



VALLEY SHORE YMCA
CHILD CARE PROGRAM
PARENT HANDBOOK



Valley Shore YMCA Child Care Parent Handbook

Thank you for registering your child for our School-Age Child Care Program. We strongly believe that every child needs a safe and fun experience each and every day. Our program is designed to provide an environment where each child can learn and grow through a wide variety of exciting activities that promote youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. We maintain a strong commitment to building character in youth through our four core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.

During the school year, the Child Care Programs will be operational based on the Public School Calendars.

Eligibility: This program is open to all children who attend any of the schools we serve. Registration for these programs is processed at the Valley Shore YMCA in Westbrook. A registration fee of \$25.00 per child is required and is non-refundable and non-transferable.

Registration Forms and Requirements: Children must be registered in advance. We do not accept any unregistered children. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE. Students may attend a scheduled 1 to 5 days per week OR register as a drop in and attend the program as needed (only if already in program).

- Child Care Registration and Release Form (online registration)
- Child Care Payment Authorization Form (online registration)
- Current Health Form including Page 1 completed by a parent.
- Child Care Behavior Contract
- Authorization for Medication Administration Form (if needed)
- Additional forms specific to the Child Care Program your child attends may be required
- **Legal Custody and Injunctions:** A copy of any court ordered custody decree or injunction must be kept on file at the Y.

Payment Policy and Service Fees: The Child Care Programs are tuition based. The yearly cost per child for the program is based on the calendar days in the school year and divided into 10 equal monthly payments regardless of number of days that month. Tuition rates are available online, by contacting the Y, as well as, in the program's registration packet. Monthly payments remain the same regardless of weather related closing, absenteeism, and holidays. All families are required to use auto-bill payment for program tuition. Automatic payments will be drafted

on the 1st of each month prior to services rendered. The YMCA charges a \$10 fee for credit card returns and returned checks which will be applied to outstanding balances. Failure to pay this fee will jeopardize your child's enrollment in the program.

Fees will be charged regardless of Attendance: There is no partial payment if a child is out sick. The only exception would be if a child were away from the program due to a prolonged illness. In such a case, the Youth Director should be notified at the beginning of the absence not upon returning to the program. No credit will be given for time missed without a doctor's note.

Financial Aid: Thanks to a generous grant from the Liberty Bank Foundation, as well as support by donors to the YMCA Annual Campaign, we proudly offer additional financial assistance. Financial Aid is limited, please apply early. We also accept Care4Kids.

Withdrawal from the Program: Should you withdraw from the program, one month written notice, prior to the last day is required. If written notice is not received, full monthly payment is expected.

Parental Concerns: If your child is having a problem while attending the Child Care Program, we ask that you inform us of the situation as soon as possible so that we may be more effective in providing a solution. Any abrasive behavior by a parent displayed towards any Y staff member or program participant may result in suspension or cancellation of care. If something is unsatisfactory, please speak with the Head Teacher at your child's site.

Insurance: The Y does not provide health or accident insurance. The parent/guardian assumes total liability for all charges incurred for medical treatment or property damage

Health Regulations and Records: A current health form must be kept on file for each child in the program and be provided by the Parent or Guardian before the start of the school year. Families must submit a health form annually at time of registration. PRESCHOOL* students must provide a copy of their immunizations annually and must provide proof of receiving a Flu shot by January 1st. Those who do not will not be allowed to attend the program until April 1st.

Records: In addition to current health records, the Child Care program is required to keep accurate personal records for each child in the program. Changes in information indicated on the forms must be reported to the staff immediately. Contact information must be kept up to date to insure that we can contact you immediately in case of emergency.

Authorized Pick-Up: In order to comply with state regulations, children will only be released to those individuals that are listed on the authorized pick-up list in the child's file. Anyone who is picking up for the first time, including parents, or someone who the staff does not recognize will be asked to show photo identification. This is done for the safety and security of each child in our program.

Arrival and Departure: In complying with state regulation you must sign you child in and out every day including signature and time of arrival/departure.

Late Pick Up Fees: Please make every effort to pick up your child by 6pm. If for any reason your feel you may be late, please try to make arrangements to have an authorized individual pick up your child. If you arrive late a fee of \$5.00 for every 5 minutes will be charged to your account. Continued lateness may jeopardize your child's spot in the program.

Child Not Picked Up: If a child hasn't been picked up by **6:05pm** the staff will contact the child's parent/guardian. If they are unable to reach you and your child is not picked up **6:15pm**, emergency contacts will be called. At **6:30pm**, if they are still unable to contact an authorized person to pick up your child, the Y staff will contact the local Police Department.

