



Grove City YMCA Child Care Parent Handbook

Dear Child Care Families,

WELCOME to our YMCA Child Care Program! The Grove City YMCA would like to thank you for choosing us to serve your child care needs.

Please read your handbook carefully. We cannot add a child to our enrollment without the required paperwork and the paid registration fee.

We look forward to meeting you and your child. We hope that the time your child spends with us will be a positive experience and that your child will grow in spirit, mind, and body. If, at any time, you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, please let us know.

Thank you for sharing your child with us!

YMCA Child Care Staff

YMCA Child Care Contact Information

Child Care Office/YMCA site:	724-458-6628
Child Care Director:	Wendy Shaw wshaw@grovecityymca.org
Administrative Assistant/Billing:	Hannah Gildersleeve hgildersleeve@grovecityymca.org
Infant/Toddler Building:	724-458-0838 Arlene Gebhart and Belinda Pompa infanttoddler@grovecityymca.org
School-Age Care:	724-992-0372
School-Age Site Director:	Lisa Hoffman lhoffman@grovecityymca.org

Hours of Operation

Infant/Toddler Building	Monday – Friday	6:30am - 6:00pm year round
Y Site	Monday – Friday	6:30am - 6:00pm year round
School-Age	Monday – Friday	2:30pm - 6:00pm on school days; 6:30am - 6:00pm on NO school days
Day Camp	Monday – Friday	7:30am - 6:00pm during summer

Days the Grove City YMCA Child Care Programs are CLOSED

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Shutdown Week – Weds., Thurs. and Fri. before Grove City School District's first day of school every fall
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Thanksgiving Friday
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Day after Christmas
- New Year's Eve

YMCA Mission

The mission of the Young Men's Christian Association of Franklin and Grove City is to serve our community members by:

- Preserving our guiding Christian principles upon which the YMCA was founded, by actively promoting the core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, and caring;
- Developing and improving spiritual, emotional, mental and physical wellness;
- Rendering services to the community, in cooperation with individuals and other organizations, which strengthens the economic, social and moral environment;
- Providing quality athletic, educational, and recreational programming by a caring and qualified staff in an open and all-inclusive setting;
- Providing access to these services for each member of the community who wishes to participate regardless of the individual's race, color, national origin, religion, creed, gender, age, special needs, or ability to pay.

YMCA Child Care Philosophy

The Grove City YMCA has designed the Child Care Program according to the YMCA's philosophy of spirit, mind, and body and according to what current research tells us about how children learn. The child care has a well-balanced program that fits the needs of the children according to their age as well as physical, educational, emotional, and social growth. Children are natural learners. Their requirements for optimal growth are: a good self-image, a stimulating environment, direct experience with objects and people, the opportunity to make changes, and loving, caring, teachers. The Grove City YMCA provides all these things plus much more. Every child participates in a combination of structured and non-structured activity time. An integrated curriculum including art, science, math, language, and physical fitness will best promote the child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development. The YMCA Child Care helps children grow personally, clarify values, improve personal and family relationships, appreciate diversity, become better leaders and supporters, develop specific skills, and have fun! Families play a vital role in the success of our program. We strongly feel that family

participation through visitation, volunteering time in the classroom, attending parent meetings, and having a voice about program quality is essential.

Child Care License

Our programs are licensed annually by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. Our license is posted at each child care site. Parents and/or guardians are welcome to visit anytime during our hours of operation. We participate in the Keystone STARS quality improvement program.

Non-Discrimination and Inclusion Policy

The Grove City YMCA Child Care, in keeping with its mission to help all people realize their fullest potential, encourages and supports the participation of all children and their families in YMCA programs. We do not and will not discriminate against any person because of gender, race, color, nationality, religion, ethnicity, disability or language. Reasonable accommodations will be made to meet individual's needs.

Language development and academic achievement of children who are culturally and linguistically diverse will be supported through various methods such as communication devices, sign language, gestures and pictures. Staff will receive training and outside services will be used as necessary to support and meet the needs of children and families.

Program Structure

Infant/Toddler through Pre-K

Infant/Toddler through Pre-K operates as a year-round program. YMCA Child Care will maintain continuous enrollment for a child until the family requests a change or withdrawal.

The registration fee for this program is \$25 per child.

Personal Days: Children in the year-round program receive two weeks of personal days per year (two weeks = double the number of days that they are enrolled per week). The one-year calendar for personal days begins on the first day of YMCA Child Care's Fall/Spring Session (Grove City Area School District's first day of school). All personal days must be used within the one-year period; there is no rollover of unused days.

