

YMCA OF METROPOLITAN DENVER

School Age Child Care & Day Camp

PARENT HANDBOOK

2011-2012

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Welcome to the YMCA Before and After School Program! We look forward to serving you and your family. The YMCA strives to provide a safe, affordable, convenient and quality program to meet your family's needs. This handbook has been written to answer many of the questions you may have concerning our childcare services. If you have any further questions, please contact your Child Care Site Director.

YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the YMCA of Metropolitan Denver is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. The YMCA commits itself to serve the community with quality childcare services in a cooperative effort with area schools. Parent involvement is essential to this goal.
2. We strive to hire quality staff for our program. They work directly with children building strong positive relationships in a safe and caring environment.
3. Staff and children work together to plan activities that encourage children to develop to their fullest potential.
4. Since children have already spent most of the day in the classroom, opportunities for outdoor and recreational activities are provided. Age appropriate activities are offered in both large and small group settings. In addition, study time is offered daily.
5. Physical education activities are offered so that children can develop good coordination, physical fitness and proficiency in athletic skills.
6. Task oriented activities are planned to challenge children's present abilities and teach them new skills.
7. YMCA childcare strives to establish a cooperative environment where children learn social skills while developing their character and self esteem.
8. The YMCA offers programs and services to individuals and families regardless of sex, race, religion, national origin or financial ability.
9. YMCA childcare supports families through regular activities and parent involvement.
10. The objectives of YMCA programs are: to grow personally, clarify personal values and character development, get along with others, appreciate diversity, become better leaders, develop specific skills, and have fun!

AGES OF CHILDREN

The YMCA accepts children ages 5-15 years of age.

SPECIAL NEEDS

The YMCA will not discriminate against anyone because of a disability. We will work with each family in the best interest of the child in our program, on a case-by-case basis. We will be willing to make reasonable adjustments in our program to meet the needs of all children, their families and program employees.

HOURS OF OPERATION

All schools are open at 6:30 a.m. until the start of school and from the time school is dismissed until 6:00 p.m. During summer session Day Camp programming time runs from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Extended hours are offered from 6:30 a.m. to beginning of Camp and 4:00 p.m. from the end of camp programming to 6:00p.m. This is included in the program cost. A late charge will be given for pick up after 6:05 P.M.

BAD WEATHER/SNOW CLOSURES

If a school is closed due to inclement weather, the YMCA childcare site in that school will close as well. Trips and activities may also be cancelled due to inclement weather.

HOLIDAYS

YMCA CHILD CARE IS CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS:

Labor Day	- September 5, 2011
Thanksgiving Day and the Day After	- November 24-25, 2011
Christmas Eve and Christmas Day (Friday Before and Monday After)	- December 23 & 26, 2011
New Year's Day (Monday After)	- January 2, 2012
Memorial Day	- May 28, 2012
Fourth of July	- July 4, 2012
2 Staff In-service Days*	-TBD

***The YMCA reserves the right to have 2 staff in-service days for professional development. A 30-day notice will be provided in advance.**

NON SCHOOL DAYS AND HALF DAYS OUT

Care will be offered at each site if there are at least 5 children enrolled.

SCHOOL VACATIONS

Holiday camps will be offered at the YMCA during Fall Break, Holiday Break and Spring Break.

REGISTRATION

There is a \$35.00 non-refundable registration fee for each family. A parent packet and all required paperwork need to be filled out prior to your child attending the program; it can be turned in at any of your local YMCA's or on site at your child's school. Included in this must be your child's immunizations.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL RATES

*Monthly rates are in effect for the fall school year. Check the rate sheet for your specific school.

** A child who attends afternoon Kindergarten may attend our regular after school program using the first through fifth grade rates. He/she may attend only after school.

LATE FEES

Payments are due in full by the 5th of the month. Should payment be received after the 5th, a late fee of \$15.00 will apply. If full payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a second late fee of \$15.00 will apply. If the 5th should fall on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday; the payment will be due on the following business day. Children will be considered unregistered for child care at the YMCA and will not be able to attend until the payment is collected in full. Further, any cancellation must be submitted in writing two weeks prior to the start of a new month. If this is not done, the parent is responsible for that month's payment.

