



Y ACADEMY
ON MAIN
FRANKLIN COUNTY'S YMCA

Child Care Department
2021-2022

Parent Handbook & Policies

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WELCOME TO THE Y ACADEMY ON MAIN

Thank you for choosing the Y Academy on Main program. We look forward to working closely with you and your child.

In order to help each day go as smoothly as possible for parents, staff, and most importantly the children, it is necessary to clearly understand the Y Academy on Main's policies and procedures. For this reason the Parent Handbook has been written as a guide for all of us to refer to and follow.

We have tried to make the Parent Handbook as complete as possible. Please take the time to read it carefully since it holds important information about the Y Academy on Main and your family's experience here. We strive to provide the best possible care for all of the children at the Y Academy on Main. With parents and staff working together we will continue to offer the quality program that you need and expect for your child each day.

If you have any questions or comments after reading this handbook, please let us know. We are here for you and your child.

Please note that there is a Handbook Agreement Contract. After thoroughly reading the handbook, please sign and return this contract to the Y Academy on Main program. This contract indicates that you will agree to abide by the program's policies and therefore will be held accountable for knowing the information it contains.

PURPOSE

The Y Academy on Main offers a well-rounded educational, social, creative, and physical program for Preschoolers (ages 2.9 to 5 years old). We are a full day Academy on Main with an early and late care offered to meet the needs of working families in our community. We also strive to provide activities and snacks that encourage whole health attitudes at a young age.

POLICY ON ACCEPTING CHILDREN

- ❖ Families must attend Parent Intake and Child Orientation. This is mandatory so that you will know what is expected of you as a participant of our program. If you are unable to attend, then you will need to schedule a time to meet with the Early Education Director prior to your child's start in our Preschool.
- ❖ The Preschool team must discuss with parent(s) any special needs, medical concerns or dietary/physical restrictions.
- ❖ Parents, Director and Teaching staff must make sure our program can meet the child's needs. If not, the Director will suggest another type of program.
- ❖ All records on the child **MUST** be received before the child may start the Y Academy on Main. This includes immunizations, physicals, necessary medical forms, complete enrollment forms, and tuition contracts
- ❖ All children are enrolled on a 30 day trial basis to ensure that our program is a good fit for your child and their needs.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Y Academy on Main program does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, marital status, or political beliefs.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Our Preschool program is an active, well-rounded program for 2.9, 3, 4, and 5 year olds available to both members and non-members of the Y. Children participate in a wide range of activities that include swimming, gymnastics, pre-academic skills, arts and crafts, music & movement, cooking, dramatic play, and physical education.

The Y believes that the young child should be encouraged to explore and discover independently within the program. We respect the unique learning styles and personalities of our participants. We believe that all children need the time and space to play and develop at their own pace. We aim to provide a child-centered environment in which children can explore and revel in new experiences and with each other. We stress such values as making independent and responsible choices, using language effectively to socialize and problem solve, and relating to other children in ways that model responsible behavior and build self-esteem.

We believe in families. We see ourselves as part of an extended family, working with parents to provide the very best care for their children. We are responsive to the concerns and ideas of parents and we encourage parent involvement in all aspects of our program.

YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of our YMCA is to provide opportunities for our members to develop character and leadership, to grow in mind, body and spirit through program participation and service, and to improve the quality of life in Franklin County.

PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM

The Y Academy on Main is licensed by the Department of Early Education & Care (EEC) and is designed to enhance the child's educational, emotional, social, intellectual, and physical development within an environment specially designed for Preschoolers. We offer several opportunities for children to learn individually and in groups according to their developmental needs and interests. Children master and integrate information through hands-on experiences with a wide variety of materials. Choice times are set up by the teachers and offer an environment conducive to learning and self-directed exploring. Learning Centers allow plenty of hands-on experiences that allow children to expand and develop cognitive, social, small and large motor skills. Children gain the ability to use the materials available to them and develop confidence in their level of competence. The teachers also works to help children define the limits of their behavior and guides them in forming their interpersonal and group skills. Through an integrated curriculum children learn to work comfortably both with others and alone. Our activities are planned to emphasize the process rather than the product which in turn fosters a sense of accomplishment.

