated swim days
- Photos of child and family

What Not to Bring from Home

(Please check with classroom staff as well)

- Toys of violence (guns, swords, weapons, etc.)
- Candy
- Chewing Gum
- Sandals or flip flops
- Anything unlabeled

The YMCA Learning Center retains the right to inspect cubbies/backpacks and their contents to ensure they're being used in accordance with their intended purpose, to eliminate fire and other hazards, to maintain sanitary conditions, to attempt to locate lost or stolen materials, and to prevent use of the cubbies/backpacks for storing prohibited items.

Safe Sleep

We are required to follow Safe Sleep practices for infants through age one year. Safe Sleep practices include:

- Infants are placed in crib on their back, once infant can roll on their own the child can assume their own sleep position
- Crib mattresses are flat and firm and have crib sheets that are tight fitting
- We prohibit the use of soft toys, blankets, bumpers, pillows/Boppy pillows, swaddling, necklaces, bibs, or strings or attachments to pacifiers while an infant is in their crib.

For children four years of age and under, a rest period will be provided after the lunchtime meal. Each child will have their own cot which will be positioned a minimum of two feet apart. After thirty minutes, children who are awake will be given supervised alternative activities.

Diapering and Toilet Training

Diapers are changed in accordance with state licensing diapering procedures. Updates are sent to families via the Brightwheel app.

Our staff is committed to supporting each child's individual needs in the toilet training process. Each classroom has its own child size restroom for child use. Teachers discuss this process with families to be aware of the strategies used at home and make every effort to ensure consistency. We recognize the importance of open communication and teachers will provide updates throughout the process. Collaboration between caregivers and parents is key to providing the best support for each child's development.

Collaborating for Children

It is in the best interest of our children, families, and staff to collaborate with an extensive network of agencies and individuals. Our collaborations focus on the healthy development of children, on providing the family ultimate support, on developing our community in knowledge and understanding of early childhood practices, and on advocating for safe environments for our children.

The center is licensed to operate by the Office of Early Learning and Out Of School Care (OELOSC). Our license is posted in the family information area. We are also licensed for food service operations with documentation displayed in the kitchen by the Indiana State Board of Health and Child and Adult Care Food Program. (The USDA and The State of Indiana are equal opportunity providers and employers.) We also meet compliances with the Indiana State Fire Marshall. To view Indiana Rules for Licensed Child Care Centers please log on to <http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2736.htm>. Our compliance reports can be accessed by logging onto www.childcarefinder.in.gov/.

We also work with River Valley Resources and The Children's Bureau who serve as our voucher agencies helping families in need of financial assistance. Our staff also collaborates with community and family volunteers. Volunteers working more than 8 hours per month have the same requirements as staff including criminal background check, physical and TB skin test. Together, with these volunteers, we strengthen our community's awareness of early childhood practices helping our children, families, center, and community develop healthier characteristics.

Other collaborating agencies and family support services include:

- INcompass Healthcare
- Children's Health Care, Dr. Gretchen Hartz
- Children's Dental, Dr. Erica J. Bayoneto
- Building Blocks
- IAEYC
- First Steps

Family Involvement, Communication, and Responsibility

Families are welcome in our center at any time (if not a primary caregiver listed on our enrollment forms, permission will be needed). Throughout the year we encourage family members to participate in swim days, field trips or special activities. They are also encouraged to participate in YMCA Family Fun nights, conferences, classroom performances and other onsite programs. Families are welcome to come and share any special talent or activity with the children. We have a Learning Center Committee that meets to discuss upcoming events and strategies for the childcare center.

Daily communication occurs through face-to-face interaction, phone calls, email and the Brightwheel app. For our infants and toddlers, a daily report is sent through the Brightwheel app to inform about eating, sleeping and diapering/toileting needs. Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to continue their feeding plan with their child. Mothers can choose to feed in the classroom or the designated breastfeeding room. Monthly newsletters are prepared by educators for individual classrooms and the Learning Center distributes a center wide newsletter each month to keep families informed of YMCA happenings. Family conferences are scheduled at least 2 times per year or as needed with the classroom teacher. This is an opportunity for families and teachers to collaborate for the child. Additional conferences can be requested at any time.