REFUNDS/CREDITS

Refunds or credits will be granted in the following cases:

- A doctors' note stating the child's health will prohibit him/her from participating in the program for five business days or more.
- The child's family moves out of the YMCA/school's service area.
- A family emergency requiring five or more days away from home.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

It is the YMCA's policy that written notice must be given two weeks in advance of your child's withdrawal from the program in order to avoid being charged for the following session. Any outstanding balance must be paid at the time of withdrawal. The YMCA reserves the right to dismiss a child from the program upon notifying the parent.

LATE PICK UP CHARGE

Late pick-up is stressful for the child. Please call if you anticipate being late. (after 6:05 P.M.) A fine of \$1.00 per minute will be enforced. This fee must be paid immediately to the YMCA upon pick-up. Repeated violation of this policy may result in the child's dismissal from the program.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Scholarships are available to families who qualify for financial assistance. Financial disclosure will be required, but kept confidential. There are limited funds available for scholarships; therefore, early application is encouraged.

A reduction of fees shall be available to those requesting such assistance providing that the person can demonstrate financial need. Along with the application form, the applicant must document all gross annual income. Income must be documented by supplying the following items:

- a) Most recent tax return
- b) Two consecutive pay check stubs

If the applicant is divorced and is requesting financial assistance for childcare, a Child Support Obligation Worksheet must be presented.

Financial assistance forms are available at the desk at the YMCA.

Social services payments will be accepted from the following counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Jefferson, and Denver. When Social Service payments do not cover the cost of the program, scholarship monies are used to fully fund the child. These scholarship funds are limited; therefore, the YMCA will have limited Social Service slots available.

All families seeking financial aid for childcare must inquire with their county social services to see if they qualify for aid.

RECEIPTS AND TAX INFORMATION

Receipts are available after making a payment and should be kept for families' records. YMCA of Metropolitan Denver childcare payments may be a tax deduction. Statements are available upon request. The Tax ID # is 84-0402696.

HEALTH

IMMUNIZATIONS

The State of Colorado requires a certificate of immunization signed by the physician for every child; due the day the child starts. Failure to follow this policy will result in dismissal of the child from the program.

MEDICATION

Prescription and non-prescription medication will be administered to children. The following procedures must be followed:

1. Parent completes and signs the Parent Release for Administering Medication form.
2. Parent brings medication to the Site Director (please do not send along with children).
3. The prescription label or doctor's statement includes the date, name of drug, name of child, name of doctor, dosage and times of administration. These must be clearly written.
4. Staff will store medication in a closed, locked container and will document when it is administered.

As of January 1, 2003 all childcare staff designated by the nurse consultant to give medications and must complete the 4-hour Department – approved medication administration training and have current first aid and universal precautions trainings. The YMCA is in compliance with the Nurse Practice Act.

SUNSCREEN

Each family must provide sunscreen for their child. All bottles must be labeled with the child's name. Staff will supervise application of sunscreen. If your child burns easily, send an extra shirt for him/her to wear while swimming. We strive to prevent sunburn and we appreciate the parent/guardian for sending the child prepared.

ALLERGIES

In order for our staff to better serve your child, it is imperative that parents inform staff of any allergies that their child may have or had, for example, food, medication, or other substances.

ILLNESS

According to state licensing requirements and for the protection of all children, the YMCA cannot accept children with the following symptoms:

- Elevated temperature
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash
- Sore or discharging eyes or ears, profuse nasal discharge.
- Diagnosed contagious disease such as strep throat or chicken pox

Sick children will be provided with a place to rest comfortably until they go home. Parents will be notified to come and pick up their child within the hour.

Please notify the YMCA if your child contracts a contagious disease, such as whooping cough, German or regular measles. It is a licensing requirement that signs be posted to notify families.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

YMCA staff is First Aid and CPR certified and has been trained in emergency procedures. Emergency numbers are available at each program. Plans for handling fire, floods, tornadoes, severe weather, lost or missing children, injuries and illnesses are on file at each site. We will call you or your emergency contact person to notify of a minor accident or injury. When there is no question that your child must be taken to the doctor or the hospital, we will call you to inform you of our course of action as soon as possible. **It is vital that you keep our staff updated in case of changes in your phone number at work and at home.**

LOST CHILD

Every effort is made to keep all children safe. In the event that a child is missing, a search will be started immediately. If necessary, the parents and the authorities will be called to assist in his search. Parents, please assist us in educating your child of the importance of staying with the YMCA staff.

