



# Family Handbook

March 2024

## **YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool**

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This Family Handbook is subject to periodic review and revision by the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool. Policies and/or procedures may be changed as circumstances demand. Updates or revisions to the handbook will be published for and distributed to families.

# About Us

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Thank you for choosing the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool, and welcome. We realize that finding the right early learning environment for your family is one of the most significant decisions you will ever make. We are honored that you have placed your trust in us.

We hope you will grow to love the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool and find a welcoming fit within its "family." We also hope you will be with us for many years to come and that we will be able to grow with your family. This document is intended to serve as your guide to center policies, expectations, and protocols. If you have further questions, please contact our Program Director.

## OUR MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

The YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing's mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. The Y is—and always will be—dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected, and secure children, adults, families, and communities. Our mission at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool is to provide a safe, nurturing, and age-appropriate environment that encourages individual growth.

Our philosophy at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool is that each child is unique in his or her own way of learning and developing. We believe that playing is a child's work, and that the preschool experience should be full of new experiences and discoveries made during meaningful, facilitated play.

## CHILD CARE LICENSING INFORMATION

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool is licensed by the Child Care Licensing Bureau of the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

License Number	License Status	License Expiration Date
DC330017559	Regular	1/23/25

Our licensing notebook is located in the Program Director's office and is available for anyone to review during regular business hours. The notebook contains all the licensing inspections, special investigation reports, and related corrective action plans. Licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports, and corrective action plans from at least the past three years are available on the department's child care licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

## OUR COMMITMENT TO NONDISCRIMINATION

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool provides equal enrollment, employment, and service opportunities to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, marital status, membership in any labor organization, political affiliation, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law.

### ***USDA Nondiscrimination Statement***

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race,

color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

We are an equal opportunity provider.

# Our Program

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## HOURS OF OPERATION

Beginning in June 2024, we are open for child care from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## LATE PICK-UP POLICY

We respectfully ask that children be picked up on time. If a situation arises where you will be late, contact the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool as soon as possible.

To encourage that children be picked up on time, and to allow staff to get home to their families, a late pick-up fee is charged when families arrive after 5:30 p.m.: \$10.00 for any of the first five minutes and \$5.00 for each subsequent five-minute period after 5:35 p.m. Late pick-up fees are added to the account and must be paid in the next payment cycle.

## HOLIDAYS

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool operates year-round. We are closed in observance of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day\*
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day\*
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day\*

(\*or the state alternative recognized holiday)

There are also five (5) in-service days each year. During each in-service period, the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool is closed to families. The specific dates are listed on the annual calendar so families may plan ahead.

***Tuition is due for each day a child is enrolled in YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool, whether enrolled on a full-time or part-time schedule. There is no tuition credit for sick days, holidays, scheduled and unexpected closings, or vacation days.***

## UNEXPECTED CLOSINGS

If **the Parkwood YMCA** is closed for inclement weather, the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool will be closed as well. Families will be notified by text and email as soon as practical in such a case.

We make every effort to keep our children and staff healthy and safe, so please be aware that YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool may also close for unforeseen circumstances, including (but not limited to):

- When we lose power, heat, or water for an extended period of time.

- When we are unable to maintain state teacher-to-student ratios.
- When the Health Department or licensing agency determines there is the threat of a contagious disease or illness.

If the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool will be closed for any of these emergencies, the administrative team will make every effort to notify families in advance, via text, email, and social media.

## CHILD SAFETY

### ***Sign-in / Sign-out Procedures***

Families must bring children to the appropriate classroom and notify a teacher that the child has arrived by signing the daily roster. Similarly, when the child and parent/guardian are departing at the end of the day, the families must notify staff on the roster. Families are required to sign each child in and out every day with the accurate time of drop-off or pick-up. Daily rosters are used to ensure all children are accounted for when the children move from the classroom to the playground or other areas in the facility; **these rosters are required by Michigan's child care licensing agency.**

A child will be permitted to leave the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool only with those adults indicated on the Child Information Record. Members of the administrative staff review the picture identification of any individual other than the parent/guardian before releasing the child, and classroom staff may request picture identification as well. If your family has a unique custodial situation, we must have legal documentation on file. Please notify the Program Director of any changes or updates to custody agreements or other legal documentation.

After a child is signed out at the end of the day, they are the responsibility of the family, and are no longer in the care of the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff members, even if they are in the building or on the premises.

It is important that families contact the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool if their child will not be in attendance or will be unusually late. As a courtesy to families, YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool may check in with families if their children are absent without notice, to assure that the child is safe.