By providing a secure and nurturing environment, the Y Academy on Main program assists each child in achieving the following goals:

- ✓ To develop feelings of positive self-esteem through self-accomplishment
- ✓ To develop interest in discovering their world and the world of others
- ✓ To interact and communicate with children and adults to develop social skills
- ✓ To express themselves through dramatic play, art, music, and movement
- ✓ To develop a range of motor skills
- ✓ Incorporates the Y's core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect & Responsibility

In addition, specific goals for individual children are identified by parents and teachers. Plans are then made to assist each child in the development of these goals.

PROGRAM HOURS & SCHEDULE OF THE DAY

Our hours are 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. We offer 2, 3, and 5 full day options. Early Care is available from 6:30 - 8:30 a.m. and Late Care from 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. We have a school year option; Sept. through June, excluding December, February & April vacation weeks, holiday care and summer program; and an extended year option including December, February & April vacations, limited holiday care and 9 weeks in the summer. We offer snow day care from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm if Greenfield Public Schools close due to inclement weather. You must sign up in advance for snow day care so we can plan our staffing accordingly. Please listen to WHAI @ 98.3 or WPVQ @ 95.3 for program delays, cancellations or early closings. If a state of emergency is declared, the preschool will be closed. If this decision is made when we are in session, parents will be called to pick up their children early.

We are closed the following holidays: Labor Day, Veterans Day (for a required Professional Development Day), Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve & Christmas Day, New Year's Eve & New Year's Day, President's Day (for a required Professional Development Day) Memorial Day, and Independence Day. A separate sheet outlining these closures is in your enrollment packet.

Children need a dependable routine in order to feel a sense of security and sureness about their surroundings. The classroom schedule at the program offers a variety of self-directed and teacher directed activities: individual, small, and large group, high energy and quiet, planned and spontaneous. The Y program posts a schedule of daily activities, as well as sending home a newsletter each month so parents will know what projects, snacks and special activities we will be doing. Field trips are included on the schedule as well. **Children need to arrive at school by 8:30 am and no later than 9 a.m.** It is very important for each child to participate in Morning Meeting and experience group activities. When a child arrives late, it often disrupts the group and the flow of activities. The children's attention is now on the arriving child and not the teacher. Educators are engaged with the children and cannot be taken away from their duties to attend to a late parent's questions, etc. Please be respectful of our routines, schedules and jobs and have your child at school by 8:30 am.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

This is just a generic sample schedule. Each classroom will have a detailed schedule of their own classroom routines. Parents will be provided with this schedule at the start of the year.

7:00 - 8:30.....Preschool Enrichment Early Care
8:30 - 9:00.....Drop-off, Parent sign-in, Snack
9:00 - 9:10.....Clean-up
9:10 - 9:30.....Morning meeting
9:30 - 10:30.....Centers with activities incorporating sensory, motor and language skills
10:40 - 11:00.....Group time, Story, Singing or Movement
11:00 - 12:15.....Gross Motor Activity Time (swim, gym, outside, gymnastics)
12:15 - 1:00.....Lunch
1:00 - 2:00.....Quiet play, bathroom, brushing teeth
2:00 - 2:30.....Circle Time
2:30 - 3:30.....Gym
3:30.....Pick Up
3:30 - 5:30.....Preschool Enrichment Late Care

During the school year, the participants of the Y Academy on Main have swimming and gymnastics lessons once a week. Parents are invited to observe their child's swimming and gymnastics lessons during these times, after the first month in the program.

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

The Y believes that every child, regardless of special need, should be integrated into our programs. Therefore, the following policy has been developed to accommodate children with special needs.

Upon registering their child, parents are asked to supply information about their child's development by filling out the ASQ-3 screening tool. If a child's needs cannot be met by our standard program or staffing, a list will be generated between parents, teachers and the Director of all accommodations necessary to integrate the child successfully. If, in the judgment of the Y Academy on Main teaching team and the Early Education Director, the accommodations needed to serve a child would cause undue financial burden to the program and/or a health or safety threat to others in the program, parents will be notified in writing of our inability to serve the child, stating specific reasons. Parents may appeal to the Department of Early Education and Care if they feel the Y has not offered fair judgment of a specific case.

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

Our program utilizes the Ages and Stages screening kit (ASQ-3). This screening is given to families to answer a series of questions based on what the parent's perception is of their child's development within the first 30 days of enrollment, which is used to support the process of identifying children with possible learning needs. Once the questionnaires are returned, they will be scored and evaluated by the Director and/or the child's teacher. The results of this screening will determine what next steps should be taken by the program. Our program's procedure is to collaborate with the family and the public school system in their town of residence to set up evaluation for the child within our program's site. When it is appropriate, we also outreach to services provided by BHN (Behavioral Health Network) through the Collaborative for Educational Services for additional support.