NATURAL DISASTERS/EMERGENCIES/THREATS

In the case of a natural disaster the YMCA school age program will follow its Emergency procedures specific to the incident. The school age program follows the districts guidelines set forth for evacuation and notification. If an emergency of this nature were to occur parents would be asked to be available at the number they have listed and an emergency contact and the YMCA will notify the parents of the procedures being taken. We ask that parents do not call but wait to be notified. The emergency procedure manual is available to all persons for review at the site.

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

YMCA childcare programs are licensed programs. The YMCA is mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse to Social Services. The license indicates that the program has met the required standards for the operation of a childcare facility. If you have not done so, please ask to see the license. If you believe that your child has been abused, you should seek immediate assistance from your county Department of Social Services. Colorado law requires that childcare providers report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

The telephone numbers to report abuse are:



JEFFERSON COUNTY HOTLINE 303-271-4357
ARAPAHOE COUNTY HOTLINE 303 – 636 - 1750
ADAMS COUNTY HOTLINE 303 – 412-5212
DOUGLAS COUNTY HOTLINE 303- 688- 4825
DENVER COUNTY HOTLINE 720 – 944 - 3000

Childcare services play an important role in supporting families, and strong families are the basis of a thriving community. Your child's education, physical, emotional, and social development will be nurtured in a well-planned and run program. Remember to observe the program regularly, especially with regard to children's health and safety, equipment and play materials, and staff. For additional information regarding licensing, or if you have concerns about a child care facility, please consult the Colorado Department of Human Services, Child care Licensing, at 303-866-5958.

PROCEDURES FOR DROP OFF/PICK UP AND RELEASE OF RECORDS

SIGN IN/OUT

It is required by the YMCA and the Department of Social Services that only authorized persons sign their children in and out each day. **It is not acceptable for children to sign themselves in and out** unless that child walks to and from the child care site and the parent has completed a "Permission to Walk" Form, if the child is 12 years of age.

Your child will be released only to the individuals that you have designated on the Child Information Record. If you need to make changes to the list of people authorized to pick up your child, please do so in writing. If there is an emergency, please call the YMCA and we will make special arrangements.

We will ask for a picture ID and check the authorization for the release of the child. If the person is not authorized to pick up the child, the child will not be released. If an unauthorized adult attempts to take a child without permission, the parents and the police will be called. Licensing requires those designated to pick up and sign your child out, must be at least 16 years of age.

The YMCA will call 911 regarding anyone picking up a child who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or otherwise incapable of providing responsible care to the child. These procedures are for the protection and safety of your child and staff, and for your peace of mind.

LATE DROP OFF

If your child arrives late, the parent needs to take the child to school or to the location of the scheduled activity. It is the parent's responsibility to have the child at the site prior to the van leaving for school. If a child is brought to a field trip location, the parent must sign in the child even if the child has a permission to walk form. Please notify the YMCA in advance if you will be bringing a child late.

LATE PICK UP

Children are supervised at the YMCA Child Care Site until 6:00 p.m. If the YMCA is not contacted and your child is still present at 6:05 p.m., we will contact other individuals authorized to pick up and emergency contacts. In the event that no one can be reached by 6:30 p.m., Social Services will be contacted and the children will be taken to the police.

CLOSING PROCEDURES

Before a staff member closes the building, all rooms including bathrooms that the childcare program utilizes will be searched to assure no child is left in the building and playground. The staff will review the sign in and out sheets to assure all children that were signed in are signed out by an authorized individual. If there are any question in these procedures staff will call the parent/guardian first and then proceed with authorized pickups to assure the safety and well being of the child.

RELEASE OF RECORDS

Due to the volume of requests for information coming into the YMCA, and the necessity of protecting the privacy of the children in our care and the parents and guardians who utilize our services, the YMCA has established a policy, which prohibits release of information without the tender of the **Authorization, Release and Request for Information** form. This form can be obtained from the YMCA Area Director.

POLICY REGARDING DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING MINOR CHILDREN, PARENTS, OR GUARDIANS WITH THIRD PARTIES

Discussion concerning any child, parent, or guardian with any third party will only be allowed with those individuals with whom authorization for release of the child (pick up) has been given on the registration card.

Discussion concerning any child, parent, or guardian with any third party not authorized on the registration card, will occur only with a member of the YMCA administration present, and must be scheduled with the Executive Director of Before and After School/Day Camp.