Program Activities: Organized games and activities are planned including homework time, arts and crafts, outside play, gym time, healthy afternoon snack and special activities. Monthly newsletters and calendars are provided to families each month to keep them informed of the activities taking place at the program. We provide the opportunity and assistance for children to do their homework but are not responsible for monitoring studies. It is the responsibility of parents to encourage their children to do homework at the Program.

Medication Administration in the Child Care Program: State regulation requires compliance with the following guidelines with any medications: A completed medical authorization form must be signed by a physician and by the parent. This form should include the name of medication, time to be administered and prescribed dose to be given. One form is required per medication. No controlled medication is allowed to be sent in with a child. Medication may be dropped off before the child's start date at the Y. All medication needs to be picked up at end of your child's enrollment in the program. Any medication not picked up within one week of your child's last day at the program will be properly disposed of.

The medication **must** have the **original bottle or packaging and prescription label** including:

- Child's name
- Dosage/route of administration (mouth, inhalation)
- Specific time/intervals to be given
- Current date of order
- Physician's name and telephone number

Illness & Medication

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Children with any of the following symptoms will not be allowed to remain in our program: temperature of 101 or higher, conjunctivitis (pink eye), strep throat, head lice, vomiting, diarrhea, rash of unknown origin, or the presence of a contagious disease.

A child will be sent home if any of the above symptoms are seen during their time in our program. It is expected that if a child leaves the YMCA he/she will remain at home the full next day to assure complete recovery. Our program is not equipped to care for ill children. Each family must be prepared with a reliable emergency contact in the event the child becomes ill during their time in our program and parents cannot be reached.

Once a parent has been notified, the child should be picked up from the YMCA program within one hour. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick up their child within one hour, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. If a parent is unable to be reached, the staff will begin to call people listed on the emergency contact form until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

If a child contracts lice, parents will be notified immediately to pick up their child.

A child will be allowed to return to our program if he/she has been on medicine for a contagious illness for 24 hours and is fever free. Fever free means no Tylenol or any other fever reducing medication for 4-6 hours prior to attending our program.

Injuries/Accidents

If a child is injured during program hours, a staff person certified in first aid will treat the child if the injury is minor. If the injury is of a serious nature and emergency care is needed, the parent will be notified immediately. If the parent cannot be reached, the YMCA will take necessary steps to obtain an ambulance. Emergency personnel will determine which emergency treatment center to transport the child to.

Should your child be injured during the course of the day, an injury report will be completed by a staff member. You will be asked to review the report and sign off that you have been notified of the injury and given a copy of the form. A staff member will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you at pick up time.

Plan for Consultation: The YMCA Program has agreements with educational, dental, social services, and health professionals. The professionals are available for annual review of our policies and program. They are also available for consultation as needed.

Child Abuse/Neglect – Legal Requirements: All Child Care Staff providers are mandated by the State of Connecticut to report suspected child abuse, child neglect and child risk to the Department of Children and Families. We are not required to inform parents or guardians if such a report is made.

Parental Substance Abuse Policy: If any staff member of the Y suspects substance abuse on the part of a parent or guardian, the Y staff will call an authorized adult on the release form to pick up the child. If the parent or guardian is aggressive or threatening, the Y staff will call the police or 911. According to state regulations, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) will be notified of any presumed substance abuse. If the situation happens more than once, the Y reserves the right to discontinue care for the child enrolled in the program.

Discipline Policy: The Y believes in positive discipline based upon the core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. The child care environment is one in which children are nurtured and encouraged. The staff and other children acknowledge positive behavior. We recognize that discipline issues will arise and therefore, we have developed progressive procedures that, while standardized, are adaptable to individual circumstances.

The first procedure is to resolve the problem through a discussion and agreement with the child. It may also be necessary to implement alternative methods including re-direction, problem solving, separation, or time out. When using time out, children will be separated from the group in an area with staff supervision for a period of time equivalent to one minute per year of the child's life. The child will not be put in a corner, outside of a door, or facing the wall. After the specified time and when the child is ready, the child will join the group.

If we are not able to resolve the problem, the second procedure is to involve the parents to discuss the behavior and how to work together with the child to resolve it. If continued and extreme violation of these rules occurs, the third procedure is to call the parent to pick up the child. A meeting with the Program Director to discuss a plan of action may be required.

