



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

YMCA of Metropolitan Washington
2019-2020
CHILD CARE
PARENT HANDBOOK

**The YMCA at HHS/ED Children's Center
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Education
330 C St. SW
Washington DC 20201
Phone: (202) 260-7643
Fax: (202) 260-6384**

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your family to the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington Child Care Programs. We are delighted that you have chosen our program for your child. We are committed to providing a loving, nurturing and fun experience for all children.

The Child Care Program is designed to meet the needs of working parents and their children by providing a safe, stimulating and wholesome environment with a plus. Our mission is to help your children develop positive identities, values, social skills, and commitment to life-long learning.

This handbook will assist you in understanding the philosophy, policies, and procedures of our Child Care Programs. Please read the handbook carefully and retain it for future reference. Also, please sign the acknowledgement sheet and return it to your Center Director. If you have any questions, please contact your Early Learning Director.

Again, welcome to the YMCA Child Care Program!

Sincerely,

Angie L. Reese-Hawkins

President & Chief Executive Officer

YMCA of Metropolitan Washington's Partnership with the HHS/ED Children's Center Board of Directors.

The HHS/ED Children's Center is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization sponsored by the Departments of Education and Health & Human Services, and governed by a Board of Directors. The Board seeks to facilitate a high-quality early childhood education program available to children of the employees of HHS and ED, other federal agencies, and the public. The Board is authorized to contract with any outside agency, operation, or organization to manage the Center's day-to-day operation, while the Board is responsible for general oversight of the Center to ensure that a high-quality child care program is maintained and to ensure compliance with the contract. The Board also seeks to provide an avenue for fundraising and tuition assistance.

The Board has partnered with the YMCA to provide child care and educational services at the HHS/ED Children's Center. The Board believes in YMCA's mission to build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all, and is excited that the YMCA will offer a warm, loving, safe, and secure environment for children. Through effective collaboration and partnership, the Board and YMCA look forward to serving our community of children, teachers, and parents.

The HHS/ED Children's Center Parent Advisory Committee (PAC Committee)

The purpose of the PAC is trifold:

1. Communication - PAC is a forum for additional communication with the Center and the Board, outside of the classroom; where parent perspectives from each classroom can be represented, and deeper relationships can develop through our collective work.
2. Support - Participating in PAC is a way that parents can support the Center and the Board in a collaborative environment.
3. Collaboration - Parents in the PAC will collaborate with the Center and the Board in organizing fundraisers, family events, faculty appreciation events, parent volunteer days, and advise on policy recommendations.

Membership: The PAC will be comprised of a Chair (who will be an ex-officio Board member), at least one room parent for each classroom, and all other interested parent volunteers. If you are interested in being a room parent for your child's classroom or otherwise participating in PAC meetings and events, please email president@hhsedchildrenscenter.org.

Table of Contents

I. WELCOME

YMCA Mission.....	1
Philosophy & Goals	1
Educational Philosophy.....	1
Character Development.....	2
Curriculum.....	2
YMCA Goals.....	2
Code of Conduct.....	3
Giving Back.....	3
Locations/Contact Information.....	4

II. PREPARING FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR-FAQS

What information will I receive from the center?.....	4
What do I bring on my child's first day?.....	4
When will my child transition to another class?.....	4
What if my child has an allergy or special diet?.....	5
What if my child requires medication during the day?.....	5
How can I schedule a conference?.....	5

III. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Arrival.....	5
Absences.....	5
Babysitting Policy.....	6
Child Abuse.....	6
Children at Risk.....	6
Credits.....	6
Communicating with YMCA Staff.....	7
Communication.....	7
Contacting my child during program hours.....	7
Drop Off/Pick Up.....	7
Gratuities.....	8
Hours of Operations	8
Late Pick Up Fees.....	8
Licensing.....	8
Parent Participation/Volunteerism.....	8
Staff Expectations.....	9
Weather.....	9

IV. EXPECTATIONS IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Biting Policy.....	10
Bullying Policy.....	10
Discipline Guidelines.....	10
Field Trips/Parent Chaperones.....	11
Personal items, electronics, money, toys, etc.....	11
Runaway Policy.....	12
Transportation.....	12
Zero Tolerance.....	12

V. HEALTH GUIDELINES

Accidents.....	13
Accommodation Process.....	14
Allergies/Special Diets.....	14
Asbestos.....	14
Contagious Diseases.....	14
Health Forms/Immunizations.....	14
Health Records.....	15
Illness Policy.....	15
Insect Repellent/Diaper Cream Policy.....	16
Medication.....	16
Special Needs.....	17
Sunscreen Policy.....	17

VI. CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Bathroom Procedures.....	18
Birthday Party Guidelines.....	18
Clothing & Other Belongings.....	18
Meals.....	18
Naps / Rest Time Policy.....	19
Outdoor Play.....	19
Toilet Training Policy.....	20

VII. OFFICE PROCEDURES

Billing/Payment.....	20
Cancellation Procedures.....	20
Confidentiality.....	21
Dismissal.....	21
Drop-in Care.....	21

Emergency Evacuation Plan 21
Fees 23
Insurance 23
Paperwork 23
Resolving Concerns 24
Tax Information 24
Waiting List 24

Please note: YMCA Child Care Policies and Procedures are subject to change in consultation with The HHS/ED Children’s Center Board.

I. WELCOME

YMCA Mission

The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington's mission is to foster the spiritual, mental, and physical development of individuals, families, and communities according to the ideals of inclusiveness, equality, and mutual respect for all.

The YMCA values diversity as strength and provides experiences that help:

- Develop self-confidence and self-respect
- Practice personal integrity
- Achieve physical and spiritual well-being
- Promote interracial, intergroup, and ecumenical harmony
- Build capacities for enlightened leadership
- Contribute to personal self-reliance and societal well-being
- Lead to worldwide understanding and peace

Philosophy & Goals

The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington Child Care programs promote care and safety, and they nurture the child's desire to explore and learn through developmentally appropriate activities. These activities are consistent with the recognized principles of early childhood education:

- We are partners with parents in their children's lives.
- We are partners with children to help them reach their fullest potential.
- We are honored by the trust and confidence parents place in us.
- We are committed to providing a safe, caring, affordable, and fun environment for all children.