Parents/guardians may contact the staff for an appointment to discuss their child's needs and progress or exchange information concerning their child or family/culture. It may not be possible to share lengthy information during class time or in front of the child.

In accepting the privilege of using the childcare center, families must also accept the responsibility to follow the policies stated in this handbook. Failure to provide schedules consistently, to responsibly handle health or discipline problems, or to follow standards listed below may result in the suspension of the privilege to use the YMCA Learning Center. The YMCA Learning Center has the responsibility for the safety and care of all the children in attendance and cannot compromise that responsibility to accommodate those who do not meet their obligations. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to:

1. Follow all of the rules and regulations stated in this handbook.
2. Keep the teacher informed of any important changes in the home situation.
3. Support the policies and objectives of the YMCA Learning Center program by:
 - a. Helping your child to get sufficient sleep, to feel rested and ready to participate.
 - b. Safeguarding your child's health in order to ensure regular attendance and protect the other children.

4. Not discussing observations or information acquired through your child(ren) or other parents/guardians. Any information about a child/family is treated confidentially. Concerns should be discussed with the Childcare Director.
5. Informing the YMCA Learning Center's admin team of any type of virus or illness contracted by your child that might be contagious.
6. Discussing concerns and/or observations regarding your child(ren) with appropriate staff in a timely manner.
7. Treating YMCA Learning Center staff and families with respect.
8. Not displaying hostile behavior in front of staff members, families, or children. Parent/guardian should remove themselves and appropriate staff to the childcare office.
9. Following all procedures as outlined in the "Child Care Security Procedures and Agreement" form signed upon receipt of door fob.

Families who fail to meet these outlined responsibilities will be counseled on an individual basis. Those parents/guardians who consistently fail to meet outlined responsibilities will be suspended or required to remove their child(ren) from the childcare center.

Persons Appearing to Be Impaired by Drugs/Alcohol at Pick-Up

Parents/guardians have the right to immediate access to their child. The center cannot deny a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent appears to be impaired. However, the staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting management, other parent, and if necessary, the local police and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick up a child and appears to the staff to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff will contact the child's parents/guardians, and if necessary local police and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

The center prohibits smoking or vapes, use of alcohol, use or possession of firearms, use or possession of drugs, unintended use of potentially toxic substances and the use or possession of illegal substances.

Visitor Policy

Custodial parents/guardians are always welcome into our center at any time to visit their child. We do, however, discourage you from having other family and friends visit your child at the center because it can be disruptive to the routine.

If you would like to have a family member (or other person) occasionally visit your child at the center, you must provide, in writing, the person's name, date and time of visit (arrival and departure) to administrative staff with your signed consent. The visitor will need to check in at the office and show picture I.D. Visitors are limited to one hour of time, even if visiting siblings or multiple children.

This policy is in place to keep disruption of classroom activities to a minimum.

Disagreements and Difficulties

The staff and administration of Southeastern Indiana YMCA Learning Center strive to give each child the best possible care. Occasionally differences do arise between parents/guardians and staff. If this does occur, the person may do the following:

- Step 1.** Talk to the teacher involved---most differences or misunderstandings can be handled at this level.
Step 2. After discussing the issue with the teacher and the issue is not resolved, then the parent/guardian may bring the issue to the attention of the Childcare Director.

Step 3. In the rare instance that the issue is still not resolved, the parent/guardian may discuss the issue with a Senior Leadership team member.