In addition to the screening tool, our program also utilizes the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment system. This system is based on the teacher's direct observations and subsequent documentation of a child in various situations and activities. Teaching Strategies Gold covers 9 developmental domains: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science/Technology, Social Studies, and The Arts. Teachers will make observations both informally and during key activity times. These observations can include verbal exchanges, photos/video of a child, samples of the child's work, checklists, and other possible forms of documentation. All of this documentation will be utilized to gather an accurate depiction of the child's development and that child will be scored on a developmental continuum that has been

created by Teaching Strategies Gold. Teachers will be able to create various reports, including reports to be used during Parent/Teacher Conferences, at which time parents will be able to see the documentation that has been collected. There will be 2 checkpoints each year: Fall/Winter with a conference in January and Spring/Summer with a conference in May.

PLAN FOR TRANSITIONS

The Y Academy on Main program has 2 developmentally age appropriate classrooms. Each child's classroom is determined by their age at admission as well as their development. Children starting in the younger age classroom, may transition to the older age classroom if it is determined by educators, Director and parents to be developmentally appropriate for the child or they age out of their assigned classroom. In such a case, educators, with signed parental consent will share all necessary information regarding that child and their development.

If in the event of a child moving on to another program, the Y Academy on Main will, with signed parental consent, release all records regarding the child's development and progress to schools who present written request for such documents.

The Y Academy on Main program is committed to making any such transition as smooth as possible for every child and will assist them in such a transition in a way that the child understands. This can include but is not limited to talking with them about the upcoming transition, introducing them to new teachers and other children, talking to them about new routines they will experience, accompanying them to the new classroom, and suggesting to families that they schedule visits with their child to the new school.

WHAT TO WEAR, WHAT TO BRING

***Due to current CDC guidelines with regards to Covid-19 and its' variants, the Y Academy in conjunction with our Health Care Consultant will require children and staff to continue wearing masks while indoors until further notice. Please be sure your child has a mask when entering our program spaces and that they have extras on hand. Adults dropping off and picking up are also required to wear masks while in child care spaces.**

*Every day of the program children should wear clothes you do not mind getting dirty or stained. We may use smocks for messy projects, but accidents do happen. To promote independence, we ask that clothing be child friendly and free from complicated fasteners, belts, suspenders, etc. especially for those children who are just toilet trained. This makes it easy for the child to be self-sufficient in the bathroom and when needing to change in and out of clothes for other activities. Please know that we encourage the children to be independent so if they have worked hard to put their clothes on by themselves and they happen to go on backwards or inside out we will not change them around as this only diminishes their sense of pride and accomplishment. We ask parents to also encourage their independence...its ok if clothes are not on perfectly.

*Shoes are very important. **Children need to wear sneakers.** Sandals, flip-flops, crocks, cowboy boots, and dress shoes are prohibited at preschool. Children may not be able to participate in certain activities if they are not wearing appropriate footwear for safety reasons. Also, please make sure that the shoes your child wears are again child-friendly. Normal sneakers or sneakers with Velcro straps are best. Cloth shoes, boots or shoes with high tops are either flimsy and/or hard for a child to be able to put on themselves.

*Our program is built around active learning which can be messy and full of movement. We ask that you provide clothing that allows for a wide variety of movement and that can get dirty without parents or children being concerned. Loose knit pants or sweatpants with elastic waists and shirts that slip on over a child's head are best rather than shirts with buttons/zippers, jeans with buttons, bibbed overalls, dresses and skirts which all limit a child's ability to move freely.

*On swimming days children should bring their suits and towels. They should wear clothes that they can get into and out of with little difficulty. Bags for swimming that hold a towel and a change of clothes should be easy for your child to wear on their back and should be a smaller size than your child. Small backpacks are great so they can then have their hands free to hold onto the railing on the stairs. Please put your child's name on his/her towel for swimming. If your child does not come to school with a bathing suit they will not be able to participate in swimming.

*On gymnastics days children should wear easy to move in clothing (i.e.: jogging pants, t-shirts, and knit pants and tops). **Pants and shirts with zippers or buttons are NOT allowed.** Children are not allowed on specified equipment when wearing clothing that can catch or tear the equipment. No tights are allowed. Children take off their shoes and socks before entering the Gymnastics Center.