### ***Emergency Procedures***

YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff members are trained in emergency procedures when they are hired, and updated training is conducted for all staff each year. The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool conducts practice drills for what to do in case of a missing child, active violence, or the need for a lockdown. In addition, fire and tornado drills are conducted on a regular basis to prepare children and teach them how to be safe in such a crisis. Each classroom is equipped with an emergency kit and a binder containing our site emergency plan. This plan is available to families upon request at any time.

If it is necessary to evacuate the building for a real emergency, families will be notified to come and pick up their children. The Program Director is the emergency response chief and is accountable to all families in these situations.

Our emergency response policy extends to circumstances where a child's parent/guardian appears to be too impaired to safely get the child home. In cases such as this, the staff member alerts the Program Director who will manage the situation either by contacting one of the adults designated on the emergency information form or alerting the police.

### ***Child Abuse and Neglect***

All staff members at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool are mandated by [Michigan law](#) to report any suspected child abuse and neglect. If a YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool employee suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, they are obligated to report their suspicions to Child Protective Services.

## **CLASSROOM STAFF**

### ***Teacher-Student Ratios***

YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool offers age-appropriate group sizes. Each classroom maintains teacher-student ratios according to the standards of state licensing requirements.

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>State Licensing Ratios</b>
Jr. Preschool (ages 2.5 – 3.5)	1:8
Preschool (ages 3 – 4)	1:10
Pre-Kindergarten (ages 4 – 5)	1:12

### ***Classroom Staff***

All our staff members strive to:

- Provide a safe, healthy, nurturing, and challenging learning environment.
- Encourage discovery-learning and exploration of the world around us.
- Promote a positive sense of self-worth in the children.
- Promote a sense of mastery, trust, and autonomy to the children.
- Advance children's physical, intellectual, and academic competence.
- Support children's social and emotional development.
- Establish positive and productive relationships with families.

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool lead teachers are qualified personnel who meet the YMCA standards of holding a college degree or meet the necessary licensing qualifications. Assistant teachers are over the age of 18 and meet the necessary licensing requirements.

In addition, all staff are trained in child abuse prevention, infant/child CPR, basic first aid, bloodborne pathogens, playground safety, and safe sleep, and they complete at least 16 hours of continuing education each calendar year.

## **STAFF AND VOLUNTEER SCREENING POLICY**

All staff and volunteers are screened in the following manner prior to hire:

- Interview with Program Director, and/or a teacher or other administrator, to determine suitability for work with and around children at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool.

- Professional reference checks (minimum of three) to confirm prospective employee is a responsible adult with the maturity and knowledge necessary to work with children at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool.
- Completion of screening process:
  - Prospective staff members must be approved in the comprehensive Child Care Background Check system, which includes fingerprinting and a review of the public sex offender registry (PSOR).
  - Prospective volunteers, including volunteers who are families of a child in care, must pass a review of the PSOR.
    - NOTE: any individual registered on the PSOR is prohibited from having contact with any child in care.
  - Proof of negative TB test within the previous six months.

Prior to having any unsupervised contact with children, all caregiving employees and volunteers receive a formal orientation, delivered by the Program Director, covering

- Our philosophy, policies, and practices (including health and emergency practices);
- [Child Care Center Licensing Rules](#); and
- Facility and grounds tour.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Our fun filled, individualized program helps children grow academically, physically, and emotionally. Through play, stories, songs, crafts, and more, we assist children in meeting developmentally appropriate milestones. Activities are designed and scheduled to encourage socialization, respect for one another, sharing cooperation, listening skills, independence, and learning through fun experiences.

Individual care will nurture strong beginnings and support developmental growth at a comfortable pace for each child. The YMCA core values of caring, respect, responsibility, and honesty are incorporated into our daily routine to enhance character development. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing, age-appropriate environment that encourages individual growth.

### ***Typical Daily Routine***

Although each classroom has a posted schedule of activities, there is a similar pattern throughout the facility.

7:30 – 9:30 a.m.	Arrival and free play
9:30 – 9:50 a.m.	Clean up, large group activities
9:50 – 10:00 a.m.	Bathroom and handwashing
10:00 – 10:20 a.m.	Snack, puzzles, free reading
10:20 – 11:00 a.m.	Small group activities
11:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Outside
11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Bathroom, handwashing, lunch
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Free play
12:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Large group activity
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Nap or rest time, small group activities
3:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Bathroom, handwashing, free play, snack/dismissal



## **CURRICULUM**

As an early care and education program, the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool strives to provide high-quality learning opportunities for children ages three to five. In all the classrooms we use Creative Curriculum, a research-based, whole-child approach to education. By fostering all aspects of the child, we prepare them for success in school and life. This curriculum incorporates guidance for individualized instruction, helping teachers meet the needs of all learners. It also encourages meaningful partnerships with families, an essential practice that integrates family and school collaborations.