The goals and principles of the YMCA Child Care Program are firmly based on the specific objectives from which our program operates. These principles are related to personal growth and interactions with others as well as with the environment. The specific principles of the program are:

- The achievement of personal growth in body, mind, and spirit.
- The formation and practice of constructive habits and attitudes.
- The strengthening of family relationships through parent participation in the program.

Educational Philosophy

As with any YMCA program, the curriculum is centered on the YMCA mission and program goals. Second only to relationships, a well-planned curriculum will help to define a child's experience in a YMCA Program.

At the YMCA we provide an environment where children are encouraged and inspired to learn and explore through play, listening, and creating. We believe children need to be exposed to experiences that are meaningful to them in order to promote ownership of their knowledge, build self-confidence and self-discipline, and encourage life-long learning. Typical daily activities include circle time, learning centers, daily art projects, playground or indoor play time, music, and story time. We use these activities to help children develop socially, emotionally, cognitively, and to enhance the development of their fine and gross motor skills.

Character Development

We plan to provide the best program possible. At the YMCA, that means more than just activities. We believe character development is an important challenge for all of us—staff, volunteers, members, participants, and parents. The YMCA is committed to embracing and demonstrating character through the modeling of the four core values: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Our goal is to challenge the children and staff to believe in and act on these positive values.

Caring: To love others, to be sensitive to the wellbeing of others, to help others.

Honesty: To tell the truth, to act in such a way that you are worthy of trust, to have integrity; making sure your choices match your values.

Respect: To treat others as you would have them treat you; to value the worth of every person, including yourself.

Responsibility: To do what is right; to be accountable for your behavior and obligations.

Curriculum

Creative Curriculum balances both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning, with an emphasis on responding to children's learning styles and building on their strengths and interest. Daily schedules are posted in your child's room. The Center also uses additional best practices such as Common Core Standards Initiative, and education resources from the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC) to support the curriculum, as needed.

Our programs strive to develop the whole child by helping him/her socially, emotionally, intellectually, and morally. In addition to focus on self-development, YMCA programs afford children opportunities to acquire critical life skills through interacting with a diverse population. Children learn to recognize and value the differences and similarities between themselves.

YMCA Goals

Each child should be treated with respect, kindness and understanding.

- Children's feelings, thoughts and ideas are worthy of recognition and response from those around them. Children must be taught and encouraged to express their feelings, thoughts, and ideas in socially acceptable ways.

- The YMCA is committed to character development by helping children accept and demonstrate the positive values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.
- Children must be secure in the knowledge that the YMCA setting in which they learn and play will protect them, insofar as possible, against physical and psychological harm.
- Parents must be active participants in decisions relating to the care and education of their children.
- Parents must support those responsible for the consistent supervision of their children.

Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct states that the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all of our families and children. To ensure safety and comfort for all, we ask individuals to act appropriately while they are in our facility or participating in a YMCA program. We expect persons using the YMCA to behave in a mature and responsible way and respect the rights and dignity of others. Our code of conduct does not permit language or action that can hurt or frighten another person or that falls below a generally accepted standard of conduct.

If, after consultation with parents, the staff, and Early Learning Director, the child's behavioral problems cannot be resolved, then the child may be dismissed from the program.

A parent or guardian who is disruptive to the program, does not comply with the policies of the YMCA, or whose behavior is intimidating to the children, parents of the other children, or the staff of the center will be asked to remove their child(ren) from the program.

Giving Back

Every year, members and program participants like you donate to the YMCA's Caring for Community Campaign to ensure that every child, adult, and family in your community has access to quality child care, summer camp, and the opportunity for a healthy lifestyle, regardless of their financial ability. If you wish to make a contribution to the YMCA 2019 Caring for Community Campaign, you may do so by completing the bottom of your payment options form, online at www.ymcadc.org (be sure to designate The YMCA at HHS/ED Children's Center), or by sending your donation directly to The Y at HHS/ED Children's Center.

Location/Contact Information

The YMCA at HHS/ED Children's Center
Mary Switzer Building
330 C St. SW
Washington DC 20201

Assistant Early Learning Director
Tamika Wilson
Tamika.Wilson@ymcadc.org
(202) 260-7643

Resource Specialist
Latoya Watson
Latoya.Watson@ymcadc.org
(202) 260-7643

Regional Early Learning Director
Paloma Jimenez
Paloma.jimenez@ymcadc.org
(202) 260-7643

II. PREPARING FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR-FAQS

What information will I receive from the Center?

Besides this handbook, we send out weekly parent communications regarding important dates, birthdays, vacations, and quick reminders. Additionally, we send out a monthly newsletter reflecting events, reminders, as well as the monthly lunch and snack menu.

What should I bring on my child's first day?

All belongings brought to the YMCA should be properly marked with the child's name. Children should wear comfortable clothing and appropriate shoes for running and playing as specified by the center. (NO SANDALS OR SOFT SOLE SHOES) Each child should have a complete change of clothing labeled with the child's name including underwear, socks, shirts, and pants or shorts. Clothing should be seasonally appropriate. The center does not maintain extra clothing

When will my child transition to another class?

Center-wide classroom transitions typically occur in August, and individual transitions may occur throughout the year. However, there are several factors we take into account BEFORE a child is moved up. These include but are not limited to: age, developmental milestones, and space availability in the next room.

What if my child has an allergy or special diet?

If your child has an allergy or requires a special diet please speak with the Director or Assistant Director prior to your child's first day. All allergies should be written on registration paperwork at the time of enrollment.

What if my child requires medication during the day?

We are able to administer medication to your child during his/her school day as long as the proper forms are filled out. Please refer to the medication section under "Health Guideline" for complete information.

How can I schedule a conference?