FINANCIAL

Enrollment Process

The enrollment process begins with a tour of the childcare facility with a member of the administrative staff. Next, the registration form is completed by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian and child must meet the child's assigned teacher and spend some time in the classroom with the child to observe and have any questions answered. Following, the parent/guardian should ensure that questions on the YMCA Learning Center program, including such topics as drop off and pick up procedures, tuition and fees, incident and accident reporting and medication policy are answered. All paperwork is reviewed, completed by parent/guardian and returned prior to enrollment.

Needed items to be admitted to the childcare center include a physical examination done within the last year and updated annually until after age 2, as well as up-to-date childhood immunizations. Medical forms must be turned into front office within 30 days from the day of enrollment. If a child is overdue for any routine health services, parent/guardian must provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for any immunization for which parents/guardians are using religious exemption. The content of your child's enrollment file is kept confidential in the front office. It is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff as deemed necessary by the Childcare Director, as well as regulatory agencies on request.

Health information may be discussed with persons listed as emergency contacts on your child's emergency card if an emergency situation arises. YMCA staff will never request or discuss a child's medical issues without parent/guardian written permission for such discussions. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to request and complete all medical documentation/forms in a timely manner.

After the paperwork is reviewed, determination of enrollment will be decided. If enrollment is determined to be appropriate for a child, it will be granted for a 60-day trial period. During this period, the child will be observed by classroom teaching staff, Childcare Director, and child's parent(s)/guardian(s). After the first 60 days, a conference may be set to discuss the child's progress, goals and any concerns.

This center does not discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or financial status. If your child has an IEP, IFSP, or any special requirements, this information is required at enrollment and as it is updated. We encourage staff participation in any IEP or IFSP case conference to better enable us to help your child.

Payment procedures

Fees are reviewed annually or as needed by the Southeastern Indiana YMCA Board of Directors. The rates are based on those charged by programs of similar quality. A self-funding subsidy is available for families with financial hardships. Please note, we reserve the right to review/change rates at any point with a 30-day notice.

1. All childcare tuition payments are due and payable preceding the week's care. Payment must be paid via automatic withdrawal from a credit card, checking, or savings account. A \$25.00 fee will be applied for any non-sufficient funds (NSF) occurrence.
2. Care will be terminated for unpaid balances exceeding two weeks. Care may be suspended for reoccurring negligence of late payment.
3. There is a non-refundable registration fee required each year for each child enrolled in the center. New enrollees will also be charged the first week's tuition payment which will be applied to that week's care. This is non-refundable if care plans change, including but not limited to starting later than planned, no longer needing care, etc.
4. Childcare fees are due on a continuous basis even if your child is ill or absent.

5. Holiday closures will be listed in advance. Your child's normal weekly tuition will be charged even if it is less than five days of care. (i.e. Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's).
6. Part-time students are not eligible for childcare subsidy or discount.
7. A \$50 annual registration fee will be charged prior to enrollment and then every August following the enrollment date. Registration fees paid after May 31 will count toward the annual August registration fee.
8. A child must be listed on a family membership to receive membership pricing.
9. All departures from each room must be done by 6:00 p.m. or a late pick-up charge of \$20.00 is required for each 10-minute interval after 6:00 p.m. This fee will be charged to the next week's payment. Late pick up charges are as follows:

6:00-6:10	\$20 charged	
6:11-6:20	\$40 charged	*care suspended on next occurrence in 30 days
6:21-6:30	\$60 charged	*care suspended on next occurrence
10. A two-week advance written notice is required when withdrawing your child or requesting a change of schedule. This gives us an opportunity to fill the vacancy. If notice is not given, 2 regular schedule weeks' fees will be charged. This notice must be given to and signed by the Childcare Director and a withdrawal form completed.
11. A waitlist for each room will be established as rooms fill to capacity. Waitlist priority is as follows:
 1. Full-time staff children
 2. Families with full-time sibling(s) in the center
 3. New full-time enrollees
 4. Part-time enrollees (**PLEASE NOTE: A full-time child may take priority over a part-time child's position at **ANY** time while enrolled in the center. In this instance, a two-week notice would be given to the part-time enrollee with the option to either go full time or be required to find alternative care outside of the Learning Center.)