Weekly lesson plans are posted in each room to inform families of the range of fun, age-appropriate activities designed to challenge and support growth in learning domains (social/emotional, cognitive, language, dramatic play, art, and gross and fine motor skills). Consistent daily routines help support a child's emotional comfort and promote opportunities to learn in a hands-on, play-based environment.

To reach our goals we will use a blended curriculum including individual, small group and large group activities. Our learning areas include library/quiet area, blocks, art, table toys, sensory, math science, music and movement, dramatic play, and literacy. Materials are arranged so that children can easily and independently make selections that appeal to them. Teachers thoughtfully plan activities that will enhance all areas of development: social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and creative.

## **TRANSITIONING TO OLDER CLASSROOMS**

To prepare children for the cadence of elementary school, the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool conducts classroom transitions in the fall. We always follow the best interest of your child's development and progress. We determine whether your child is ready to transition to the next classroom based on his or her social emotional skills and age. Our age groups are aligned to give your child the optimal experience with each classroom full of caregivers.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are planned according to availability and around certain themes. A family's written permission for the child's participation in field trips must be obtained at the time of enrollment and before each field trip and kept on file at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool.

Our classes regularly take short walks in the surrounding trails and neighborhood. These activities are considered to be part of our daily program and you will not be notified in advance.

## **PICTURES**

Periodically, we take pictures of the children participating in different YMCA activities. We may also share pictures of our classrooms through a private social media group. Please understand that these pictures may be displayed in a presentation or used in flyers, brochures, and other publications concerning YMCA programs. If you prefer that your child's picture not be used, please indicate this on the photo release form included in the enrollment packet.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool strives to respond to the needs of all children and families by providing a positive learning environment for all children enrolled in the program regardless of ability, special needs, or learning style, and we work with families whose children require special accommodations to meet their needs and allow children the opportunity to participate in their least restrictive environment. We will provide these accommodations to the greatest extent possible without undue hardship on the program. We may find that our program does not fit a child's needs. If behaviors or the developmental needs of a child exceed our early childhood knowledge, or if they prevent us from maintaining the mandatory teacher-child ratio, we will meet with families to discuss alternatives such as outside intervention. Appropriate efforts will be made with the family to determine the best course of action for all involved. A plan will be developed which may involve one or more of the following:

- Changing classroom placement.
- Recommending to the family that they seek outside help.
- Assistance with a referral to the local ISD.
- Recommending to the family that they seek another program that more closely meets the child's needs.

If all of the above steps fail to resolve the issue, YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool reserves the right to make the final decision on whether continued enrollment is advisable. The center will provide the family with a two-week notice, except where such notice is not reasonable because of safety concerns. Center staff will offer to assist the family in obtaining alternative care.

## DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool is committed to providing a culturally-competent and responsive experience. Our program adheres to a strict non-discrimination policy in both employment and enrollment, and our teachers are dedicated to providing a learning environment that is relevant to all children who are currently enrolled, and to their families. Annual training on issues related to diversity and appropriate practice help the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool teachers to continually grow in their practice.

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool knows that in order to be culturally relevant and responsive in the classroom, communication with families is paramount. We recognize that the backbone of a strong relationship with both children and families relies on an ability to communicate in ways that are most meaningful to each family and child. We strive to communicate with families in a variety of ways including home and program surveys, direct teacher communication, emails, and newsletters.

## QUALITY RATING

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool also has a **Reflecting on Quality** rating from Michigan's Great Start to Quality Initiative. Programs that meet these standards provide a safe and healthy environment for children, have teachers who are well-trained, have access to excellent teaching materials, and work with curricula that are appropriately challenging and developmentally sound.

# Admission and Withdrawal Policies

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## ADMISSION POLICY

Children may be enrolled at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool throughout the year. The admission procedure, as space allows, is as follows:

Children aged three to five are accepted for care on either a full-time or part-time basis.

- **Full-time care** is defined as care that is delivered *five* days per week.
- **Part-time care** is defined as care that is delivered either *two* or *three* days per week.
- YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool does *not* offer care for the following schedules:
  - drop-in care,
  - just one day per week,
  - just afternoon care.

Children are selected for enrollment on a first-come-first-served basis when they submit an enrollment form (with the required fee) for vacancies within the appropriate age/development groupings at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool. Occasionally, when more people wish to enroll than there are spaces for, there is a waiting list organized by date of application and age of child. Selection for enrollment is made as quickly as possible to allow families time to prepare for the transition into the program.