Assessments are offered on an ongoing basis at the request of a parent. Scheduled conferences are held twice a year during the late fall and late spring. Parents have the option of signing up for a parent/teacher conference if they wish. There will be a sign-up sheet at the time assessments are passed out, listing days and times that are available. This gives both the YMCA and parents the opportunity to exchange information if the parent chooses. This is also an ideal way for the YMCA and parents to work together and provide a positive environment for the children. Conferences during other times of the year may also be scheduled should the YMCA or parents deem it necessary

III. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Arrival

All children should be signed in electronically upon arrival by the parent/ guardian. Parents of young children should help their child with settling into the classroom, taking off coats, boots, etc., and putting away the child's belongings or backpack. Children should also wash their hands when they enter the classroom. Parents of children in the infant and toddler rooms should assist their child to ensure their hands are clean and dry. Please read Infant and Toddler Handbook for further information on Handwashing procedures for these rooms. Be sure to say goodbye to your child before you leave. If you need to speak at length with a teacher, please schedule a conference through the Director.

Please limit your conversation and refrain from distracting the teacher from the care of the children. Remember that the teacher's primary responsibility is the care of the children and staff.

Absences

If your child will be absent from the program, please notify the center via Tadpoles as well as by emailing and/or calling the Assistant Early Learning Director and Resource Specialist.

Babysitting Policy

Although YMCA program staff work well with children, our policy states that employees of the YMCA are not permitted to have additional contact, baby-sit, or provide transportation for families with children enrolled in our YMCA programs.

Child Abuse

State laws of the District of Columbia require the YMCA to report suspected or actual child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities. In compliance with the laws, the YMCA has adopted a policy, a summary of which is as follows:

- Sexual misconduct and/or child abuse on the part of employees is prohibited by the YMCA. Any employee that admits to or is found guilty of an incident of illegal sexual misconduct shall be immediately terminated from employment and any position of responsibility with the YMCA.
- Any employee of the YMCA who has reason to suspect that a child is abused or neglected should report that matter immediately to his/her supervisor who shall make a report forthwith to the local department of the county or city where the child resides or where the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred. If neither locality is known, then such report shall be made to the local department where the abuse or neglect was discovered.
- Any employee making a report of child abuse or neglect pursuant to the appropriate sections of the Maryland, District of Columbia, or Virginia statutes or who participated in a judicial proceeding resulting there from shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability in connection therewith, unless it is proven that such employee acted in bad faith or with malicious intent.

Children at Risk

Parents who arrive at the YMCA in an incapacitated condition (i.e. alcohol, drugs) present a risk to their child. The staff in charge will advise the parent of their options regarding the transportation of their child to his/her home. Some options that may be exercised are:

- Call another person on the child's emergency contact list
- Call the other parent
- Call a taxi
- Call a nearby neighbor/friend

If a reasonable conclusion cannot be reached, the parent will be advised that either Child Protective Services or the Police will be called.

Credits

A full week of tuition is due if a child attends the Center any portion of the week. If the child misses an entire week when the center is open, half of the regular **weekly tuition** will be due. This reduction in tuition is limited to two weeks per calendar year and requires advance notice from the family to the Center Director. There is no charge for the week when the center is closed (such as for cleaning or due to unforeseen circumstances such as repairs necessary due to weather damage.)

Please provide two weeks' notice when requesting a vacation credit to ensure pre-scheduled payments are adjusted accordingly.

Communicating with the YMCA Staff

Exchange of information between parents and staff provides insights for both parties. The format may be formal or informal. It is vital that you inform us of changes happening in your family. Changes at home include: moving, hospitalization of a sibling or parent, alterations in the parents' relationship, etc. These influence the way in which your child relates to others. Staff members can better provide for a child's needs if they are aware of the situation. We will treat this information with the utmost confidentiality.

Communication

All communication in our child care program is done through phone or e-mail. Please send all absences, questions, and other pertinent information to our e-mail address. The Director, Assistant Director and Resource Specialist will have continuous access to this e-mail address throughout the day.

The HHS/ED Children's Center Phone Number: (202) 260-7643

Email: hhsedchildrenscenter@ymcadc.org

Tamika Wilson: Assistant Early Learning Director: Tamika.Wilson@ymcadc.org

Latoya Watson: Resource Specialist: Latoya.Watson@ymcadc.org

Paloma Jimenez: Regional Early Learning Director: Paloma.Jimenez@ymcadc.org

Contacting your Child during Program hours

Please do not call to speak to your child unless it is an emergency. If your child is experiencing problems, we will call you immediately. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Director or Assistant Director at any time. Child Care participants are not allowed to have cell phones or any other electronic devices. Please speak with the Director or Assistant Director regarding education electronic devices.

Drop off /Pick Up

The HHS/ED Children's Center opens its doors at 7:00am. Please do not attempt to drop off before this time. All children must be signed in by the adult dropping them off. Children are not allowed to enter the program without an adult. Always leave your child with staff, do not leave them alone in an empty classroom or any area of the center.

It is important that all children are picked up on time. If a child is not picked up by closing time, parents and emergency contacts will be notified. If neither the parent nor the emergency contacts can be reached, or if the child is not picked up within 45 minutes of closing, Police may be called. A child will not be released to anyone, including parents, who appear to be in an impaired condition, i.e. under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Should a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs remove the child from the center, the police WILL be notified.

Please note that a photo I.D. is required for anyone, including a parent, to pick up children from our Programs if YMCA staff does not recognize that person or their key code/card is non-operable. This is to ensure that all the children are safe and going home with the appropriate person. The center is not responsible for a child once they have left the

premises. Staff is prohibited from transporting children to and from the center in their vehicles.

Please note if you will be dropping off your child after 9:30 am, please inform the center prior to 9:30 a.m. that day for planning purposes.

Parking passes are available for the D Street parent parking spaces. These spaces are labeled "GSA Child Care Center Parking". Please make sure you do NOT IDLE YOUR CARS during drop off and place your parking passes in the dash to avoid ticketing. You are only allowed to park for 15 minutes during pick up and drop off times.