Should a family wish to take their child out for more than two consecutive weeks and then return to care, the "Extended Leave Policy" will go into effect to hold that child's spot (see Extended Leave Policy on page 4).

Kindergarten/School-Age

The Kindergarten/School-Age program consists of two separate sessions. The Fall/Spring session occurs during the GCASD academic year, and the Summer Session occurs over summer break.

Children attending the Fall/Spring Session and/or the Summer Session must be enrolled for the program(s) each year during the designated registration period.

The following registration fees are assessed each time a child is registered for a session:

- Fall/Spring Session \$25 per child
- Summer Session \$15 per child

Currently-enrolled children are given the opportunity to register for the next session before it opens to the public. Failure to register for the upcoming session can result in the loss of a child's spot in the program.

Personal Days: Children receive the same number of personal days as they are enrolled in one week. Children attending both sessions may carry personal days over from the Fall Session to use during the Summer Session. Any personal days that are not used before the end of the Summer Session will be lost.

Maternity Leave

For families choosing to keep older siblings at home during a maternity leave: YMCA Child Care will hold the child's spot for up to 6 weeks without charging a holding fee. For additional time beyond the first 6 weeks, the "Extended Leave Policy" will go into effect (see below).

Extended Leave Policy

- Signed contract must be in place before the start of leave specifying the length of time approved
- The family must pay a weekly "holding fee" to hold the child's spot. The amount of the holding fee will be equal to 15% of that child's weekly child care fees for the duration of the leave.
 - Holding fee will be based on the child's enrollment schedule prior to the start of leave. Families may request changes in enrolled days upon the child's return, but this will be subject to availability.
- For families with more than one child on extended leave, older sibling weekly holding fees will be 10% of weekly child care fees for each older sibling.
- As long as all holding fee requirements have been met, then the \$25 registration fee will not be charged again upon return to the program.

Example: Infant enrolled 5 days at \$175/wk x 15% = \$26.25 weekly holding fee

Older sibling in Pre-K 5 days at \$135/wk x 10% = \$13.50 weekly holding fee

- For families receiving ELRC subsidy: YMCA Child Care holding fee amount will be equal to the ELRC weekly copay

Hardship

If your family is facing a hardship, please contact the Child Care Director for assistance. There are resources available to help those who are in need while still maintaining care for the child.

Payment Policy

- When you enroll your child there is a **non-refundable** registration fee. If you withdraw your child from the program for any reason you will be required to pay the registration fee again to re-enroll.
- Payment is due for the days your child is registered as stated on the agreement form regardless of attendance.
- **Payment is due the Friday before the week of care. Unpaid bills can result in termination of services. If your payment is behind 2 or more weeks, we reserve the right to withdraw your child from the program until the account is paid in full or payment arrangements are made with the Child Care Billing Department.**
- There is a payment slot located at each child care site.
- We accept cash, check, or credit card. If you opt to pay with cash you must do so at the main Y Child Care office or at the front desk of the YMCA. **No cash in the payment slots, please!**
- Automatic payment options are available for your convenience. Please contact us to request an Auto-Pay Authorization form. Payments can also be made via the website www.grovecityymca.org.
- If two checks are returned to us due to non-sufficient funds, we will no longer accept checks for payment. There is a \$30.00 returned check fee.
- Personal days may be used for any type of absence (for example: illness or on vacation). **You are responsible to notify the Child Care Billing Department when you are using a personal day.** For more information on personal days, see Program Structure on page 3.
- In order to adjust your child's schedule by either changing or adding days, or to enroll in upcoming sessions, your account must be paid current.
- To decrease the number of days attending you must give a two-week notice.
- If you withdraw your child from the program for any reason, **you must notify us of your child's last day at least two weeks in advance. You will still be charged your full amount during this two week period.**

- Upon your written request we will transfer your child's records to the educational setting of your choice. You will be required to complete a form to ensure the information is transferred to the correct facility.
- Any account that is not paid in full within 60 days of the child's last day of enrollment is subject to collections proceedings.
- If you receive funding through the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC), you must contact them, and complete all necessary paperwork **before** your child begins attending our program. We will not enroll your child in our program until we receive confirmation of ELRC enrollment, unless you agree to pay the private rate until the ELRC enrollment process is complete.
- For more information or to apply for assistance through the ELRC:
 - <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/Apply-for-Benefits.aspx>
 - Mercer County office: 878-202-4169
 - Butler County office: 724-285-9431

Enrollment Requirements

Before your child's first day of attendance, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Keystone STARS require the following forms be completed and in each child's file:

- **Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form**
- **Agreement form**
- **Waiver of Liability form**
- **Enrollment Meeting form**
- **Getting to Know Your Child questionnaire**
- **MUST be in our files within 30 days of your child's start date:**
 - Current Health Assessment with up to date immunization records
 - Modified/delayed immunization schedules must include a signed letter from the child's doctor explaining the reason
 - Proof of most recent influenza vaccination or signed refusal

Definition of Current Health Assessment:

- The initial health report for an infant must be dated no more than 3 months prior to the first day of attendance at the facility.
- The initial health report for a young toddler must be dated no more than 6 months prior to the first day of attendance at the facility.
- The initial health report for an older toddler or preschool child must be dated no more than 1 year prior to the first day of attendance at the facility.
- The initial health report for a school-age child must be dated in accordance with the requirements for medical examinations for school attendance in 28 Pa. Code § 23.2 (relating to medical examinations).

Updating your Child's Enrollment:

- To DECREASE the number of days attending YOU MUST GIVE A TWO WEEK NOTICE. YOU WILL STILL BE CHARGED THE HIGHER AMOUNT DURING THIS TWO WEEK PERIOD.
- You may request to change or add days to your child's schedule. This is subject to availability and must be approved by the administrative staff.

Updating Records:

It is vitally important that we are notified when there is a change in address, phone number, work place, emergency contacts and/or health information. Please notify your child's teacher as soon as there are any changes by filling out an "Emergency Update Information" form so we can update the necessary paperwork. Every 6 months you will be required to review/verify your child's information.

It is mandatory that all children enrolled have a current health assessment (see definition above) with updated immunizations on file. This must be updated according to DHS regulation 3270.131. See chart below.

Age:

2 months (immunizations only)
4 months (immunizations only)
6 months
12 months
15 months (immunizations only)
18 months
24 months
3 year old
4 year old
5 year old
Entering Kindergarten (last physical needed for school-age children in program)

Sign In/Drop-Off Procedures

- Every responsible adult, or sibling at least 16 years of age are responsible for signing your child in every day using the sign-in/out sheets. This serves as the accounting system in the event of an emergency, or in case of evacuation.
- Parent or drop-off person **MUST** accompany child into the building. **It is the parent or drop-off person's responsibility to take the child to where the class is located (playground, gym, arena, etc.) and "hand off" the child to a staff person. We cannot assume responsibility of any child until they are signed in and placed in the care of a staff person.**

Sign Out/Pick-up Procedures

- Every parent, guardian, responsible adult, or sibling at least 16 years of age are responsible for signing your child out every day using the daily sign-in/out sheets. This serves as the accounting system in the event of an emergency, or in case of evacuation.
- All persons picking up a child **MUST** be on the pick-up list unless arrangements are made in advance, **in writing**, from the parent or legal guardian.
- The child care staff will question anyone (including a parent) who is unfamiliar to him/her and ask for photo identification. Anyone without proper authorization and identification will not be permitted to take your child. This policy is for the safety of your child.
- If an emergency arises, please contact us as soon as possible so that alternate arrangements can be made. **We do NOT accept oral phone releases!**
- For families that share custody of their child/children, we **MUST** have a certified copy of the court order which specifies the custody agreement. **In the absence of a court order, both parents have equal parental rights regarding picking up a child or in specifying people who are on your child's pick-up list.**
- **Please note:** Staff persons are only permitted to transport individual children if on the child's pick-up list and it's been approved by the Grove City YMCA CEO.
- The child care staff reserve the right to delay the release of a child to a parent or other designated pick-up person if they have reasonable cause to believe the adult is impaired by alcohol/drugs or is in any way incapable of assuming responsibility for the child **including** not having a car seat in which to transport the child. Staff shall confer with the Director, contact additional YMCA representatives, or contact emergency names listed on the child's paperwork in order to make an appropriate determination regarding the release of the child.

Late Pick-up Fee

All Grove City YMCA Child Care Programs close at 6:00pm. Parents arriving between 6:01pm-6:10pm will be charged a late fee of \$10.00 per child. Parents arriving after 6:10pm will be charged \$1.00 for each additional minute they are late per child.

Also:

- Please drive slowly!
- DHS regulations state that **all cars must be turned off** and keys removed from the ignition.
- **No child may be left alone in a vehicle!**

Illness Policy

Our Illness Policy may change in the event of an outbreak, epidemic or pandemic. In order to keep children, families and staff safe our facilities will follow the recommendations and guidance of the Department of Health and Center for Disease Control.

We enforce this policy for the health and safety of all children and staff in our program, and to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. We consult with a local pediatrician, as well as refer to Caring for Our Children which is the National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs to assist us in developing the policy.