*All children need to have several complete extra sets of seasonally appropriate clothes for bathroom accidents, spills, water play, etc. These can be stored in the classroom. Please make sure you check and replenish clothes often and always check for and bring home soiled clothing. Label everything.

***Outside clothing** - We will be going outside every day, which could include taking walks and outdoor play, so children should be dressed for the weather and have a water bottle here at school. On rainy days, children should wear raincoats and boots but please leave umbrellas at home (they are a safety hazard). On snowy days please send your child with boots, warm coat, and hat, insulated mittens that won't soak through, and snow/ski pants. Also, if children wear boots to school they need to bring shoes to wear indoors. They may be left in their cubbies during the winter season. Please no slippers. During the fall and spring, weather changes from minute to minute, so children should bring a sweater or jacket for unpredictable weather. It is advisable to dress your child in layers to accommodate the temperature changes from inside to outside. Please label all outside clothing with your child's name. It can get muddy on the playground and preschool children love to explore and play in the mud, which often gets them pretty "messy". Please allow your child to be free to enjoy their messy and fun experiences. **As always children and clothing are washable!!! ☺**

***INCLEMENT WEATHER (excessively hot or cold weather):**

Outdoor time will be held every day unless it is raining or below 32 degrees. We will have shortened outdoor times if the temperatures are above 90 degrees and/or excessively humid or as determined by the Director or staff person in charge. Children should come prepared with appropriate clothing for the day's ever changing weather patterns and for the season that we are in. They must also have a water bottle here at school. It is important to remember that if a child is well enough to attend school then they are well enough to go outside

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

The Y Academy on Main day starts at 8:30 a.m. It is important to be on time. The Y's upper parking lot is reserved for adults with limited mobility. Parking is available behind the Y. Our entrance is off Hope Street just past the Court House. Parents are to sign their child in on the attendance sheet that is kept in the child's classroom (**it is an EEC regulation that we maintain a daily attendance log and therefore you MUST sign in and out**) and then either leave them in the classroom with their teacher(s) or bring them to the playground (weather permitting). All children must be escorted to and from the drop off locations and be sure that you have made contact with a teacher before leaving your child. Please keep your child with you at all times and do not allow them to run ahead, open gates or doors. They need to be in the sight of an adult at all times. At pick up time, parents must come to the classroom or to the outside play space, (if we are outside) and be sure to sign your child out daily! Again please make sure you have let a staff person know that you are taking your child home and do not allow them to run ahead. Please be sure to ask for a parking pass and always have your scan card to get into the building. If you do not have your scan card, please use the Welcome Center at the front of the building and have a desk person check in with one of our teachers.

LATE PICK UP

Our school day program ends promptly at 3:30 pm and the Late Care Enrichment Program ends promptly at 5:30 pm. Please allow enough time to gather all of your child's belongings prior to these times (it is suggested that you come at least 5 minutes prior to your scheduled pick up time). Children will remain at the Y until pick up has been made or alternate arrangements have been made between parent and the staff person in charge. Please be considerate of the teachers and their time, as they often have families, meetings, and commitments of their own when the school day is over. In case of late pick up, there will be a \$5 charge for the first 5 minutes and \$1 for each minute after that. This fee is to be paid in cash to the teacher on duty before your child

can return to the program. You will be given a written receipt and the charge will be documented.

RELEASE

No child will be released from the program to anyone other than the parent or authorized adult. Please do not send in another child or someone younger than the age of 18 (as long as they can provide a photo ID) to pick up your child. A note must be sent if a child is to be picked up by anyone other than the parent or someone not listed on the child's pickup list. Should the pick-up person change after you have dropped your child off you **MUST** call the staff to let them know. A photo I.D. will be asked for. In case of a discrepancy or doubt, no child will be released until contact has been made with the parent.

If we feel the person picking the child up is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, we will try to contact the next person on the emergency pick up list. If the person decides he/she is capable of leaving with the child further action will be taken by the program.