Gratuities

YMCA employees may not accept gifts, tips, gratuities, or other benefits. A small token of appreciation or small general fund distributed equally among staff is permissible.

Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday 7:00am-6:00pm

Late Pick Up Fees

The YMCA at HHS/ED Children's Center closes at 6:00pm

The late pick up fees are as follows:

There is a \$1 per minute after a five minute grace period late fee for pick-up beyond the standard hours of operation. Two staff shall be present in the center at all times even if only one child is in the center. Parents will complete a late notice form, sign, and provide to staff caring for your child(ren) who will provide to the Director. The charge will be added to your account. Cash will not be accepted at any time. Payment will either be taken via billing method on file or in person from Director. You will receive a slip from the Director with the amount due for your late fee and it will be taken on your next draft cycle.

Licensing

All YMCA sites and programs are licensed in the District of Columbia by the Department of Health, and a copy of the licensing plan is available for your inspection at all times. Re-licensing and unannounced inspections occur regularly.

Parent Participation /Volunteerism

You are always welcome in the program as a volunteer either on an on-going or occasional basis to share special interests, a helping hand, or expertise. Please contact the Director or Assistant Director to volunteer your services. Parents of enrolled children may make unannounced visits at any time. All custodial parents have the right to enter the center at any time. We request, however, that visits of a lengthy nature are scheduled with the Director ahead of time in order to avoid having too many people in the room at one time. Visitors other than parents are welcome to visit, but should make an appointment with the Director ahead of time.

We invite all the parents to attend any special events put on by the children throughout the program year. Parent participation is encouraged, such as attending parent workshops/meetings, special events, field trips, etc.

The Parent Advisory Committee is a wonderful opportunity to express your views on how we can improve our program. Parents and YMCA staff come together to share ideas and suggestions regarding family activities, enrichment programs, and other items of interest. Parents are encouraged to participate. The HHS/ED Children’s Center Board of Directors is another opportunity for parents to support the program. Please look forward to more information via newsletters, email, and posted throughout the center on how you can join.

The YMCA welcomes program volunteers and matches them with programs or activities that they are best suited for. All volunteers are interviewed and are required to complete a background check before working the program. Volunteers are not counted in staff to child ratios.

Staff Expectations

The YMCA strives to hire high quality, well-trained staff to conduct all YMCA Youth Development Programs. All staff members are selected based on their education and experience in working with children. Staff is expected to demonstrate sound judgment, dependability, responsibility, and the ability to create an environment which reflects care, respect, and safety for all children. All YMCA staff must complete a background check before working in any youth development program.

In addition, The HHS/ED Children’s Center staff must comply with all federal background checks required for employment in federal facilities/child care centers. YMCA staff members participate in planned training (First Aid, CPR, Child Abuse Prevention, etc.) and educational trainings to further their skills in child development and recreation.

YMCA Inclement Weather Policy:

Please note that we send all Inclement Weather Notifications via email and Tadpoles. Please also check www.ymcadc.org for routine updates as well.

Office of Personnel Management (OPM)	HHS/ED Children’s Center
Open	Open
Open, X hours Delayed Arrival, with option for Unscheduled Leave or Unscheduled Telework	Opens at 9:00 am
CLOSED	CLOSED

IV. EXPECTATIONS IN OUR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Biting Policy

Incidents of biting are a relatively common, yet unpleasant, experience with infants and toddlers. These children have not yet acquired the verbal skills to express their frustrations or desires. Please reference the Infant and Toddler handbook for more detailed information in regards to our Biting Policy.

When the child is able to verbalize and teething is no longer a factor, the center will implement our Biting Policy. If an incident occurs, the parent will be called and notified. If incidents of biting continue to occur, the Center Director and staff will schedule a meeting to work with families to achieve a common resolution. Please see the Director or Assistant Director regarding any questions or concerns.

Please reference the Infant and Toddler Handbook for additional information on this policy

Bullying Policy

Bullying is when one or more people exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick, or put down another person with the intent to hurt another. Bullying happens when a person or group of people want to have power over another and use their power to get their way. Bullying can also happen through cyberspace: through the use of e-mails, text messaging, instant messaging, and other less direct methods. This type of bullying can also lead to persons being hurt and can be especially hurtful when persons are targeted with meanness and exclusion.

- **In YMCA Youth Development Programs, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying.** Our philosophy is based on our mission statement which ensures that every child is accepted. We are open to all to develop the spirit, mind, and body. We work together as a team to ensure that all participants gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with great memories. Unfortunately, persons who are bullied may not have the same potential to get the most out of their experience. Our leadership addresses all incidents of bullying seriously and trains staff to promote communication with other staff members and their children; so both staff and participants will be comfortable alerting us to any problems during their program experience. Every person has the right to have the best possible experience, and by working together as a team to identify and manage bullying, we can help ensure that all participants and staff have a great experience.

Discipline Guidelines

The YMCA disciplinary guidelines are as follows:

- Expectation and consequences will be explained clearly to children and posted in easy to understand terms.
- Children will be given clear guidelines for their behavior so that they develop internal control of their actions.

- Children will be allowed to express their feelings, both positive and negative. The YMCA staff will focus their efforts on showing children acceptable ways of expressing their feelings.
- Simple, clear-cut rules will be established. These include rules for safety as well as rules for protecting the rights of others.
- Children's appropriate behavior will be reinforced.
- Verbal abuse or derogatory remarks are not acceptable.
- Staff will model positive behavior and attitude.

If incidents of disruptive behavior occur, the Center Director and staff will schedule a meeting to work with families to achieve a common resolution. Please see the Director or Assistant Director regarding any questions or concerns. Please reference the Infant and Toddler Handbook for additional information in regards to infants and toddlers behaviors.