If none of the above results in a satisfactory resolution of the inappropriate behavior, the last procedure would be to suspend or expel the child from the program. Some behaviors may warrant our skipping procedures depending upon the severity of the inappropriate behavior. Behaviors that involve physical harm or verbal attack toward other children or staff will not be tolerated.

Snacks: The YMCA provides an afternoon healthy snack each day. The YMCA has adopted the Y's healthy eating and physical activity standards (HEPA) for our after school program. The snack menu will be posted at each site location.

Legal Custody: We require a copy of the legal custodial agreement in situations when parents are unable to pick up their children on specific days or at all. If a court has not determined parental custody, both parents have a right to pick-up their children and we are not legally allowed to keep a parent from picking their child up from our program.

Parents Involvement and Communication: We strongly believe that parent involvement is a key ingredient in a quality child care program. We have an open door policy and you are welcomed and encouraged to visit the program at any time your child is enrolled. Parents and visitors are required to sign in with the staff prior to visiting their child.

In order to understand each child better, the staff welcomes any opportunity to talk to parents about their children. It is critical that the lines of communication stay open. If communication is frequent, together we can provide security and continuity for your children. Any time during a child's participation in the program a parent may request a meeting with the staff to discuss the child's needs. The meeting will be set at a time that is convenient for both the parent and staff.

Parents are encouraged to share a special talent, hobby or vocation with our children. Contributions of toys, supplies for creative art projects and scrap office paper are very useful and are always appreciated by the children and staff.

In an effort to be environmentally friendly, monthly emails will be sent to families throughout the school year. Information about the upcoming events as well as the current highlights will be included in the emails, so be sure to include your email address on the registration form.

Individual Care Plans: If your child has special health care or developmental needs you will need to complete the appropriate individual care plan for your child. Care plans will be required for severe allergies, asthma, seizure disorder, chronic illness, specific dietary needs, hearing or visual impairments, history of a contagious disease or specifics such as development delays. If your child has special health concerns please contact Youth Director to obtain the appropriate care plan. This form is used to ensure all staff caring for your child are aware of his/her specific needs.

Electronic Devices and Toy Policy: The Y does not allow your child to bring toys, expensive or valued items to the program. There is always a risk that something can be broken or lost. Phones, iPods, DS's, or any other electronic devices should be kept at home. The Y is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items.

Chain of Command: We value your input and want to hear your positive feedback or concerns about the program. As a first step, please attempt to resolve any issues with the teachers or site coordinator. If you feel the problem has not been remedied, please contact the Youth Director.

School Closings/ Inclement Weather

SCHOOL VACATION DAYS/FUN DAYS: When there are scheduled days off from school, the YMCA in Westbrook offers a full day of exciting activities from 7 am to 6pm. Registration is required and is not covered in the monthly tuition.

SNOW DAYS: In the event of school closing the YMCA program will be closed

The Valley Shore YMCA reserves the right to close/delay opening in the event of severe weather.

Decisions regarding early closing due to storms will be made in conjunction with the Valley Shore YMCA and School Administration based upon the severity of each storm and could vary from storm to storm. Parents will be called if programs are closed early. If parents cannot be reached, a person from the child's pick-up list will be called. You must have local people on your child's pick up list. Please understand that each storm is different and the safety and well-being of our children and staff are our focus.

YMCA Outside Care Policy: The YMCA prohibits its staff from providing outside care services to YMCA members and program participants. Outside Care Services are defined as babysitting, instruction or tutoring, giving swim lessons, life-guarding, transportation, etc. and are provided off YMCA premises and on the employee's own time.

The purpose of this handbook is to promote understanding of our program and its policies. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, you may call the School Age Program Director. Our caregivers are committed to providing you and your child with the best possible service. Together we can ensure a safe and healthy environment for children between school and home.

Britney Bruno

Senior Director of Youth Development

860-399-9622 x115

bbruno@vsymca.org

HOURS OF OPERATION/LOCATIONS/PHONE NUMBERS

*Site cell phones are only available during program hours. Please email Britney Bruno outside of program hours to report changes in dismissal. Email is the best way to reach Britney and Katie.

The Valley Shore YMCA

Britney Bruno – bbruno@vsymca.org

Katie Harris, Admin Assistant – kharris@vsymca.org

CLINTON – Lewin G. Joel, Jr. School

(860) 304-2691

7AM – 8:30AM Before School
3PM – 6PM After School

OLD SAYBROOK – Kathleen E. Goodwin School

(860) 304-2271

7AM – 8:45AM Before School
3PM – 6PM After School

CHESTER – Chester Elementary School

(860) 304-5482

3PM – 6PM After School

Coverage for scheduled half days begins at the early dismissal time for your school (please check with the school and school's calendar for dates and times).