The admission procedure, as space allows, is as follows:

- The parents/guardians meet with the Program Director to tour the center and review center operation, policies, programming, etc. This tour includes time in one of the classrooms to observe the center "in action." A tour packet is provided to the family, which includes instructions for submitting an enrollment application.
  - When completing the application, a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$100 must be submitted.
  - If there is space available in the program of their choice, the family is contacted to determine an enrollment date and schedule classroom visits.
- State regulations require that the emergency information and immunization records be completed and on file by the first day a child is in attendance without a parent/guardian. The Health Appraisal Form must be on file no later than 30 days after the first day of attendance. The Child Information Record must be updated at least annually so we are able to contact families in an emergency.
- An intake meeting with the classroom teachers *may* be arranged for families to ease the child's transition into the program.

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

A two-week written notice or email message must be provided to a member of the administrative staff by the family before withdrawing a child from the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool. Tuition will be charged for this two-week period even if the child does not attend.

## **DISENROLLMENT AND DISMISSAL GUIDELINES**

A family may be asked to leave the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool for any of the following reasons, although there may be others. Each disenrollment/dismissal will be handled on an individual basis by the Program Director.

- The child and/or family are not adjusting to the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool.
- The family and/or child is disrupting the safety or well-being of children and/or staff.
- Families have not completed and returned required enrollment forms promptly.
- Nonpayment or habitual late payment of tuition or fees.
- Habitual late pick-ups.

# Tuition and Fee Policies

Tuition is paid to secure the space within our program and is due for each enrolled child. Although tuition rates are calculated by the day or week, there is no tuition credit for sick days, holidays, or days the center is closed.

Tuition is to be paid weekly, in advance of the care received. Tuition may be paid using credit/debit card, or e-check. Families are strongly encouraged to pay by auto-withdrawal from a bank account or credit card.

## ANNUAL ENROLLMENT FEE

Upon initial enrollment, a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$100 per child must be submitted. Subsequent enrollment fees of \$100 per child will be applied to family accounts each year in early September, coinciding with routine classroom transitions.

## FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME TUITION RATES

### *Full-Time Tuition Rates*

Group	Classroom	Schedule	Weekly Rate
Preschool, ages 2.5-3.5	Dragonflies	Mon – Fri, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$250
Preschool, ages 3-4	Bumblebees		
Pre-K, ages 4-5	Hummingbirds		

### *Part-Time Tuition Rates*

Group	Classroom	Schedule	Weekly Rate
Preschool, ages 2.5-3.5	Dragonflies	Mon/Wed/Fri, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$180
		Tue/Thu, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$125
Preschool, ages 3-4	Bumblebees	Mon/Wed/Fri, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$180
		Tue/Thu, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$125
Preschool, ages 4-5	Hummingbirds	Mon/Wed/Fri, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$180
		Tue/Thu, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$125

## TUITION ASSISTANCE

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool accepts all forms of tuition assistance allowed under Michigan law, including employer-paid assistance, payments from the state's Child Development and Care (DHS-CDC) program, and grants from institutions of higher education and other organizations. Such payments are applied directly to family accounts, reducing or eliminating the amount owed by the family. Our administrative staff will calculate whether the family will be responsible for any portion of tuition and will communicate the payment schedule to the family.

The Y is firmly committed to access for all, regardless of family financial situations, and the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool strives to provide scholarships to those in need. The amount of financial assistance awarded each year from the Y is dependent on the amount of fundraising and donations received.

To be eligible, families must first apply to DHS at [www.michigan.gov/mibridges](http://www.michigan.gov/mibridges). If families do not qualify, a YMCA financial assistance form may be completed with a copy of the DHS denial letter. Those families that do qualify will be asked to fill out additional documents as required for enrollment. Scholarship forms must be fully completed with all information included. All fees apply as normal until the application has been reviewed and approved. All scholarships are subject to availability of funds.

Difficulties in complying with any policy regarding tuition or fees due to extreme or unforeseen hardships should be addressed in writing to the Program Director.

### **LATE PAYMENT POLICY**

A late fee of \$25.00 is assessed if a tuition payment is not received by the due date. This would apply if a credit/debit card is declined.

## Other Policies

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### FOOD SERVICE POLICY

Eating time is an important learning and social time. Parents are required to provide breakfast, lunch, snack, and a water bottle. The YMCA encourages healthy food and eating habits. All families will be notified of any food allergies or restrictions. No child will be deprived of snack.

### ALLERGY-AWARE POLICY

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool maintains an ALLERGY-AWARE facility where children who have a range of allergies and food sensitivities receive care and special protection to the greatest extent possible. The following guidelines are followed throughout the center and with the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool children when they are away from the building for a field trip.

- Allergy accommodations will be made on a room-by-room basis if the condition is life threatening. For example, in a classroom which includes a child with a severe nut allergy, no nut products will be allowed.
- In the case of an allergy so severe that it is dangerous for the child to touch small amounts of the food or breathe in its odor, staff will take reasonable precautions outside the classroom with the understanding that complete protection is not possible. An allergy action plan will be developed in conjunction with the family's physician for any child with severe allergies.
- Allergies that pose a major health risk will be communicated in writing to all other families in the classroom, and notices will be posted on classroom doors and other locations around the room as needed.