If there is a custody issue involving your child, please inform the Director. If legal custody is given to only one parent, the preschool program will need to have copies of any court orders/agreements that support this custody. If one parent is not permitted to pick up your child we will also need copies of those orders/agreements from the court. The same goes for other family members that may or may not have legal rights to pick up/see a child in our program. Unless we have legal documentation stating that a particular parent is the custodial parent with sole legal/physical custody of the child in question then we cannot legally keep the other non-custodial parent from coming to the school and picking up the child. If a problem occurs during school hours, the police will be called. **Please solve these issues in court and not in our classrooms in front of other children/staff.**

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT & TERMINATION

The Y believes that there are alternatives to punitive discipline which can effectively manage behavioral problems and develop a strong sense of community in the program. All staff are trained in these techniques and operates according to a single, consistent vision of appropriate discipline and behavior management. No child is ever subjected to abuse or neglect, cruel, unusual, severe or corporal punishment including: any type of physical hitting, punishments which subject a child to verbal abuse, ridicule or humiliation; denial of food, rest or bathroom facilities, punishment for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, or punishment related to eating or not eating food.

Our priority in behavior management is a preventative one. We believe that if children are placed in a rich, appropriately designed, well organized and creative environment there is little reason or temptation for children to involve themselves inappropriately. Teachers work to get to know each participant as an individual with a particular style of likes and dislikes, and activities are made available to appeal to a wide range of personal styles. Within a group setting, however, individuals must learn to sometimes waive their personal preferences in deference to routines and limits that allow the group to work effectively as a whole. In order to accept that responsibility, children must feel they are an integral part of the group and its rules and routines. Therefore, we encourage children to think of rules and limits as a group, as well as the consequences for breaking those rules. Giving children a sense of ownership in the program is a way of teaching them to consider the effects of their behavior on others.

When an individual child's actions go against the rules and limits set by the group, or are dangerous or hurtful to others, we believe that a standard, predictable and consistent routine of consequences carried out by the staff is most effective. At all stages of discipline, an emphasis is placed on communication with the child in an effort to better understand their motivations as well as to explain why a particular behavior cannot be allowed. We point out and discuss facts of behavior without ever attacking a child's character. We practice mediation and problem solving techniques whenever possible in an effort to get children to learn how to recognize for themselves the responsibilities of safe and thoughtful behavior. The following is an example of a behavior management technique that may be followed:

- First, a simple statement pointing out the circumstances surrounding the inappropriate behavior to give the child the chance to re-direct themselves.

- If repeated, a child may be asked to choose between changing a behavior or changing their activity.
- If the behavior continues, a child might be restricted from a particular activity all together.
- A "thinking time" may be used if a child's actions are continuously inappropriate/dangerous to them self or others. This process includes a short period of time (1 minute/year of age) spent sitting on their own in order to allow him/her to regain composure.
- If a child exhibits extremely dangerous or consistently inappropriate behavior, parents will be called and the child will be sent home for a period of time that will be specified by the Director. A conference between the parent, child's teachers and the Director will be mandatory before a child may return to the program. Behavior Logs/Incident Action Plans will be used and presented during these meetings. In cases where the staff notes issues for children which may indicate physical or developmental difficulties, parents will be referred to the Greenfield Public School Department (772-1320) and an Early Childhood Screening will be strongly recommended. A parent may also choose to go through their pediatrician to seek outside agencies that could help their child. Written record of any referral will be kept in the child's file. Parents will be asked to share the results of screenings with Preschool staff, and inform them of any recommendations. If a parent fails to take advantage of this screening or does not take action to find outside agencies that may help their child, the Director will follow up in two weeks, requesting a visit by the parent to possibly observe the child in the program and to again meet with the teaching team and the Director. Again, written record will be kept in the child's file.
- Continued behavioral problems (if the child is not in a screening/treatment process) will result in a probationary period of two weeks being set.
- If behavioral problems continue, treatments from outside agencies are ineffective, the program is unable to provide such treatment for the child or lack of parental cooperation and support this will then lead to dismissal from the program. The program will dismiss the child in an appropriate way so he/she will understand.

The Y reserves the right to terminate any child not suited to the program. Circumstances under which termination may occur include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Child is not suited to the group of children enrolled. Child displays inability to adjust after sufficient time has elapsed.
- ✓ Child has needs that require outside assistance and the staff is not equipped to meet these needs in a manner appropriate for the child or the Preschool.
- ✓ Parent does not seem content with the Preschool and has needs that require a program more conducive to their own philosophy of learning.
- ✓ Parents do not pay tuition on a timely basis will receive notice of termination.
- ✓ Lack of parental action, cooperation and or support regarding a child's continued behavioral disruptions to the classroom, other children, and staff's ability to do their jobs.
- ✓ Lack of parental cooperation with the YMCA preschool policies as stated in the handbook.