Field Trips/Parent Chaperones

Field trips are important to the YMCA Youth Development program because they expose the children to the community, and can be educational. Field trips are used to stimulate interest in a subject as well as to extend information. Far from being a "one day" experience, a field trip can be integrated into the total program for maximum learning. Parents are notified of scheduled field trips and may attend, if available. The YMCA has busses and will provide transportation. The busses are inspected pre/post trip and meet the Department of Motor Vehicle requirements for safe driving.

Please speak with the Early Learning Director or Assistant Director regarding attending field trips as a chaperone.

Personal Items, Toys, Money, Etc.

The center is equipped with toys and games suited for each age group. Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home, eliminating unnecessary problems. The children may bring toys or items of special interest on sharing days or by special arrangement with the child's teacher.

- Please do not allow your child to bring guns, war toys, or other items relating to aggression and destruction.
- Please do not allow your child to bring in any electronic devices. The YMCA is not responsible for any lost, stolen, damaged, or traded items. All items unclaimed will be donated to charity at the end of the month. For identifying purposes, remember to label all your child's belongings with their first and last name.
- Please do not allow your child to carry money to the Center unless it has been previously requested by written communication from the YMCA for a specific program or field trip.

Runaway Policy

If a child leaves the designated YMCA site area without permission from the staff or refuses to leave when the rest of the group leaves an area, the following procedure will be followed:

*Example A: Child runs towards the woods when he is out of a game or refuses to join the group when they are leaving. A staff member will alert the rest of the staff and will go after the child and bring the child back to the area.

1. Parent will be notified and asked to pick up child immediately.
2. A meeting will be arranged between the parent, child, and Site Director/Coordinator before the child can return to the program. The event will be documented.
3. The child will no longer be allowed to attend the program if this is a repeated offense.

*Example B: If the staff is unable to locate the child, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Police will be notified.
2. Parent will be notified and asked to come and aid in the search if the child. When the child is found, the parent will be asked to take the child home.
3. The child will no longer be able to attend the YMCA care program

Transportation

YMCA transportation provides safe and well-maintained vehicles for transporting children to/from school and for special events and trips.

Children are expected to follow these rules for bus safety:

1. Enter and exit in an orderly fashion
2. Sit in seat facing front with seat belt fastened
3. Keep body inside vehicle (no head, arms, etc., out the window)
4. Place all unsecured objects under their seats
5. No objects thrown in or outside the vehicle
6. Noise **MUST** be kept to a level as not to disturb the driver
7. Children shall not have body parts or items in the aisle
8. Code of Conduct for all participants must be followed

The rules **MUST** be followed for the safety of everyone. Violations will be handled as follows:

1. Verbal warning to student
2. Written report to parent/student
3. Suspension from transportation for one day

*Should inappropriate behavior continue, the student may be dismissed from the transportation and/or the program.

Zero Tolerance Policy

YMCA Youth Development Programs have a zero-tolerance policy for serious behavior infractions since our goal is to provide a healthy, safe, and fun environment for every child. The behaviors below are grounds for immediate removal from programs for the remainder of the current day and additional days as deemed necessary by program staff. Each incident will be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine if the child is capable of functioning in a group setting while in the program. The Early Learning Director will meet with the child's parent(s) to determine a course of action and the length of the suspension.

Serious behaviors that may result in immediate program suspension are: (If a child is removed from the program no refunds will be given.)

1. Any behavior that endangers the health and safety of children, staff or members
2. Leaving the program without permission, or refusing to remain with assigned group
3. Inappropriate touching of other participants or sexual misconduct
4. Theft, defacing, or destruction of property belonging to the YMCA or others
5. Any kind of physical assault such as hitting, kicking, biting
6. Gang-related activity
7. Possession of weapons, tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs

V. HEALTH GUIDELINES

Accidents

All precautions will be taken to prevent serious health risks to all participants. In the event that a minor injury occurs, First Aid will be administered on site by staff. The following procedures will be followed:

- First Aid will be provided and the incident recorded and filed. Teachers and or Center Director/Assistant Director will notify parents.
- The child will periodically be observed after First Aid has been applied.

In the event that a major injury or health problem arises and professional medical care is needed:

- Immediate First Aid will be administered by staff person until professional services arrive.
- Parents will be notified immediately. If the parent cannot be contacted, the emergency contact person(s) will be notified. Please keep your Emergency Contact information updated. If changes occur, please report them immediately.
- 911 will be called.
- A staff person will accompany your child to the hospital and remain there until you or your emergency contact person arrives. The YMCA does not pay for the ambulance transportation.
- The incident will be recorded on an Incident/Accident Report Form and any first aid given will be documented.
- Appropriate reporting requirements will be followed.

Accommodation Process

Whether a child is non-disabled or has special needs, consideration is given to the individual needs of every child and the ability of the program to meet those needs.

Please inform the YMCA if you or your child has a disability or special needs requiring an accommodation during the enrollment process or prior to their first day in the program.

This information enables the YMCA to better meet your needs or those of your child, within available resources and to the extent reasonable.

When a child needs additional services in the areas of social, emotional, cognitive, language, and for motor development growth, a referral to a professional resource in the community may be made.

Allergies / Special Diets

The YMCA must be made aware of any child who requires a special diet due to medical or religious reasons. All allergies should be written on registration paperwork at the time of enrollment and kept up-to-date.

Asbestos

The YMCA will work with HHS/ED/GSA as necessary regarding any concerns regarding the condition of the facility.

Contagious Diseases

If your child or any member of the immediate household has or has been exposed to a highly contagious disease, please inform the Center Director or Assistant Director immediately of the condition within 24 hours. Highly contagious illnesses include: strep throat, stomach flu, influenza, pinworm, chicken pox, conjunctivitis (pink eye), scarlet fever, lice, scabies, whooping cough, impetigo, meningitis, hepatitis A, measles, mumps, salmonella, and shigellosis. Your child should be clear of all symptoms and checked by a doctor before returning to the center with a doctor's note.

Health Forms/Immunizations

By their start date in the program, all children must have a current physical exam on file. Physical examinations must be completed and signed by a child's physician. All immunizations must be current.