If a child has any of the following signs/symptoms of illness, he/she shall be immediately isolated and the parent/guardian will be called to pick up the child. **Children that are ill must be picked up within 1 hour of notification.** If parent/guardian cannot be reached within 1 hour, the emergency contacts will be notified to pick up the child.

- Illness that prevents child from participating in daily child care activities
- Illness that results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
- Fever of 101 degrees or higher accompanied by behavior changes, lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing
- Mouth sores associated with drooling
- Abdominal pain more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever
- Diarrhea that contains blood or mucus
- Untreated, infected skin patches (rash)
- Vomiting 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
- Communicable and/or contagious diseases

When you arrive, you will receive a “Readmission to Child Care” form, which will describe the symptoms your child has and how long they are required to be excluded from childcare.

Please report all contagious diseases to your child’s teacher immediately. The child care will post any highly contagious diseases so that parents can be alerted.

Administration of medication

It is the YMCA Child Care policy to dispense prescription and non-prescription medication if the following procedures are followed exactly:

- A medication log MUST be completed by parent/guardian BEFORE medication can be administered to your child. Verbal instructions must also be given.
- Medication must be in the original container, CANNOT be expired and must be labeled with the child’s name.
- Please do not leave cough drops, Chap Stick, diaper cream, sun block, hand sanitizer, etc. in your child’s backpack. DHS considers all of these medications.

PLEASE NOTE: If your child is ill and has a fever of 101 degrees or higher, we will not give medication to reduce a fever. Please do not give your child fever reducing medication and bring them to child care if he/she is ill.

Emergency Procedures

In the case of a severe emergency or accident we will:

1. Administer first aid/CPR as appropriate
2. Call Emergency Medical Transportation (911)
3. Contact child’s parents/guardian
4. Contact the Site Director/Child Care Director

In order to ensure your child’s safety during an emergency the following procedures will be taken at each site:

- **Immediate evacuation:** Children are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc.
- **In-place sheltering:** Sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- **Evacuation:** Total evacuation of the facility may be necessary if notice of severe weather or there is danger in the area. In this case:

- Infant/Toddler children will be taken to the YMCA
- YMCA Site children will be taken to the Infant/Toddler Building.
- School-Age Program children will be taken to the YMCA.

If all sites need to relocate the staff and children will be transported by bus to the Physical Learning Center at Grove City College.

- **Modified operation:** May include cancellation/postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children but may be necessary in a variety of situations.

As part of our day to day procedures, we have collected information from you as to who may pick up your child. In the event of an emergency, we will continue to follow the instructions that you have already given us, unless you would like to give other instructions to be used in case of an emergency. By signing the Parent Statement of Understanding and Waiver of Liability you are consenting to the above Emergency Procedures.

Closing Information

In the unlikely event that the Grove City YMCA Child Care is closed, cancellation information will be available on the Grove City YMCA Facebook page, and www.grovecityymca.org.

Parental Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns with the YMCA Child Care Program, please do not hesitate to inform your child's teacher. If you feel your questions have not been answered or problem resolved, please contact the Site Director if your child is enrolled in the Infant/Toddler building (724-458-0838), the Child Care Director if your child attends the YMCA site (724-458-6628), or the Site Director if your child attends the School-Age Program (724-992-0372). If you still do not feel your questions have been answered or your problem resolved then contact the Child Care Director (724-458-6628).

Discipline/Suspension/Expulsion Policy

It is the goal of the YMCA to develop the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility in the children enrolled in the program through positive, non-threatening teaching techniques in a caring, responsive, safe environment that is free of discrimination and bullying. The YMCA strives to adhere to all federal and state laws writing our policies and procedures. We believe that discipline should be handled in a positive manner which encourages children to solve problems, recognize right from wrong, and build character. Explanations and re-direction are the standard methods of discipline. **Each discipline situation is looked at individually.**

The following steps are taken to attempt to minimize and prevent difficult behavior and encourage appropriate behavior:

- Highly qualified, dedicated staff that are able to individualize instruction, model and encourage appropriate behavior for the children
- Classrooms that are set-up for each age group in a manner that is accessible, welcoming and developmentally appropriate
- Daily communication with families both verbally and written on how each child's day went
- All children are screened within 45 days of starting and observations are completed on a regular basis by staff
- Conferences are offered to families 3 times per year or when requested by families and/or teachers
- Lesson plans developed by the teachers to align with the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Learning that include all Key Learning Areas, as well as the supporting curriculums:
 - Creative Curriculum
 - PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)
 - Learning Without Tears
 - CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health)
- Daily schedules that are consistent and flexible based on the needs and interests of the children, offering a balance of child directed and teacher directed play
- Maintain a positive work environment that allows staff to feel valued by offering support through resources, meetings with co-teachers, planning time, and breaks

For our Infant/Toddler through Pre-K, the following steps will be taken when inappropriate behavior from a child is consistent and frequent are as follow:

- Documentation of child's behavior with times of day, activities going on, etc to try to pin point triggers.
- Request a meeting with parents/guardians to discuss behavior and strategies to put into place to try to decrease or eliminate behavior.
- A Social Emotional Ages and Stages screening is completed by the teacher on the child. Depending on continued behavior and scoring of the screening we may request the parents/guardians complete the same screening. After conferencing, a request may be made to seek assistance from Infant Early Childhood Mental Health.