### ***Family Participation in Allergy Management***

The most important step in ensuring the safety of allergic children is communication. Communication from the family of the allergic child to the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool and to the other families within the school is paramount. While food allergies can lead to severe reactions and death, the risks can be greatly reduced with education, management strategies, and emergency procedures.

### ***Allergy Prevention Strategies***

#### ***Parent/Guardian Responsibilities***

- Read this Allergy-Aware policy.
- Inform anyone else bringing your child to the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool of this Allergy-Aware policy.
- Send a note attached to any unpackaged or homemade snacks intended to be shared with other children, listing the ingredients.
- Inform the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool of the severity and scope of a child's allergy, provide an emergency treatment plan signed by the child's doctor, and supply any medications for the allergic child. Communicate this information with the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff in new classrooms as a child transitions.

- In high-risk cases, work with the family physician to develop an allergy action plan for use at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool.
- Follow the steps as outlined in this Allergy-Aware policy.

### ***YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool Responsibilities***

- Provide annual training to the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff on the Allergy-Aware policy and on prevention and treatment strategies. Provide introductory training on the Allergy-Aware policy to new staff upon hire.
- Encourage children to NOT share snacks, drinks, or utensils.
- Ensure all children wash hands with soapy water before eating.
- Communicate allergy information between the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff and classrooms as children transition.
- Ensure all children's hands and faces are wiped clean with individual facecloths by the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff after eating.
- Ensure all unpackaged or homemade snacks intended to be shared with other children are checked for attached note listing the ingredients.
- In consultation with the family in high-risk cases, develop an emergency plan in the event of accidental exposure to allergen.
- Ensure that classroom-specific allergies are communicated to families of all children in the class so they may plan/pack lunches and snacks accordingly.
- Ensure that all activities adhere to the guidelines of this policy, both inside and outside the center (e.g., cooking, crafts, and field trips).
- Outside and on field trips, take medication (i.e., Epi-pen, Benadryl) and emergency plan, and be aware of exposure risk (i.e., food & insects).

### ***Response in the Event of Allergic Reaction***

If any signs/symptoms of an allergic reaction are perceived by the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool classroom staff, administrative staff will be notified immediately. The emergency treatment will be implemented as necessary, and families will be notified.

## **OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY**

In accordance with state licensing regulations, the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool teachers make every effort to have the children spend time outside each day. In extreme temperatures or conditions, this time may be minimized or eliminated. However, families should make sure children have sufficient clothing and amenities, such as water bottles and snow boots, to make outdoor play possible. It will be assumed that if a child is well enough to be in attendance that they are well enough to go outside.

## **ITEMS FROM HOME POLICY**

### ***What to bring:***

Children should be dressed comfortably so they can participate in all activities, indoors and outdoors.

Please label jackets, coats, backpacks, and all other personal items. Please bring a complete change of clothing (including socks and underwear) in a labeled gallon-size zip-closure bag to be stored



in the classroom. Bring a small pillow, blanket, and comfort item for nap time. If your child is still toilet-training, bring sufficient supplies of diapers/pull-ups and wipes.

### ***What not to bring:***

Please leave all toys at home! This helps to avoid hurt feelings from not sharing with others and prevents your toys from being damaged or lost. We have show-and-share days when it is appropriate to bring an item from home. You will be notified ahead of time when these days are happening.

## **REST POLICY**

Nap and rest period is required as part of our licensing. Individual mats and sheets will be provided for children. We ask that you send a small pillow, a blanket, and a small comfort item from home. Sheets will be washed weekly at the center. Home items will be sent home on Friday to be washed at home and returned the following week.

## **HEALTH POLICIES**

The issue of dealing with sick children in a group situation requires care, patience, and understanding on the part of families and caregivers. The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool minimizes the spread of infection by a conscientious use of the following procedures.

- Routine screening throughout the day of children and staff for illness
- Strict hand washing procedures for staff and children in situations involving food service, toileting, and nose blowing
- Use of flush toilets and not potty chairs for sanitary reasons
- Careful washing of children's faces, removing saliva and nasal discharge using disposable wipes and tissues
- Frequent washing and disinfecting of toys and room surfaces
- Cleaning all rooms frequently
- Going outdoors each day for play periods (when appropriate—see "Outdoor Play Policy")
- Isolating children from care who may be infectious until they are able to be picked up

### ***Medication***

This policy adheres to the standards established by the State of Michigan. The following procedures must be followed:

1. Whenever possible, medication should be administered at home. Initial doses should be given at home so that families can monitor for side effects.
2. Medication, prescription or nonprescription, must be given to a child by a child care staff member only; children may not self-administer any medication.
3. A child care staff member shall give or apply medication, prescription or nonprescription, only with prior written permission from a parent/guardian.
  - a. For oral prescription or nonprescription medications and topical prescription medications, the Medication Permission and Instructions form must be filled out

completely by the family indicating the dosage, times given per day, and the number of days to be given.