The medical form must be current within 12 months of their last day in the program. If the YMCA does not receive the updated medical form by their start date, your child will be removed from the program and you will forfeit your deposit.

All children must have up to date immunizations to enroll and stay enrolled in the YMCA Childcare program. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide the center with up-to-date immunization records. Drop-off will be denied if health forms are out of date.

Health Records

As required by the local licensing authority, each child must have a completed:

- Registration Form to include two emergency contacts (one must be local)
- Health/Immunization Form Parts One, Two and Three
- Policies and Waivers Form
- Proof of Identification Form
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
- Medication Consent Form
- All About Your Child Form
- Lead Screening (6 years and under)

These forms must be given to the YMCA at the time of registration or your child will NOT be able to attend!! Please be sure that the information on the forms is accurate and complete. Please do not leave any of the sections blank on any of the forms.

Illness Policy

Children must be healthy enough to participate in the daily routine of the program. If there are indications of illness, your child will not be admitted or be allowed to remain at the center. If your child becomes ill during the day, he/she will be separated from the classroom and the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately to pick the child up. If we are unable to reach you, or your child is not picked up within 45 minutes, we will call the next emergency contact listed on the Emergency Form. Each child's registration form MUST have an emergency contact person living in the area.

A child picked up from the center because of an illness may not return to the center the following day. When they do return to school, your child must be diarrhea free, vomit free and/or fever free for the past 24 hours without any medication. Also, if your child is on a restricted diet due to illness, they may not return to school until they have been cleared of all restrictions. Please see Director for any additional questions you may have in regards to medication.

We sincerely appreciate your cooperation regarding our health policy. In order to continue to provide quality care for your children we need your help with the following:

- Recognize the signs and symptoms of illness in your child.
- Promptly pick up your ill child when called.
- Consult with a doctor about diagnosis and care during illness.
- Inform the center of any medication(s) your child is taking, including any possible reactions.

A child will NOT be permitted to attend with the following:

- Fever of 100 degrees F. or above (may not return the following day).
- Any contagious disease (such as chicken pox, stomach flu, influenza, ringworm, impetigo, scabies/lice, conjunctivitis). Follow the guidelines for exclusion for all communicable diseases.

- Yellow or green nasal discharge.
- Sores with yellow or green drainage.
- Eye discharge/Conjunctivitis (may not return until on antibiotics for 24 hours).
- Unexplained rash (consult your physician).
- Difficult or rapid breathing, severe cough, high-pitched croup or whooping sound after cough.
- Diarrhea/Vomiting: A child may not return the following day.
- Significant ailment affecting your child's ability to participate in all school activities. (Indoors and Outdoors).
- Any symptoms requiring one-on-one care or causing severe discomfort without the use of medications.
- A child taking antibiotics may not return to the school until 24 hours after the first dose to allow the medicine to work.

Upon discharge for the day for an illness, you will receive a sick form. This form will be signed by the center director and may list any stipulations in detail for return.

Insect Repellent / Diaper Cream Policy

Children are not to carry insect repellent & diaper cream in their backpacks or have them in their cubbies. Instead, the repellent & diaper cream must be stored out of the reach of children in a concealed location. Staff will be required to record each time the insect repellent and/or diaper cream is used on each child. **Parents must fill out an authorization form, one form per item, listing the specific name/brand of the insect repellent or diaper cream and any known adverse reactions.** Please send the insect repellent or diaper cream in a ziplock bag labeled with your child's name. Please be sure to pick up your child's insect repellent or diaper cream at the end of the season/or at the end of his/her participation with the YMCA program.

Medication

Our medication policy is primarily established to accommodate the administration of medication(s) commonly prescribed by physicians for the treatment of short-term illness. Prescription and "over-the-counter" medications will not be dispensed without written consent from the child's parent. Parents and Guardians should:

- Complete the medication authorization form included in your registration packet. Please note: We are not allowed by state to accept health forms from another Child Care Center. The authorization form has to be on our YMCA form. If the medication is prescription (includes inhaler and EpiPen) it will have to have a doctor's signature on the form.
- Keep all medication in the original container with the prescription label/directions attached. Medication must be labeled with the child's name, the name of medication, the dosage amount, and the time or times to be given.

- Hand all medication (including inhalers, and EpiPens) to the Child Care staff. Children are not allowed to keep medications on their person, in their backpack or lunch bags.
- All medications are stored in a secured location and given to your child at the prescribed time.

Medications authorized are only valid for 10 days, at which time all unused medication will be returned to the parent or disposed of, unless a new form is completed. If a child is taking medication for an extended period, a note with these specifications, signed by a physician, must be submitted. We encourage you if you have a child that is on a long term medication such as an inhaler, EpiPen etc. to have your doctor fill your form out with a start date of September through August. This will allow us to keep the same form on file the entire school calendar year. Please note: Per state our fiscal year runs from September through August, so your end date cannot go past August.

YMCA staff members are not authorized to perform any medically invasive procedures such as glucose blood testing, diabetic injections, or the administration of suppositories, etc. When trained by the child's physician or parent as to what procedures to follow, the staff may administer epinephrine to a child in a life-threatening situation.

We strongly encourage all parents to administer medication to children prior to drop-off and after pick-up.

Special Needs

In order for the YMCA to provide the best experience for your child, we ask that you consult with the Director regarding any special needs required by your child prior to registration. We will assess the support needed and discuss with you the benefits of the program or the alternatives available. In addition, there are certain treatments and procedures that our staff cannot legally perform because they are not qualified or trained to do so. Children with special needs will be evaluated on an individual basis. We will make every attempt to serve all children.

Sunscreen Policy

Children are not to carry sunscreen in their backpacks or have them in their cubbies; instead, the sunscreen must be stored with the staff. Parents must fully complete the sunscreen authorization form listing the specific name/brand of the sunscreen and any known adverse reactions. Please send the sunscreen labeled with your child's first and last name. Sunscreen will be sent home at the end of the season. Please be sure to pick up your child's sunscreen at the end of his/her participation with the YMCA Youth Development Program.