- An action plan will be written, agreed upon, and implemented with the input of the families, teachers and administration that is in the best interest of not only the child, but all of the class and staff involved.
- If the action plan is not adhered to, suspension and/or expulsion are possible.

For our School-Age participants, the following are examples of inappropriate behavior:

- Physical harm to another program participant or staff
- Verbal abuse towards other program participant or staff, including swearing directed at another person
- Physical exposure
- Malicious and willful destruction of personal, school, or YMCA property

The following action steps will be taken:

1. An incident report will be completed detailing the situation
2. The incident will be brought to the Director/Site Director's attention
3. The Director/Site Director will inform the child and the parent/guardian
4. Future consequences will be discussed

Any incident beyond the third incident may lead to suspension or potential removal from the program.

Parents/Guardians are contacted when serious discipline problems occur with their child. The parent/guardian will be called to immediately pick-up their child from the program for the remainder of the day for the violation of any one of the following serious discipline problems including but not limited to:

- Repeatedly leaving designated space unsupervised
- Possession of weapons, firearms, ammunition, and/or explosives
- Possession of drugs, tobacco products, and/or alcohol
- The child is a serious safety threat to themselves, other children, or the staff

In the event of a second infraction of the above serious discipline problems, the child will receive an immediate 3 day suspension from the program. Payment or use of personal days will be expected for the three days. In addition, the YMCA reserves the right to remove a child from the program for a first infraction of the above incidents if the seriousness of the incident so warrants.

It is the intent of the YMCA to work together with the parents/guardians for the best care of each child. Working together as a team is a necessary step to correct repeated inappropriate behavior. Our

ultimate goal for discipline is that it should help children develop their own sense of right and wrong and enable them to behave appropriately and function independently. We believe that if children learn to control their behavior at a young age they will continue to do so throughout their lifetime. Your patience, support, and follow-through is not only appreciated, but necessary.

Withdrawal/Transfer of Records Policy

If our program is not meeting your needs or the needs of your child you must give a two week notice of withdrawal.

If one of the following occurs, you may be asked to withdraw your child from the program:

- Non-payment or lack of adherence to payment policies
- Failure to submit a Health Report or Immunizations as requested
- Lack of cooperation from families with the child care's efforts to resolve differences and/or meet a child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences
- Behavior which is determined to be detrimental to the health, safety or well-being of the other children or staff
- Abusive behaviors and/or verbal threats by parents toward children, staff or others
- Parents disciplining, in any way, children other than their own while at the child care facility
- Refusal to abide by any YMCA Child Care policy

Upon your written request we will transfer your child's records to the educational setting of your choice. You will be required to complete a form to ensure the information is transferred to the correct facility.

Required Reporting

Pennsylvania State mandates reporting of child abuse or neglect. YMCA staff is legally required to contact the Child Abuse hotline if there is reasonable cause to suspect physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, or maltreatment of any child enrolled in child care. Staff will report any suspected abuse or neglect.

Within 24 hours after a child has developed a known or suspected communicable disease, we are mandated to inform all families. An illness alert will be posted at the site where the child attends the program.

Photography

Photographs of the children participating in the program may be taken from time to time and may appear in newspapers, magazines, brochures, Facebook or other publicity material. Your permission for photographs of your child to be used without compensation is a part of this agreement unless otherwise stated.

Curriculum Statement

We strive to offer a developmentally appropriate curriculum. With young children, it is vital to offer many opportunities to explore, discover, and socialize as they begin to form friendships with other children. Through learning centers, arts and crafts, large motor activities, fine motor activities, stories and child-directed play, it is our goal to facilitate the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each individual child. Child-directed play allows children to interact with peers, and creates numerous opportunities for social interaction with both peers and staff. Our staff receives specialized training in child development and appropriate programming. These practices support continuity of care to support long-term relationships between a child and their primary teacher. All staff show respect for all children and nurture them utilizing curricula that are cross walked with the PA Learning Standards. The Creative Curriculum is used for Infants through Pre-K children. It is designed to guide the teacher's planning to be intentional, responsive and individualized for all children. We believe a child's academic success will flourish, as long as they are socially and emotionally ready. This is why our preschool curriculum also consists of P.A.T.H.S. (Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies) which will help children label emotions, express emotions, build self-confidence, and provides strategies for problem solving skills to develop. CATCH (Coordinated Approach To Child Health) provides the children with a large variety of physical activity experiences which nurture their love of movement. Learning Without Tears is also taught at the preschool level.