DROP IN FEES

Drop in fees will be charged for any unscheduled day that your child attends. Fees will be charged immediately when registering for the drop in.



Child's Full Name: _____ DOB: _____

Authorization for Medical Attention

*I give permission for the YMCA Certified First Aid staff to treat my child, if needed. I authorize the child care staff to consent to emergency treatment (under advice of a Connecticut licensed physician) for my child when the need for such treatment is immediate and when efforts to contact me are unsuccessful. My child will be transported to the nearest emergency facility. I understand that any expenses incurred, through transportation and the treatment of my child, are my responsibility.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Child Care Behavior Techniques

At the YMCA, we believe in the concept of 'Positive Discipline.' Through generous praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement, the motivation for most misbehavior can be eliminated. However, some discipline situations may arise. The teachers will discuss the situation with the child and any other children involved. If this does not work, the teachers will try to redirect the negative behavior. If the behavior persists, the teachers will then allow the child some time away from the activity.

The following techniques are used to help modify children behaviors:

- Changing the setting
- Giving choices
- Encouragement
- Reinforcing positive behavior
- Giving reasons
- Setting limits
- Giving consequences
- Warnings

If redirection of the child and the time out is ineffective and serious behavioral problems continue to disrupt the program, the parent will be called to pick-up their child early. The YMCA also reserves the right to remove or suspend a child without tuition reimbursement if the parents, Director of School Age Program, Head Teacher cannot mutually get the child to behave in an appropriate manner.

Your signature affirms that you have been presented with, understand and agree to comply with the Behavioral Modification Techniques outlined above and in the Parent Handbook and that you have discussed this policy with your child and the policy is understood by the family as a whole.

School Age Child Care Behavior Contract

CHARACTER CODE FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS

- I will show respect by treating other children and adults the way I would want to be treated.
- I will be honest, will always tell the truth, and will be a friend that others can trust.
- I will demonstrate caring by helping others and treating them kindly.

- I will take responsibility for my own behavior and accept the consequences for my actions.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

- Have a safe, calm, clean and orderly environment.
- Make mistakes without being ridiculed by others.
- Seek help from adults who are there to help.
- Be treated with dignity and respect by everyone.

CHILDREN AND PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY

Expectations:

- Avoid fights or verbal abuse of other children.
- Be fair and accepting of others eager to join any activity.
- Work and play safely.
- Use appropriate, acceptable language.
- Be kind, considerate, helpful, and respectful toward others.
- Share equipment and materials fairly and use them properly.
- Respect property, especially things that do not belong to me.
- Cooperate with others and with adults who are here to help.
- Speak out when witnessing unfairness or offensive language or behavior of other.
- Be a good sport whether you win or lose.
- Be truthful with everyone.

CONSEQUENCES

- Letter of discipline for talking back, destroying property, bullying children, disrupting the program, refusing to obey. Parent will be required to sign these reports acknowledging that they have read the report. After three reports child and parent may be required to meet with the Program Director.
- Letter of Discipline and immediately suspended for a minimum of one day for hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, scratching, swearing, making degrading or racial remarks, or leaving the group. Parents may be required to meet with the Program Director before the child can return to the program.
- School Age Program services may also be terminated if the parent is physically or verbally abusive to a staff member. It is our desire that every child enjoys his/her experience in the program.
- I understand the Student Behavior Contract.
- I will be honest about my actions and feelings. When I am frustrated or believe that I am being mistreated, I will talk with my head teacher and I will not act out in an inappropriate way.
- I will act in a caring and respectful manner to others. I will not talk back, use obscene or threatening language, or speak in an unkind manner about others. I will follow directions and listen attentively while participating in activities.
- I will take responsibility for my own behavior, not blaming others for the choices I make. If I destroy something as a result of my inappropriate behavior or actions I will replace it.
- I understand that my participation in the School-Age Child Care program may be limited or discontinued if I do not follow this contract.

My signature affirms that I have been presented with, understand and agree to comply with the Behavioral Modification Techniques, Behavior Contract and Parent Handbook and that these policies have been discussed with me by the YMCA staff. I also acknowledge that I have read and understand the Discipline Policy in the Parent Handbook. I agree to discuss these policies with my child.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