Leave of Absence

We have the following leave of absence policy:

3-12 weeks away from childcare (i.e. teachers, pregnancy, major medical, laid off)

1. No weekly fee is required during absence (exception: see #3).
2. A signed commitment waiver stating when your child will be returning, with a paid \$50 registration fee and the first week's tuition must be completed before withdrawal. (First week's tuition will only be charged if a space is committed by admin staff)
3. If the classroom that your child(ren) will be re-entering on return is going to be filled, the admin team will contact you and give you one of the following options:
 - a. You may begin paying the regular weekly fee to hold your spot before returning, or
 - b. If you choose not to pay the weekly fee, and if your child's classroom is full upon returning, you will be moved to the waiting list.

HEALTH

Childhood Illness

Our center operates for well children only. Children who are mildly ill (i.e. minor cold symptoms) may remain at the center only with an administrator's approval. Children should be fully able to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. We will not go outside during heat and smog alerts. Parents/guardians should provide appropriate changes of clothing so children do not become either chilled or overheated. Snow pants and boots are needed for snowy days as well as hats and gloves. Dress in dry clothing and layered for warmth is needed for chilly outdoor play of at least thirty minutes at a time. Per the Indiana Licensing Standards, "Daily opportunities for children to use large muscle skills, learn about outdoor

environments, and express themselves freely and loudly, except when the severity of the weather poses a safety hazard, the wind-chill temperature is below twenty-five (25) degrees Fahrenheit, or there is a health related reason documented by a parent/guardian or physician for a child to remain indoors. (For a period exceeding three (3) consecutive days a physician's statement is required.)" Swimsuits are needed for swim and splash days. Light sweaters or jackets should be made available, as well. "Jellies", "flip-flops", and sandals are not appropriate for wear at school. Sunscreen or bug spray may be applied by staff, with the written permission of the parent/guardian on the student emergency card.

Children with symptoms of communicable disease remain with a staff member in a separate area until the parent/guardian or designated representative arrives for the child. We make every effort to reach the parents/guardians when a child is ill, but if there is no verbal contact, we will notify the emergency contacts indicated by the parents/guardians on the data entry form and the student emergency card.

We will not serve children with:

- A fever of 100° F or higher, axillary
- A skin rash that has not been identified by a phone call or in writing from a physician who has seen the rash
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting
- Evidence of head lice, nits, scabies, or other parasite
- Severe coughing
- Rapid or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Stiff neck
- Infected skin patches
- Pain of which the child complains and interferes with normal activity
- Evidence of infection
- Excessive fatigue
- A moist or open cold sore
- Symptoms of conjunctivitis including redness, swelling or discharge (children will be excluded until symptoms improve or the child has been on medication for 24 hours)

Children may be readmitted:

- With a physician's statement that the child is free from communicable disease and that returning poses no risk to the child or to others.

OR

- Is visibly free from communicable disease, fever free without fever reducing medications for at least 24 hours and free of vomiting /diarrhea for at least 24 hours while on a normal diet. **(48 hours during heightened illnesses at the center)**

The center retains the right to continue to exclude a child despite a physician's statement if that statement contradicts the center's policies. When a communicable disease in a child's class is confirmed, parents/guardians are informed in writing within 24 hours via a posting in the child's classroom. If vaccine-preventable diseases have occurred in the program, the specific disease will be posted in the affected classroom. The YMCA Learning Center reserves the right to promptly exclude any under immunized child if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program.

Our staff members have special training in recognizing communicable diseases. The staff relies on their training, as well as the disease chart issued by the Indiana State Board of Health to determine indicated diseases. We follow strict handwashing and disinfection procedures. Teaching staff complete daily health screenings upon a child's arrival to the center. These include looking for changes in behavior or appearance, taking a child's temperature if needed, skin rashes, complaints of pain or not feeling well, or other

signs/symptoms of illness. If determined necessary, parents/guardians will be contacted. Records of teachers' concerns will be kept in the child's file.