PROGRAM

LOCATION OF CHILDREN

Staff supervises children at all times. Attendance is taken each day and staff makes phone calls to account for all children. Staff utilizes attendance sheets and head counts every ten minutes to account for children. When restrooms are not located immediately adjacent to the childcare room, children are accompanied by a staff member. Any time a program is away from the site, parents are given a written agenda of the field trip.

TRANSPORTATION

Children attending YMCA programs will be transported in YMCA minibuses. All children are required to wear seat belts when riding in the minibuses. It is the YMCA's responsibility to transport these children safely and to comply with Motor Vehicle Laws. A child must follow instructions and cooperate. If his/her behavior is affecting the safety of the other children, the participant's parents will be notified and your child may be dismissed from the program. We all want a safe and happy experience for the children. Safety is our primary concern.

YMCA drivers are required to have a CDL license. Each driver participates in the YMCA of Metropolitan Denver's Drug Testing program.

During the summer day camp season some camp participants will be transported by a school bus, we contract through local public school transportation. The public school transportation departments are required to follow State of Colorado Transportation Laws. We only transport children age five and older. If a child is unruly on the bus, a parent will be called to pick up the child from the current location in order to maintain a safe environment for all children.

MINIBUS PICK UP AFTER SCHOOL

Please call the YMCA if your child will not be attending that day. Failure to do so will result in a delay of routes and children waiting at the next stop. Children must report to the YMCA minibus immediately after school. A call will be made to notify parents of absences. A fee will be charged if parents do not notify staff in advance of absences.

FIELD TRIPS/Special Activities

Field trips are a scheduled part of our program and will be posted in the weekly schedules, as well as in the YMCA Office. A sign will be left at the site for parents describing the location and return time of the group. During full day care we ask that all children be dropped off by 9:00 am. If your child arrives late and has missed the departure for the field trip, the parent will assume the responsibility for transporting the child to the group at the field trip location and locating staff to sign the child in (even if the child has a walking permission slip), or finding alternative care for the day. Schedules are subject to change; please call the YMCA for updated information. Please realize that our drivers are instructed to consider safety first, and that they may run late when traffic or weather problems occur. Attendance on field trips is taken by two different methods. A head count is done every five minutes. Actual documented roll call is taken every 30 minutes. In addition, the YMCA will be offering special activities where outside organizations will come into our programs as a guest speakers/or give

presentations. During this time the YMCA staff will continue supervising and not allow children to be alone with these individuals.

CAMP T-SHIRTS

Your child will receive a Camp T-shirt when your child is fully registered to the Day Camp program. Camp shirts must be worn on all Field Trips. Additional camp shirts may be purchased as long as supplies last.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Snacks – During the school year an afternoon snack will be provided for your child. (This does not include summer day camp, the guardian must provide an am and pm snack as well as a sack lunch, and there is no refrigeration or microwave available). The YMCA uses a federal food program, which ensures nutritious snacks are served to your child. You are required to provide your child a well-balanced, nutritious lunch on days your child is out of school. We want snack/lunch time to be a pleasant experience for children. The atmosphere will be kept pleasant with conversation encouraged along with eating. No child will be forced to eat, nor denied food as a form of punishment. **Make sure that staff is aware of any food allergies your child may have.**

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

It is the intent of the YMCA to make children as responsible for their belongings as possible. We believe that a child learning to care for one's belongings is an important life skill that we want to foster. You can help by labeling your child's belongings for easy identification.

WHAT TO BRING

Please provide your child with something that will hold his/her belongings and can be easily carried. Please read the activity schedule to determine when a child needs to bring extra items such as a swimsuit and towel. During day camp, days of out school, holiday break, and spring break, please send a labeled sack lunch with the child and a labeled water bottle, as well as two nutritious snacks.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Do not allow your child to bring expensive clothes, gang clothing or items such as guns, knives, or any type of weapon or propellant toy; pocket radio, game boys; pets of any kind; or money unless specified in weekly schedule. **DO NOT LET YOUR CHILD BRING ANY ITEM HE/SHE CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE!**

LOST AND FOUND

The YMCA will keep a lost and found at the childcare site. Check for lost items daily, as we donate the unclaimed items to charity, after 30 days.