Nutrition Policy

Child Care staff will promote healthy eating to children to help prevent overweight/obesity and encourage lifetime healthful habits. Healthy snacks will be offered during snack time for children in the program.

Teachers/caregivers are informed of all food allergies at the site at which they work. Allergies are also posted in all classrooms of every child at that site.

We encourage you to celebrate your child's birthday or other special occasions with an alternative to food, such as sharing favorite stories, music, dancing, games, crafts, or other activities. What is important to children is that something special is planned. Using food as the focus of celebrations is discouraged. Children may not share food brought from home unless the food is intended to be shared with all of the children.

Limitations for Screen Time

- Infants and Older Toddlers: No screen time for children younger than 2 years is permitted.
- Children 3 Years and Older: No screen time for children 3 years and older is permitted unless to enhance learning or for special occasions.

Screen time is no more than 15 minutes at a time except for children with special health needs who require and consistently use assistive and adaptive computer technology.

Physical Activity/Outdoor Play Policy

The Grove City YMCA Child Care Staff will promote developmentally appropriate physical activity to help children (and themselves) prevent overweight/obesity and practice lifetime healthful habits.

Children have outdoor play except when weather or air quality poses a significant health risk, defined as a wind chill factor at or below 25°F and a heat index at or above 90°F or poor air quality (eg, an ozone alert) per the National Weather Service.

Child care providers will inform parents, caregivers, and families that children need to be dressed appropriately for the weather, including appropriate seasonal clothing and footwear, so they can participate fully, move freely, and play safely:

- Snow: heavy coat, snow pants, waterproof boots, hat, and mittens/gloves
- Sun: lightweight clothing that is sun protective, hat, and sunscreen
- Rain: raincoat and waterproof boots
- Different temperatures during the day: layers of clothing

Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Examples of appropriate footwear include sneakers, gym shoes and other shoes with rubber soles that enclose the feet and will not come off easily.

If you would like to read our detailed Nutrition and/or Physical Activity policies, they are available upon request.

Child's Developmental Screenings/Assessments/Observations

The teachers will be using Ages and Stages, a developmental screening, within the first 45 days of your child's enrollment and/or your child transitioning to a new classroom. Along with the screenings, the teachers will assess your child's growth and development according to the Ounce Scale for children birth to 3 years of age and in the fall, winter, and spring using the Work Sampling Scale for children 3 thru Pre-K. You will be given the opportunity to conference with your child's teacher after each formal evaluation is completed, as well as throughout the year as deemed necessary. Throughout your child's day, teachers will be making observations on a regular basis. The information collected from the screenings/assessments/observations assist the teachers in planning lessons that will prepare the

children as they continue their education. If there is a need for referral services, a meeting will be held to provide your family with resources and support throughout the referral process.

Referral Plan

If it is determined that there is a possible need for an evaluation, a parent/teacher conference will be requested to discuss the appropriate next step. The Y administration, teachers and staff will partner with the family, community agency and specialists through use of our facility and program to provide services and work together to best meet the needs of the child and family.

Parents who have questions about their child's development may contact the CONNECT Helpline. The CONNECT Helpline assists families in locating resources and providing information regarding child development for children ages birth to age 5. It can also assist families by making a direct link to their county early intervention program or local preschool early intervention program. For assistance please call the **CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288** or visit www.connectpa.net.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) Information Plan

Because of the diverse needs of the children in our program it is important to gather as much information about the best ways to meet your child's needs. If your child or family has an IEP or IFSP we request that you provide a copy so we can work together to best meet your child's needs and the needs of your family.

Transitioning Information

Teachers will work together to create a transition schedule for your child based on his/her individual needs. Approximately one month before your child is scheduled to transition, you will receive a transition calendar and a letter informing you of what to expect in your child's new classroom. Communication is crucial to ensure a positive transitioning experience for you and your child.

Infant/Toddler Building – Children 6 weeks to approximately 42 months

Some general information:

- Once your child eats table food, we provide a morning and afternoon snack for your child. There is a menu posted in the classroom. If you would like your child to have something other than what is being served, feel free to send it in and let us know.
- All bedding and stuffed animals will be sent home for laundering on the last day of the week that your child attends.