- b. Topical nonprescription medication, including but not limited to diapering cream, triple antibiotic, sunscreen, and insect repellent, requires written parent/guardian authorization annually. Topical nonprescription medication does NOT include hand sanitizer, lip balm, or hand/body lotion, including petroleum jelly-based products such as Vaseline.
4. All medication (including all nonprescription topical medications) must be in its original container, stored according to instructions, and clearly labeled for a named child.
5. Prescription medication must have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's first and last name, instructions, name and strength of the medication, and it must be given according to those instructions.
6. A child care staff member shall give or apply any prescription or nonprescription medication according to the directions on the original container, unless otherwise authorized by a written order of the child's physician.
7. If nonprescription medication states "See Doctor" for the student's age group, the medication must be accompanied by a signed doctor's authorization with dosing instructions.
8. For children with severe illness or conditions such as seizures, asthma, or allergies requiring an epi-pen or inhaler, YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool requires an emergency action plan signed by a physician.
9. Emergency medications such as epi-pens or inhalers will accompany your child whenever they leave the classroom (playground, gym, fieldtrip, etc.).

YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool employees receive training (upon hire and annually) on medication administration.

When bringing in medication for a child, families must deliver them to the classroom, where it will be stored in the locked medication box/cabinet. Families may inquire in the classroom at any time to check or remove the medication.

If the child transitions to another classroom, the medication will be delivered back to the family, who must then submit a new form with the medication to the office.

### ***Exclusion Policy for Child Illnesses***

All children are routinely screened throughout each day for signs of illness or injury; all staff are encouraged to stay home if they experience signs of illness. In an effort to minimize the spread of illness to our children and staff, **families are strongly discouraged from bringing children to the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool when they display any of the following symptoms:**

- Fever over 100.4° Fahrenheit
- Difficult breathing, wheezing, uncontrolled coughing
- Vomiting

- Diarrhea
- Unidentified rash
- Signs of possible severe illness, including unusual lethargy, persistent crying, severe pain, or anything else that will require one-on-one care
- Contagious conditions (e.g., pink eye, mouth sores with drooling, etc.)

If your child becomes ill at YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool with any of the above symptoms, you will be called to take your child home as soon as possible. Generally, a child will be sent home if he/she appears contagious or is uncomfortable enough to require constant one-on-one adult attention. *The teachers and Program Director will determine whether or not a child should remain at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool.* A child who appears contagious may be isolated from the rest of the group, under the supervision of a caregiver, until the family can pick him/her up. Families are encouraged to have back-up care providers available to pick up your child when you are unavailable to due to conflicts.

If your child does not meet the above criteria for exclusion from the program, but is not feeling well, you may receive an information call from the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool. Information calls will be given when your child is running a fever of less than 100.4° Fahrenheit, and/or is exhibiting other symptoms. The information call allows you time to assess the situation and prepare accordingly.

**In order to ensure the safety of staff and other children at the center, you must notify the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool office (via phone) within 24 hours if your child is ill with a communicable/contagious disease, such as COVID-19, strep throat, RSV, conjunctivitis, fifth disease, chicken pox, or influenza.**

Time at home allows your child to rest and recuperate. It also prevents infections from spreading to other children and staff members. We strongly suggest that alternate arrangements be planned prior to those occasions when your child is ill.

All the following guidelines will be used, collectively, to determine when a child can return to group care after an illness:

- The child's temperature has been below 100.4° Fahrenheit for 24 hours *without* acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- It has been 24 hours since the last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- The rash has subsided or has been confirmed in writing as non-contagious by a physician.
- The signs of possible severe illness (including lethargy, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, severe pain, and uncontrolled coughing) have been checked and ruled out in writing by a physician.
- The child is no longer contagious and is feeling well enough to participate comfortably in the usual activities.
- If an antibiotic has been prescribed, the child may return 24 hours after the first dosage, or sooner with a physician's note confirming them as non-contagious.

Generally speaking, it is the *lack of symptoms* that indicate your child is ready to return to the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool. A note from a physician may be required. The YMCA

Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool will make every effort to accommodate a child who is not ready to resume full activities after an illness upon return to the center.

See "Notification Procedures" under the Center-Family Communication section of this handbook.