WEATHER

We want children to have the opportunity to experience the changing seasons. All children need to be prepared to go outside on a daily basis. This gives children a chance to get fresh air, run, and climb and roll in a large natural setting. We are aware of temperature and natural weather changes. Please send appropriate clothing for your child, e.g. snow boots, gloves, mittens, hats, jackets, and sunscreen. During hot weather, water is available at all times. Some activities are planned in the shade or indoors. If the temperature is below 44 degrees (F) the children will stay indoors and during the summer months if the temperature rises over 100 degrees (F) the children will as well stay indoors.

MOVIE POLICY

Movies will be shown occasionally during the program. We will be posting the movie before it is shown to the children. The movie will be offered to children as an option and will be a G rating (or PG rating with written parent approval). No PG 13 or R rated movies will be shown in school-age programs.

DISCIPLINE

The YMCA's philosophy of a discipline program is that discipline is a continuous, daily process of love and logic during which:

- Children will be encouraged at all times
- Responsible behavior will be recognized
- Self-esteem will be built through positive interaction.

The YMCA will not permit corporal or physical punishment against a child. While in the care of a child, staff must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect the children's physical and mental health.

DIFFICULT CHILD

Occasionally it becomes necessary to inform parents of disruptive behavior that is above and beyond the typically expected range. In an event such as this, a behavior report (Parent Communication) is written and submitted to the Child Care Program Director. A copy is given to the parent along with some discussion from the staff regarding the child's behavior. In cases where a child receives two behavior reports, a conference will be scheduled to discuss the child's continued participation in the program. In some cases, it becomes necessary to dismiss a child from the school age program. If this occurs, parents will be asked to find alternative care immediately. No child will be dismissed without the benefit of a conference between parent and staff first.

COMMUNICATION

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

The quality and effectiveness of YMCA services for children are directly related to the skills and personal characteristics of staff. Recruiting, selecting, training and supporting staff are essential, interrelated processes in insuring the success and integrity of children's programs. The leaders are required to have experience in working with children, acknowledge of recreational activities, and must possess certain qualities in order to serve as role models for children.

The staff is selected for personal qualities of warmth, empathy, and ability to relate positively to children. They receive training in many areas: Safety, Child/Adult communication, numerous activities including arts/crafts, games, etc. YMCA staff are First Aid trained and CPR certified. Background checks are conducted on all staff. This includes criminal record background checks, Central Registry checks and reference checks.

RATIO

The YMCA follows Social Services guidelines for the State of Colorado. Licensing requires a 1:15 ratio for school age childcare. The YMCA strives to run programs at a ratio lower than that required.

PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

The YMCA is committed to a vigilant effort to safeguard and enhance the lives of young persons entrusted to our care. Every reasonable effort is made to reduce risks to children. Staff are trained, supervised and evaluated in the prevention of child abuse. As current information about child abuse demonstrates, there are no documented procedures to eliminate this risk. Nevertheless, the growing body of information about the nature, prevalence and effects of child abuse has created an enhanced awareness for childcare providers, families and the general community. The YMCA has in place a detailed training and reporting program.

BABYSITTING

YMCA staff and volunteers are not allowed to baby-sit or transport children at any time outside of the YMCA program. Please assist us by **NOT** requesting staff to baby-sit your child.

COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF

Each YMCA childcare site has a director in charge of that program. If you have a message or concern and are unable to reach that person, the Area Director assigned to childcare programs may be contacted. Please ask your site director for the necessary phone numbers.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent support is critical to the success of the program. The YMCA recognizes and values parents in our programs. Daily communication with staff is very important. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit their child's program. Parents or guardians are always welcome and visits do not need to be announced or arranged in advance. However, the observing parent or guardian must be listed on the child's authorization card in order to have access to the program area. Donations of supplies for our dramatic play and arts & crafts areas are gratefully appreciated.

Family events will be scheduled throughout the year. The YMCA staff hopes that your family will take the opportunity to visit with staff at that time.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The YMCA works in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care. One of the functions of this department is to monitor childcare centers. All YMCA childcare programs are licensed with the State of Colorado.

Colorado Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203-1714
(303) 866-5958

VISITORS

Parents or guardians are always welcome and visits do not need to be announced or arranged in advance. However, the observing parent or guardian must be listed on the child's authorization card in order to have access to the program area. Any visitor entering a YMCA childcare program is required to sign in. A visitor will sign the "Visitor's Register", write their address, state the purpose of the visit, and show identification.

EVALUATION

During the year, you will be asked to evaluate our program. However, we would appreciate your feedback on our program and welcome your comments at any time. We are here to meet the needs of the community and welcome suggestions.