VI. CLASSROOMS PROCEDURES

Bathroom Procedures

No participant is ever alone with a staff member. All participants will take trips to the bathroom with the entire program and/or groups of participants escorted by program staff. Program participants will only use bathrooms inspected for safety by program staff.

Birthday Party Guidelines

It is our pleasure to help assist you in your child's birthday celebration at the center. You may schedule a time with your child's teacher for a birthday party. Remember to promote healthy eating and try to limit sugar-filled foods. Birthday party invitations may not be distributed at the center unless ALL children are included. Please note that The HHS/ED Children's Center classrooms are "NUT FREE ZONE" which means no nut products are allowed in the classrooms. In addition, only bring in sealed store bought products and NO party bags please.

Clothing & Other Belongings

All belongings brought to the center should be properly marked with the child's name. Children should wear comfortable clothing and appropriate shoes for running and playing as specified by the center. (NO SANDALS OR SOFT SOLE SHOES).

- A complete change of clothing labeled with the child's name including underwear, socks, shirts, and pants or shorts. Clothing should be seasonally appropriate. The center does not maintain extra clothing.
- A small blanket and crib/cot sheet for rest time. These MUST be taken home on Friday for you to WASH and RETURN on Monday morning

Meals

Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided daily for all children enrolled in the program. We offer wholesome, ample meals for your child, with no soda, candy, or gum. Our food contains no nut products. Please see the Center Director for any medically diagnosed food allergies (gluten, dairy, fish). We will attempt to accommodate these allergies with our food vendor. **Outside food is not permitted without the consent of the Center Director.** For medical reasons, your child must have a doctor's note if they need a special diet provided. All food brought from home must be in a glass container due to NAEYC regulations.

All snacks and lunches are according to USDA guidelines for children. Each child will be given a choice of a vegetarian menu or a regular menu; you must pick one menu for your child to follow for the year at time of enrollment.

Please speak with the Center Director or Assistant Director to discuss special diets/outside meals.

The following foods pose choking hazards for children 4 years and younger. The center will follow guidelines set forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics when serving food.

The following items should be avoided:

- Nuts and seeds
- Raw vegetables
- Popcorn
- Hard pretzels
- Hard or gummy candies
- Marshmallows
- Grapes

The following items need to be cut into pieces no larger than ½ inch:

- Fruits
- Meats
- Cheeses
- Soft-cooked vegetables

This is not an exhaustive list, other food items not listed above and that are found to be choking hazards will not be served to children. Parents will be notified by staff.

All food served by the center will be cut into pieces no larger than ½ inch.

Nap / Rest Time Policy

The center's naptime is from 12:30-2:30pm. To avoid any disruption, we ask that please avoid dropping off children during these hours. Please notify the Director or Assistant Director if you plan to arrive during nap time. Individual cribs or cots are provided for children. Parents may bring a small blanket for their child(ren)'s cot. We ask for no pillows or stuffed toys to be brought in from home please. Rest time is required by Childcare Regulations. All blankets must be clearly marked and taken home every Friday for washing. The center provides crib sheets for the infant room and does not require additional bedding. (Please reference Infant and Toddler Handbook for additional information.

We recommend that nap items (blankets) be brought in a marked bag. This bag provides a clean method of storing each child's items daily and makes it convenient for taking things home for washing. The center will provide sheets for children in the infant room. Families should provide sheets and blankets for all other classrooms.

Note: Infants may not be swaddled at sleep times. You may provide a sleep sack if desired.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily schedule and is required by the Childcare Regulations. This time allows the children to develop their large muscles. Parents are asked to dress their children appropriately for weather conditions. All children will go outside daily, weather permitting. If your child is not well enough to participate in outdoor play, please keep him/her at home. We will also keep your child indoors as a precaution if your child is dressed inappropriately.

Please note on Code Orange or Red days, time will be limited according to the code.

Code Orange: The children will not be outside for more than 15 minutes at a time.

Code Red: The children will not be outside

Toilet Training Policy

Children who are not toilet trained should arrive at the center in clean disposable diapers. Please check each day to be sure that the child's supply of diapers, wipes, change of clothing, etc. is sufficient. Please be sure that at least two complete changes of clothing are kept at the center the Preschool I and Preschool II classrooms. Please reference the Infant and Toddler Handbook for additional information on the specifics for these classrooms.

Children with special needs will be evaluated on an individual basis and the Center Director and staff will work with children and families on toilet training to ensure the child's confidence and inclusion in the class.

VII. OFFICE PROCEDURES

Billing/Payment

Please note the billing for Youth Development programs with the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington are billed prior to when care is given. Please see the tuition fee schedule for exact dates and coverage.

Cancellation Procedures

If you choose to remove your child during the school year, written notification is required 2 weeks prior to your draft date. If you choose to remove your child without notifying the center, you will still be held responsible for your next scheduled monthly billing cycle. There will be no refunds given. Cancellation requests should be turned in to the Director of the program.

If your child is cancelled out of the program due to non-payment, the full amount still owed is due before reinstatement into the program. Child may not be readmitted if the program is full.

- Drafts that are scheduled for the 10th of the month are required to have

cancellations turned in NO LATER than the 26th of the PREVIOUS MONTH to avoid any further drafts.

- For drafts scheduled for the 26th of the month, cancellations are due NO LATER than the 12th of that month to avoid any further drafts.

Confidentiality

A custodial parent/legal guardian must authorize access and release of records in writing. Custodial parent/legal guardian's access to the child's record will be available upon request. Records will be released without parental or custodial authorization when an official subpoena is received from the court.

*All forms must be completed and returned to the main office prior to a child attending a YMCA program. All information requested on the forms is necessary and is considered confidential.