If a child's diet must be modified for health reasons, a physician's written explanation is required. If a child's diet is modified for cultural or religious reasons, the parent/guardian is asked to put the request in writing. In both these instances, the parent/guardian may be asked to help provide supplemental foods.

Classroom materials are non-toxic. Children and staff are not permitted to eat while using art supplies/materials. Art supplies/materials are used in a well-ventilated area.

Administration of Medicine

1. Any administrator or teaching staff who administers medication has had specific training on Medication Administration with the Six Rights for Giving Medications and is updated annually by a health professional.
2. Medication is given only if parents/guardians sign a center-supplied Medication Administration form and only if it is needed 3 or more times a day. No over-the-counter medicine will be administered for more than 5 days. After 5 days, a physician written instruction will be required. Dosage shall not exceed the appropriate amount for the child's age and weight as stated on the label.
3. Any over-the-counter medicine requires a "Record of Medication Order" form to be completely filled out and signed by a physician or dentist. This form must be completed annually until age 2 then every 2 years after that.
4. Prescription medication must have a prescription label with the child's name, exact dosage, specific number of daily dosages, the route of administration, and current date on it. Instructions "to be given as needed" must have specific written instructions by the parent/guardian. The label must be attached to the original container. You should ask the pharmacist for an extra bottle with a label if you need one for home.
5. No medication will be given if it is past the written expiration date on the container.
6. Medical samples and over-the-counter oral medicines MUST have a written note from the doctor as well as a parent/guardian signed form.
7. Non-medicated Chap Stick, sunscreen, and bug spray do not require a physician's signature, but do need a parent's/guardian's written instructions and permission. Such items must be labeled and given to a teacher.
8. The "Medication Administration" form will be signed by the staff member administering medication and kept on file for a minimum of one year.
9. When bringing over-the-counter medication to the center, please ensure your child's name is clearly marked on the bottle.
10. Tylenol and other fever reducers/pain relievers may be kept at the center (in a locked container) until the date of expiration. Cold medicines and others that are only needed for a current illness must be taken home at the end of the course of treatment.
11. All emergency medications that must be readily available (EpiPen, Benadryl for allergic reactions, and Asthma medications) will be kept in the child's classroom out of the reach of children in a locked cabinet or carried by the staff member during classroom outings.

Illness, Injury or Death of a Staff Member

Should a staff member become sick or seriously injured, parents/guardians of that classroom will be notified by the administration team or other staff in the classroom. A substitute teacher will be scheduled until the return of that staff member.

In the unfortunate death of a staff member, the following will take place with the least amount of disruption to daily operations:

1. Parents/guardians of the classroom involved will be personally contacted making them aware of the situation.
2. If appropriate, staff will meet as a group in prayer to mourn our loss prior to returning to the classroom the following day.
3. A letter will be issued to all parents/guardians informing of the death and our grieving process.
4. Children will have the opportunity to deal with the event by creating cards to express their feelings.
5. A counselor or clergy will be contacted and available to help anyone in the grieving process.

Nutrition

We provide nutritionally balanced snacks, meals, and cooking activities. Menus are posted in each classroom as well as in the family information area. Copies are available upon request. We limit sugars and prefer birthday celebrations sent by parents/guardians to be raisins or other fruits, yogurt, crackers and cheese, or other nutritious alternatives to cake and ice cream. Any food items brought to the center must be store bought and in its original, unopened container.

Mealtimes include breakfast served at 8:30 a.m. and lunch at 11:00-11:30 a.m. and a snack at 2:30 (school agers have snack upon arrival from school). Our menus meet the guidelines provided by the Indiana State Board of Health and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. (The USDA and The State of Indiana are equal opportunity providers and employers.)

PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW OUR NUT FREE POLICY. ITEMS THAT CONTAIN NUTS WILL NOT BE SERVED AND WILL BE DISCARDED TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN WITH ALLERGIES.

Menu exceptions can only be made with proper physician documented medical reasons, except for religious/cultural beliefs. It is important that you advise us of any allergies your child may have by submitting a physician statement of the allergy and restrictions.

We provide two-thirds of the child's daily nutritional needs. Seconds are offered to the children during lunch. Adults eat seated with the children. Mealtimes are relaxed times, rich with conversation and fellowship.

SAFETY

No child is ever left alone or unsupervised. We ask that parents/guardians closely supervise their children in the driveway, lobbies, and elsewhere in the center. It is recommended that children exit from cars and be offered a hand to hold. Sticking together seems to be a reasonable safety request. Please do not park against the curb at the childcare entrance ensuring that visibility is clear of oncoming cars for safe crossing. It is discouraged to leave idling vehicles in our parking lot. When going to the classroom, families are asked to stay together. Parents/guardians are responsible for handing their child off to the child's teacher ensuring the teacher is aware of his/her presence. Children MAY NEVER be left alone inside of a vehicle.

Children must be signed in and out daily by their teachers in the classroom. This is extremely important since the list is used to check attendance during emergency drills or events. Children are released only to persons for whom the staff has written permission from the parents/guardians. We will ask for photo identification for all unknown pick ups to match to the name on the data entry form or student emergency card. Please ensure the teacher is aware of the departure of your child.

Fire Safety

1. Monthly fire and disaster drills will be held at varying times during the year at a minimum of one fire drill per month. The childcare admin team will maintain a record of fire and disaster drills.
2. A fire alert and weather emergency plan, including evacuation routes, is posted in each classroom.
3. In case of emergency evacuation, the center will use the Margaret Mary Medical Arts Center (building to the south of the Y on HWY 129) until re-entry to our building is possible or all children are picked up.

Water Safety

1. Signed permission forms from a parent/guardian is required for each child swimming. This is done so by signing the Family Care Agreement form.
2. All swimming pools are fenced or locked from access by children.
3. The childcare staff always accompany children during swim time. Pool is supervised by certified lifeguards.
4. Child-Staff ratio shall be halved and/or exceed state requirements.

Field Trip Safety

1. Signed permission forms from the parent/guardian is required before escorting or transporting a child to or from the center for any reason.
2. Permission from parent/guardian will include child's name, destination, date of trip and departure/arrival time, parent/guardian signature and contact phone number for date of trip, and date permission was signed.
3. By signing the Family Care Agreement form you agree to allow us to transport to any field trips taken on the YMCA premises (i.e. the gymnasium, game room or swimming pool) as well as transports by the YMCA bus and Batesville Community Schools for school year transports as needed for daily care.
4. A first aid kit and a fire extinguisher shall be available on each field trip. A person trained in first aid will be available on each field trip. Each child's emergency card will be taken on every trip. All children transported on trips are accounted for before, during, and after transport by designated staff member.

Incidents and Accidents

1. A report will be filed when an accident or injury occurs at the center. The incident/accident form will be given and explained to the parent/guardian. It will be signed by the parent/guardian. One copy will remain in the child's enrollment file.
2. Immediate access to a telephone (for emergency use) is available in every area of the childcare center.
3. Childcare staff are required to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the Child Abuse Hotline at 800-800-5556. The Indiana Division of Family and Children Social Services can also be contacted to report any suspected violation of the YMCA Learning Center.

EMERGENCIES

Medical and Dental Emergencies

A parent/guardian will be notified immediately in the event of any emergency, accident, injury, or illness requiring immediate medical or dental treatment. In the event we cannot reach either parent/guardian, the next person listed on the data entry form or student emergency card shall be contacted. If immediate transportation is required, the EMS will be called, and the child will be transported to Margaret Mary Health.