## **ACCIDENT, INCIDENT, INJURY, AND ILLNESS POLICY**

Good safety measures will prevent most accidents but if an accident does occur the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff will call the family and/or 911 as appropriate. Families will be notified immediately if professional medical attention is required for their child. Caregivers will also provide written details of the incident and record any first aid procedures used.

If a family seeks medical care for a child due to an accident, incident, illness, or injury that took place at the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool, the family must alert the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool so it can be reported to the licensing agency. Families must indicate where the child was taken and what diagnosis was made.

An incident may be defined as anything out of the ordinary that a family would benefit from knowing, including child behavior such as engaging in exposure to another child. When a situation such as this is reported, the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool will notify the families of the children involved within 24 hours. Staff members have been trained to alert the Program Director of all such incidents so they may properly report and notify families and any others as appropriate.

See "Notification Procedures" under the Center-Family Communication section of this handbook.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Our discipline policy makes great use of age-appropriate, non-severe, positive behavioral supports. Whenever possible, staff members use the technique of positive redirection, distraction, or humor to change unacceptable behaviors. Teachers try to avoid power struggles by focusing on children's expressed desires and capabilities. Teachers utilize the "teachable moment," and help a child learn new behavioral skills to use in the future. Children also have the opportunity to remove themselves from the situation in order to regain control or have quiet time.

Physical punishment or language that demeans children is unacceptable and is never permitted at YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool. **All the following means of punishment are prohibited:**

- Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
- Placing any substances in a child's mouth, including but not limited to, soap, hot sauce, or vinegar.
- Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her.
- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities.
- Excluding a child from daily learning experiences.
- Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar enclosure.

- Time out must not be used for children under 3 years of age. In children 3 years and older, time-out is only used to stop aggressive behavior or to allow angry or upset children to calm down; it is used only as a last resort to help the child gain a better sense of self-control. The time out will not last longer than it takes for the child to calm down, and the child remains supervised at all times.
- Children cannot be excluded from outdoor play or participation in large gross motor activities as a behavioral consequence.
- Children cannot be excluded from daily learning experiences as a behavioral consequence.

## **BITING POLICY**

Biting is a very common behavior among children from birth to three years of age. Biting is a form of communication and is almost always a response to coping with a challenge or stressor. At the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool, we believe by understanding the developmental stages of the children in our care and their individual needs, we can proactively prevent many biting behaviors by the environment we create for the children.

Biting is a normal, yet unpleasant, phase that most children go through. It is instinctual—fight or flight—and childcare centers typically provide learning experiences related to biting. It can occur without warning, can be difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the families, and the teachers involved.

For many children, biting is just a passing stage. Different children will need different instructional methods to help teach them alternative ways to cope in situations where they are biting. Children bite for different reasons and each reason calls for a different type of response.

- A child who bites out of frustration needs to learn alternate coping skills.
- A child who bites when teething may need teether.
- A child who bites when an ear infection is brewing may need a trip to the doctor.
- A child who bites for attention may respond to a social story.

Biting signifies that a child is having a difficult time with something, and it is the job of the early childhood professional to work to figure out what is causing the child the stress and how to help the child work through it.

The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool will take the following approach when dealing with biting situations.

- If a staff member observes a biting incident, the “bitten” child will be attended and comforted immediately. The area of the bite will be cleansed with soap and water, and ice will be applied if necessary.
- The child who did the biting will be moved to a different area of the room and a staff member will help the child understand that the behavior is not acceptable. The child will be redirected to an appropriate activity.
- The parents/guardians of both children (the child who was bitten and the child who bit) will be called or notified upon pick up. Neither family will know the identification of the other child.
- The biting incident will be documented. A copy of the report will be given to both families, as well as placed in their files.

- If the incident is repeated, it will be discussed with the family of the biter and we will work with them to identify possible biting causes and discuss strategies to help change the behavior. The child will be monitored closely by staff, making sure he/she is busy with activities and materials during the school day.

After all preventative steps have been taken by the staff, and if the child continues to bite, the Program Director will call the family of the biter to pick up the child for the remainder of the day. Chronic biting may require that a child be suspended from enrollment for a period of time. If a child is suspended, the family will be informed that the child may return as soon as the biting has abated.

If the child returns to the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool, continues to bite, and is endangering the other children, the child may be terminated from the program.

## **FAMILY CONDUCT POLICY**

Parents and guardians are expected to always conduct themselves in a respectful and positive manner. The child(ren) associated with any adult who chooses to display conduct towards an employee, child, or other family that can be considered rude, offensive, intimidating, aggressive, or otherwise inappropriate may be subject to immediate disenrollment at the sole discretion of the center. This includes but is not limited to: name calling, cursing, threats of any kind, inappropriate tone of voice, physical or verbal aggression, physical altercations, or overall disrespect.