Dismissal

The Director, teachers, and parents will work personally with one another to help resolve any behavior problems that may occur. If all efforts are exhausted and the behaviors continue, the child may be dismissed from the program. A parent or guardian who is disruptive to the program, does not comply with the policies of the YMCA, or whose behavior is intimidating to the children, parents of other children or the staff will be asked to remove their child from the program

Drop In Care

The YMCA offers Drop in Care on a first come first serve if spacing allows. Drop in care must be pre-arranged with the Director at least 72 hours in advance.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

In the event of an emergency, the HHS/ED Children's Center will comply with the Emergency Evacuation Plans set forth by HHS/Federal Protective Service (FPS).

- **Fire** – The Center building fire alarm will sound. If a fire is detected and the Center alarm does not sound the natural disaster alarm will be sound.
- **Natural Disasters** – (tornado, thunderstorm, and earthquake) – whistle will be sounded three quick/short times (repeated as needed).
- **Chemical Spills/harmful substance** – whistle will be sounded one long the one short time (repeated as necessary).
- **Intruder/Unknown occupant** – whistle will be sounded two quick/short times (repeated as necessary).
- **Terrorism** – whistle will be blown in a circular fashion (like lifeguards do at break times, repeat as necessary).

Emergency Communication

At all times a Director or designated lead staff person will be on site to deal with emergencies.

Emergency numbers include:

- Poison Control: 800-222-1222
- Emergency Police: 911
- Non-Emergency Police: (202) 727-9099
- Bomb and/or Chemical Threats: (202)708-3051
- Suspicious Packages: (202)708-3051
- Theft, Harassment, Suspicious Person(s): (202)708-3051
- Guards, PSC Post ONE: (202)708-3051
- Police (Federal Protective Service): (202) 708-1111

Walkie-talkies and program Director's cell phones will be readily available for use at all times and in the event of emergencies.

Evacuation

If an evacuation of the site is deemed necessary, teachers will alert their children/group to assemble immediately to take a head count and record attendance. The HHS/ED Children's Center has a first evacuation route to the Cohen Building Cafeteria. This is the main gathering place for all center evacuations. In the case that we cannot evacuate to the Cohen building, our second location is St. Dominic's Church located across from The Department of Housing and Urban Development on 6th street.

In the event of an evacuation, the program Director and/or Assistant Director will bring the following items with them:

- Sign in/out records
- Contact information for all children
- First Aid kit
- Medication box and forms

After the evacuation is complete and all children are in a safe shelter and accounted for, communication will continue with cell phones. Parents will be informed (in advance) to contact the program main number for information regarding the emergency and children's specific location. This number is available to parents 24 hours a day, with updated messages concerning the program.

Shelter in place:

In case of emergency when evacuation is not necessary, children will be kept at the facility and given appropriate provisions. The appropriate alarm will sound and teachers immediately take a head count and record attendance. Once the head count is complete and all children are accounted for they will return to their central assembly location (i.e.: assigned classroom). Depending on the disaster, if the classroom is not safe, children will be moved to alternate locations determined by HHS/ED/FPS representatives assisting with the emergency. Once in the appropriate location another

headcount will be taken. If necessary, parents will be contacted immediately concerning the emergency situation.

Emergency Drill Logistics:

Fire drills will occur once a month and 2 emergency evacuation drills will occur during the school year (September-June).

Plans will be reviewed on a bi-weekly basis or as each drill is performed. Plans will be updated and changed at this time if necessary. Any changes to the plans will be provided in writing to all parents and staff. Staff will review any necessary changes with all children.

Evacuation procedures/maps will be posted at the entrances of facility. Parents will also be provided this information.

Emergency evacuation records will be kept on site. Each drill or actual emergency evacuation will be recorded. Details will include: time of emergency, number of staff and children present, where children were located, length of time it took to evacuate and other relevant information.

Emergency numbers will be posted in a conspicuous place that will always be visible and available to staff and parents.

Fees

A onetime registration fee of \$100.00 for a single child or \$150.00 for a family with more than one child enrolled, due at time of registration.

Annual Education/Activity Fee (per child) due at the time of enrollment and yearly each September are as follows:

- Infants- \$20.00
- Toddlers and Two's - \$40.00
- Preschool and Pre-K- \$60.00

*The annual education fee covers each child's online assessment profile, field trips, on-site events, performances, and activities.

Insurance

The YMCA is insured with liability insurance. Any parent wishing to view our insurance plan should contact the Early Learning Director.

Paperwork

The YMCA at HHS/ED Children's Center meets State licensing requirements along with our Association regulations. The following must be 100% completed in order for your child to attend school:

- Emergency Contact Information (this includes 2 emergency contacts with complete addresses and phone numbers. Must be someone other than parents and one must be local.)
- All doctor and insurance information filled out
- Registration Form
- Tuition Payment Form
- Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Parent "Need to Acknowledge" Sheet
- Updated Health form
- Family Photo.

If the above required items are not provided, the following actions will be taken:

- Door access will be deactivated and drop off will be denied if any of the following is missing or incomplete after first warning.
- A final letter/email will be sent if, after the second notice does not result in proper paperwork being completed and submitted, and your child may be removed from the program with the cancellation policy still in effect. This means that every line needs to have the correct information added for your child to attend the program:

****Please note:** It is your responsibility to make sure all phone numbers are up to date. It is very important that we are able to contact you in case of emergency.

Resolving Concerns

Open communication between staff and parents is an essential ingredient in providing high quality care. If you have any questions or concerns about the care your child is receiving, or any aspect of the center's operation, we urge you to discuss them as soon as possible with your child's teacher or the Director. Continuing an open communication between the teachers, director and parents is an essential part of a good program and we ask that you bring any concerns about your child or the center as soon as they arise.

Tax Information

The YMCA's tax ID number is 53-020-7403.

Waiting List

In the event that a program fills prior to your registration, you may place your child on our waiting list. There is a \$50 fee to be placed on the waiting list for the HHS/ED Children's Center.

****Please note:** YMCA Child Care Policies and Procedures are subject to change in consultation with The HHS/ED Children's Center Board of Directors. Policies and Procedures are subject to change upon Board's approval. Advance notice of 30 days is provided unless immediate mandates are proposed for safety and health reasons by government and or accreditation officials.**