First aid bags are kept in each classroom noted by a Red bag. First aid supplies are also available in the staff lounge, childcare front desk, and On the buses. Emergency numbers are filed in the childcare front

office as well as kept in each classroom. All staff are trained in Pediatric First Aid, Infant, Child and Adult CPR, AED and Bloodborne Pathogens.

Emergency Phone Numbers:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. EMS | 911 |
| 2. Fire Department | 812-934-2230 |
| 3. Police Department | 812-934-3131 |
| 4. Margaret Mary Health (hospital) | 812-934-6624 |
| 5. Poison Control Center | 1-800-382-9097 |

Dr. Gretchen Hartz (812-933-6000) is our consulting Child Care Physician.

Dr. Erica J. Bayoneto (812-934-6166) is our consulting Children's Dentist.

In the event of an emergency, one teacher will remain with the child. A second teacher will remove the other children to another area. The childcare admin staff will be notified immediately. First Aid will be administered, a parent/guardian notified, and transportation arranged, if necessary. Enrollment in the center implies permission for emergency transportation to be provided. We will not accept any children whose parents or guardians refuse to grant permission for emergency transportation. All of the child's records will be taken with the child. A staff member will remain with the child until a parent/guardian arrives. The attending staff member will prepare an incident report, a copy will be given to the parent/guardian and a copy kept on file at the center.

In case of an illness, a child may rest on a cot in the childcare office, or in an area away from the other children but visible to an adult. The child will be continually supervised until a parent/guardian arrives.

Fire Emergencies

Staff members remain calm and reassure the children. The person noting the fire sounds the alarm and calls the fire department (911) when safe to do so. The infants are placed in a single evacuation crib and wheeled outdoors. Staff members escort children to the nearest safe exit and congregate in the parking lot by the shelter or designated assembly area. The staff takes attendance which is compared to the daily sign-in sheets. The administration team checks the restrooms, cots, classroom, kitchen and other used areas to ensure everyone has evacuated the premise. Plans for evacuation are posted in each classroom. Elevators are not used for evacuation.

Stormy Weather Emergencies

Once it is determined that the weather is worsening, staff members are informed by the administration team. They remain calm and reassure the children. Children are escorted to the inner hallway or restroom in the basement level of the center per the evacuation plan posted in their classroom. Staff may bring books or manipulative games with them for the children. Parents/guardians who arrive to take their children are strongly encouraged to remain at the center until the weather alert has been lifted.

Winter Weather Emergencies

School Cancellation

When Batesville School Corporation cancels classes for the day due to bad weather all YMCA programs/classes may still run. The YMCA Learning Center will remain open on most occasions.

Snow Emergency Policy

The Southeastern Indiana YMCA and YMCA Learning Center will be open for business unless a Red Warning is declared in Ripley County. The CEO will decide when other factors require the facility to close.

- In the event that we foresee a delayed opening, we may post the evening before.
- Classes and programs will run when the YMCA is open for business, pending the instructor is safe to travel.

Note: The above listed scenarios are used for general guidance in making decisions of when to open or close. The CEO takes many factors into consideration when making the decision with the safety of our members and staff as the highest priority. WRBI radio is our local source for opening and closing announcements. You may view their website at www.wrbiradio.com. You may also view our opening and closing status on Facebook, our website (www.siyymca.org), or our Daxko mobile app.

Fees: If closed due to weather, no credit or refund will be given.

Guidance Policy

When a child exhibits behavior that is harmful to the safety of the classroom or severely affects the other children's positive classroom experience, the following procedure will be followed, noting that teachers have a 30-60 day period to warmly welcome and transition a child into the classroom as a new student. The goal of our stated policy is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary measures.