- The children go outside DAILY, weather permitting. Please be sure to send clothing appropriate for the weather (hat, gloves, boots, etc.) Remember we will go out for fresh air and playtime even when it is cold.
- Once children turn 6 months they must wear sunscreen outside. (No spray sunscreens please)
- PLEASE. . . no bottles or pacifiers in the Older Toddler and Older Toddler/Young 3's Rooms.
- We are happy to be a partner in your child's potty training. We are never harsh or punitive; nor do we force your child to sit on the potty. We do however offer opportunities to use the potty and praise when children are successful. Please watch your daily sheets for notices on potty successes and when more pull-ups, diapers or wipes are needed.

The Infant Room works on:

- Tummy time
- Interaction with other infants and staff
- Exploration using the five senses
- Introduction to colors, shapes, and objects in their environments
- Story time with teachers

The Young Toddler Room works on:

- Washing and drying hands properly
- Lining up to go outside or to another room
- Sitting at the table and eating with other children
- Playing and interacting with other children
- Exposure to concepts such as colors, shapes, numbers and letters
- Fine and gross motor skills such as walking, running, jumping, grasping, rolling, throwing, squeezing, rolling, etc.
- Using five senses to explore
- Self-help skills such as:
 - Drinking from a sippy cup
 - Using manners
 - Using cozy corner to self-soothe

- Learning basic sign language to help communicate needs such as please, more, etc.
- Eating with a fork and a spoon
- Putting away toys at clean-up time

The Older Toddler Room works on:

- Washing and drying hands properly and independently
- Lining up to go outside or to another room
- Sitting at the table and eating meals with other children
- Short group activities
- Playing and interacting with other children
- Exposure to concepts such as colors, shapes, numbers and letters
- Fine and gross motor skills such as walking, running, jumping, grasping, rolling, throwing, lacing, squeezing, rolling, snapping, etc.
- Using five senses to explore and experiment
- Introduce potty training in a positive way based on each individual child
- Following one and two step directions
- Self-help skills such as:
 - Drinking from regular cups
 - Using manners
 - Using cozy corner to self-soothe
 - Communicating needs such as please, more, etc.
 - Eating with forks and spoons
 - Putting away toys at clean-up time
 - Cleaning up after meal times by putting their trash in the garbage and cups in the red bin
 - Putting on coats to go outside, pulling pants up and down after using the bathroom
 - Name recognition
 - Using words when frustrated, upset or when he/she needs something

The Older Toddler/Young 3's Room works on:

- Washing and drying hands properly and independently
- Lining up to go outside or to another room
- Sitting at the table and eating meals with other children
- Short group activities
- Playing and interacting with other children
- Concepts such as colors, shape, numbers and letter recognition
- Fine and gross motor skills such as walking, running, jumping, grasping, rolling, throwing, lacing, squeezing, rolling, snapping, etc.
- Using five senses to explore and experiment
- Potty training, pulling pants and underwear up and down
- Following one and two step directions
- Self-help skills such as:
 - Drinking from a regular cup
 - Using manners
 - Eating with forks and spoons
 - Putting away toys at clean-up time
 - Cleaning up after snacks and lunch by throwing away trash
 - Putting on coats, snow pants, boots, etc.
 - Name recognition
 - Using their words when frustrated, upset or when they need something
 - Making cot for quiet time and putting bedding back in cubby at the end of quiet time.

YMCA site – Children Young Pre-K Room and Pre-K Room**Some general information:**

- Each day when dropping off and picking up your child you will need to sign him/her in and out of our “Sign In Book” located by the payment box in the Child Care waiting area.
- Please help your child wash his/her hands upon entering the classroom. This helps us cut down on the spread of germs and illness.

- Each child has a cubby for his/her backpack, extra food, spare changes of clothes, etc. When you come in to drop off or pick up your child, please be sure to check his/her cubby for any information pertinent to your child.
- We play outside daily when the real feel temperature is between 25 and 89 degrees. Please be sure your child has weather appropriate clothing.
- Look for the “What we did today” note hanging in your child’s classroom. Also, you will receive a half sheet highlighting the events of your child’s day.
- If your child requires medication, you will need to bring it in the original packaging, labeled with your child’s name. It will need to be handed to a staff member and then signed into our medication log. The child care staff who administers the medication will sign the medication log and record the dates and times medication was given.
- We provide the children with a morning and afternoon snack along with drinks throughout the day as needed. There is a menu posted above the “Sign-In Books” and in the classrooms.
- Please do not send toys from home. We cannot guarantee they will return home in one piece.
- If you sign your child up for other YMCA programs, please let us know. Please give your child the opportunity to practice dressing and undressing themselves. This helps changing for swim lessons, gymnastics, etc. go much smoother and alleviates frustration children feel when they are not able to do something on their own.