We will not get involved in any legal disagreements, disputes, or conflicts between two parents or guardians of a child and/or children. It is the parent/guardian responsibility to resolve their own conflicts without causing any issue to the center, its employees, other families, and children. If a conflict between parties cannot be resolved and results in behavior to our staff that can be considered rude, offensive, intimidating, aggressive, or otherwise inappropriate, the family may be subject to immediate disenrollment at the sole discretion of the center.

We take all concerns seriously and will work hard to rectify any situation presented. However, we also value our dedicated teachers, staff, and families and must ensure that we provide a safe and nurturing environment for them at all times—just as we do for our children. We thank you for your understanding and support.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND PROHIBITIONS**

- Smoking or vaping is not allowed on YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool property, including inside a car in our parking lot.
- No weapons of any kind are to be brought onto the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool property.

## **PARKING POLICY**

- Please park in the main parking lot when dropping off and picking up.
- **Please do not park in the parking circle to drop off your child.** The circle is a fire lane, and you can be ticketed for leaving your vehicle unattended.
- Families and staff may park in any available non-handicap spot.

- A valid handicap parking tag is required to use the handicap parking spots, even for a short period of time.
- Families must drive slowly in the parking lot.
- Families must not leave vehicles idling in the parking lot, except in cases of extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.
- Families must not leave young children unattended in the car, even for a few minutes.

## **CENTER-FAMILY COMMUNICATION**

We exist to provide children with a positive developmental experience that enhances and supports, but does not supplant, the family in fostering child growth and development. Therefore, we strongly encourage good communication between families and staff. It is important for families and staff to share information about those things which may have an impact on the child's day or evening. When possible, it is best for families to communicate directly with the child's teacher or with our Program Director.

Families may expect communication from YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool in any of the following ways:

- Some classrooms use notes and newsletters to communicate with families.
- The administrative staff periodically produces a newsletter that highlights center activities and useful family information.
- Our social media presence (Facebook) provides families with photographs and timely information about early learning and events that are relevant to followers.
- Parent-teacher conferences are held at least once per year for families to talk in-depth with teachers about their child's development. Additional conferences may be requested as needed.

### ***Notification Procedures***

In the event of an accident, illness, incident, or injury involving a child attending the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool, the following procedures are implemented:

- If the situation is deemed an emergency by the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff, we will call 911 first and then alert both parents/guardians via telephone; text and email may also be utilized to reach the families.
- In non-emergency situations, we will notify the impacted families within 24 hours by calling the first parent/guardian listed on the Child Information Record, using all the phone numbers provided until we reach the family. If we cannot reach that parent/guardian, we will leave voice-mail messages and proceed to call the second parent/guardian listed on the Child Information Record, also using all the phone numbers provided.
- If neither parent/guardian can be reached in a reasonable amount of time and the child needs to be picked up, we will call the first emergency contact listed on the Child Information Record, proceeding down the list until someone agrees to pick up the child.
- Accidents, incidents, and injuries that cause a family to seek medical care for the child must be reported to Michigan's child care licensing agency. The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool will notify the family that such a report will be filed and request that the family provide information about the diagnosis and where the child was treated.

## **Confidentiality**

At YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool families are encouraged to share information regarding their child's day-to-day activities, as well as any situations or experiences the child may be having that are new, stressful, fun, or exciting. Many times, families share important, but *private*, information with staff for the benefit of their child. Staff members are trained and expected not to divulge any information regarding a child to anyone but that child's family. This means that staff members do not discuss confidential information regarding children with other staff members (unless it directly concerns another staff member's care of that child), release or discuss any family information volunteered by families, or discuss any child or family outside of the center.

## **Cooperative Problem Solving**

Occasionally families have suggestions for improvement or questions about our program and policies. The YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool always encourages open communication between its staff and families. If an issue arises that needs clarification or information, working together is important. Options for solving problems include any one or a combination of the suggestions below.

- Families should attempt to clarify facts and/or concerns with the teaching staff directly, in person, on the phone, or via email. A private conference can be scheduled with prior notice.
- The Program Director is available to discuss issues with families, particularly ones involving policies, fees, and the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool procedures.
- We are licensed by the State of Michigan through the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Child Care Licensing. Families can initiate an investigative process by contacting a licensing consultant there.

The following actions may be used to resolve concerns between the YMCA Parkwood Kid's Time Preschool staff members and families:

- Fact-finding with the teaching staff, Program Director, and family.
- A meeting with the staff and family to discuss the issue and explore solutions, which may involve, but are not limited to:
  - Monitoring the situation
  - Teacher training
  - Disciplinary action

## **QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS**

Questions and concerns regarding your child or the program should be brought to the immediate attention of the Program Director in person, through email, or by phone.