1. After educators have observed and attempted to assess the function of the child's behavior, the classroom teacher will schedule and document a conference with parent(s)/guardian(s) to have an open and honest discussion about the behavior being exhibited. This is a time to build a trusting relationship and open lines of communication. The teacher will explain guidance techniques used in the classroom. It will be established that all behavior plans are for the benefit of the child and family. It will be addressed that all matters involving the child's behavior will be kept confidential and addressed by only those that are directly involved with the child. Educators will ensure that positive behavior supports such as a predictable schedule, visual routine cards and a calming area are a part of the child's classroom. A second conference will be scheduled between the parent/guardian, teacher and Childcare Director for 1-2 weeks after the initial conference.
2. If behavior remains a concern at the time of the second conference, a specific behavior plan tailored to the individual child will be initiated. All parties (the child, the teacher, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Childcare Director will have roles to support the child and the classroom as new behaviors are taught. A third conference will be scheduled between the parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher and the Childcare Director for 1-2 weeks.
3. If behavior still remains a concern at the time of the third conference, together, the parents/guardians, teacher and the Childcare Director will utilize resources including, but not limited to INcompass Healthcare, First Steps, Building Blocks, the local schools, and the child's physician. All conference

participants will act swiftly to schedule and meet with outside services. If parents/guardians are unwilling to participate in this process, a probationary period will be implemented before services are limited or terminated. At this time, the CEO will be informed of the work being done on behalf of the child.

4. A fourth meeting between parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher and the Childcare Director will be set once outside resources are able to assess the needs of the child. With the expertise of specialized services, an individualized plan will be implemented with fidelity on the part of the parent/guardian and the teacher. It is the role of the Childcare Director to guide the teacher and support the plan. The result of intervention may lead to the following:
 - Implementation of an individualized plan that leads to successful inclusion within the classroom
 - Qualification of the child to attend developmental preschool or participation in outside care for part of the day
 - On or off-site therapy that results in successful inclusion within the classroom
 - A combination of any of the above

Limited services or termination will be considered if:

- Placement of the child in the class jeopardizes the physical safety of the child or classmates as assessed by outside mental health specialists, behavior specialists or Childcare Director, and all available intervention supports have been exhausted.
- The family is unwilling to participate in any part of the 4-step process.
- Continued placement in the class fails to meet the needs of the child as agreed by both the center and the family.

If it is deemed necessary to terminate services, a 2-week notice will be given when possible. During this 2-week period, the child and family will continue to be treated with respect and support. A termination of services notification does not denote that work done to teach new behavior was in vain or that the family or center has failed the child. A termination of services is to benefit the child in finding a care setting that can better meet their needs. During the 2-week disenrollment transition, the family will receive support in the following ways:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given the contact information for Building Blocks to assist in the search for care
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given a folder of local resources that can be used to continue strengthening the family
- The family will be invited to have continued open dialogue with the Childcare Director regarding their needs due to this transition

It should be noted that the center reserves the right to terminate care at any time, with the approval of the CEO, due to serious incidents that cause severe detriment to self, another child or staff.

We recognize that positive discipline teaches and encourages the healthy development of a child's self-esteem. Our childcare facility does not allow the use of physical punishment, psychological abuse or coercion of children by caregivers. Examples of prohibited staff practices include shaking, hitting, slapping, squeezing, shaming, threats, ostracism, withholding affection, rough handling, and physically forcing a child to perform an action. Discipline is not used for a child's failure to sleep or eat or for toileting accidents. Our staff are trained to employ positive discipline techniques, which include noticing, encouraging and recognizing kind and helpful acts. Teachers act as good role models in order to influence and reinforce a child positively. Children who have conflicts or problems with others while at our center will be encouraged to verbalize their angers and concerns.

Techniques of discipline are not intended to humiliate, shame or frighten a child. This center does not terminate children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or financial status in compliance with federal and civil state rights compliance laws.

Children are our business!

If you have any questions about our childcare center or any information contained in this handbook, please contact me at 812-932-1415. I am happy to answer any questions you may have. To see each individual child grow to his/her potential with a positive self-concept is what I hope each child can experience while in our care.

McKenzie Callahan

Childcare Director