Skills we work on:

- Number, letter, and shape recognition
- Word recognition such as names, address, birth date, colors and days of the week, months of the year and sight words
- Fine motor skills (cutting, play-dough play, manipulatives, etc.)
- Handwriting (posture, pincer grip, formation of letters)
- Following two and three step directions
- Counting and one to one correspondence
- Proper book care, appropriate handling of books and concepts of print
- Using senses to observe, explore, and experiment
- Proper use and care of classroom materials
- Responsibility through daily jobs (calendar helper, weather person, line leader, etc.)
- School rules (playground, classroom, pool, gym, and arena)
- Gross Motor skills using climbers, outdoor games, and games in gym/arena

- Rhymes, songs, and finger plays
- Self-awareness
- Building positive relationships with peers and adults
- Self-help skills such as:
 - Ask a question when something is needed (ie. “May I please go to the bathroom?” as opposed to “I have to pee.”)
 - Using the bathroom independently
 - Proper hand washing
 - Pouring and serving themselves when appropriate
 - Using manners such as saying please, thank you, and excuse me
 - Dressing themselves independently
 - Being responsible for their own items such as jacket, book bags, etc.
 - Cleaning up after playing with toys and being able to clean up their own spills.
 - Sitting quietly and raising hand, as well as, participating in classroom activities.

School-Age need to know info . . .

Our goal is to actively engage your child during the after-school hours. With all children’s best interests at heart, we strive to meet their physical, social, and emotional needs through a variety of activities and personal interactions.

- On the first day of school, please send a note to the Hillview school office to inform them that your child will be attending the “YMCA School-Age Program located at Hillview”.
- When picking up your child you must use the entrance on the East Main Street side of the school (the old front entrance).
- Please call our School-Age phone OR send a message via the “Remind” app as soon as possible if your child will not be attending our program FOR ANY REASON. Information for how to join “YMCA School Age at Hillview” on Remind is attached. If a child does not show up, we must call all contact numbers until we find out where your child is and why he did not arrive at our program after school. It is a busy transition time after school, so it is greatly appreciated if you contact us first. The phone number is 724-992-0372. You can leave a message any time of day. We will check the messages at 2:00pm before the children arrive.
- We have homework time Monday-Thursday. If you would like us to help your child with homework, please check with the staff member with your child’s group to sign-up. Please understand that during homework time we will help your child but it does not guarantee that

your child's homework will be completed at our program. If your child's teacher assigns homework on the Chromebooks provided by the school district, expectations will be in place for how these will be used while in our care.

- Before signing your child up for other YMCA programs please talk to the Site Director or Child Care Director to ensure Child Care staff are available to walk your child to and from the program.
- According to the Department of Human Services, we are required to give our School-Age children at least 30 minutes of outside time daily if the (feels-like) temperature is above 25 degrees and below 90 degrees (with the heat index). All children are required to go outside during this time period weather permitting. The outside play space that we currently have available to us is the grassy space between Hillview and the YMCA. We encourage you to check the weather each day and look ahead to the afternoon in order to dress your child appropriately for the weather. If your child is dressed in clothes that you would not want to get dirty, please send a change of clothes and/or shoes. Your child is responsible for letting us know he needs to change.
- We will provide a snack and drink daily. Please see the menu posted. If your child would like to bring a snack from home, he may do so.
- If school is delayed or cancelled, care is still provided. What do I do for the following scenarios if I enrolled my child for less than 5 days/week?
 - Please see the chart below regarding the following scenarios:

Snow/Weather Cancellation? <u>UNSCHEDULED</u> 2-hour Delay? <u>UNSCHEDULED</u> Early Dismissal?	No matter what day the scenario falls on, if you need care then your child may attend on any of these scenarios. Additional charges may apply depending on which scenario takes place.
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- For any of the unscheduled scenarios above, please sign your child in at the Pre-K site at the main Y. If school is delayed, child care staff will walk all School-Age children to Hillview at the appropriate time. A child care staff person will wait in the cafeteria with the children until they are dismissed to their classrooms. If school is cancelled or scheduled off on the Grove City School District calendar, we will provide all-day care at the Y or Hillview for an additional rate.

Each child is a unique and precious individual. We are so happy that you allow us to be part of your child's life. Please ask questions, express concerns, and let us know how you are feeling about your child's experience. We are very excited to watch your child learn and grow. Thank you for sharing your child with us!

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