Every effort will be made to make the transition as smooth and comfortable as possible for all involved parties. Parents will be given two weeks' notice before termination is to begin unless the health and safety of children or staff is in jeopardy. Parents will also be given written documentation of the reasons for termination.

TOILETING PROCEDURE

Children entering the pre-school classroom do not have to be fully toilet trained.

- ✓ No child is punished, verbally abused, or humiliated for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.
- ✓ Children wash their hands with soap and running water after toileting and before snacks and meals or handling food. Staff members wash their hands with soap and running water when preparing food or after assisting children with toileting or toileting themselves. Individual paper towels are used to dry hands.
- ✓ Parents must provide pull-ups, swim diapers, and wipes if your child is not fully toilet trained.
- ✓ Clothing soiled by feces, urine, vomit or blood is wrapped in a double plastic bag then placed in the child's cubby to be taken home. Clothes with feces will not be washed or rinsed before being bagged.

- ✓ Children will be supervised at all times while using the toilet.

Parents MUST provide a complete change of clothing as needed for their child to be kept in the classroom. A limited supply of Preschool owned clothing is available for emergencies. Center-owned clothing must be laundered and returned to the Preschool as soon as possible so it will be available when needed again.

TOYS

Guns, swords, action figures and toys that portray violence and could hurt another child even in pretend are not allowed! Play guns weapons and other toys that encourage aggressive play are never welcomed in the classroom. Building cooperation and concern for one another are working principles of the Y Academy on Main program. Items that promote aggression, competition and hostile feelings are not permitted in the Y Academy on Main. They will be taken and put aside until dismissal so please keep them at home! We provide a variety of toys and change them regularly. Please keep home toys at home. They often become a problem at Preschool. They get lost or broken and the children get upset; the children give the toys away without permission from parents and the children argue over the toys and their ownership. Classroom teachers may choose to have special "sharing days". Please make sure your child is not sneaking home toys to school in their backpacks. Also, please leave money at home. There is no reason for your child to have money at school. The only exception to this policy is for rest time items in which your child may bring **one soft cuddly toy to have at rest time** or if they need to use it during the day as a method to comfort themselves.

SEPARATING FROM PARENTS

Leaving your child at the Y Academy on Main may be difficult at first - for both your child and you. Our staff understands how difficult it is to leave your child in a new situation and we will do whatever we can to help this transition. Some children adjust easily and will quickly join in an activity. Others may have difficulty saying goodbye. It is entirely normal and natural for children and parents to have some anxiety or concerns about separating. Parents are welcome to stay with their children as long as they feel they need to. However, it is important to understand that your child's anxiety is heightened by ambivalence. Once you have decided to go, carry through with this and leave.

Before arriving at the program in the morning, talk with your child about whom she/he will see and what she/he will do with friends there. Sometimes it is helpful to make a "goodbye plan" in advance with your child. For example, "We will read one story together and then I will go" or "When the big hand is on the ten I will leave." Be firm but reassuring and consistent with your separation routine. Tell your child about where you are going and when you will return. It is easy to feel that you are giving added support to your child when you agree to "one more story" or a "little bit longer." Your child, however, may misunderstand your ambivalence to mean that the program is not a safe place to be left. Please ask the teachers for assistance when you need help in saying goodbye. The staff will call you if your child has an unusually difficult time after you have gone, or feel free to call and check in with one of the educators. Remember the more relaxed the parent, the more relaxed the child.

SNACKS and LUNCH / SPECIAL DIETS & ALLERGIES

We follow parental and physicians orders for restrictions and allergies. All allergies will be conspicuously posted and available to all staff members. Please note that due to recent changes in EEC regulations any child with a diagnosed food allergy/intolerance will be required by the state to have an Individual Health Care Plan filled out legibly and signed by the child's physician along with any other necessary Allergy Action Plans and Medication Consent Forms (i.e. in the case of epi-pens). Parents must provide their child(ren) with healthy food choices for a morning and afternoon snack. Please see below for suggestions. In addition to their snack, please be sure your child also has either 100% fruit juice or a water bottle to drink. They should have a water bottle at all times so that they may drink whenever they are thirsty.

The following is a sample list of some snacks that are appropriate: Vegetables & dip, cheese & crackers, apples & peanut butter, fruit salad & crackers, bagels & cream cheese, crackers & peanut butter, cottage cheese & crackers etc.

Children will also need to bring their own healthy lunch each day. Parents are required to provide healthy and nutritious lunches that follow the USDA Federal Food Guidelines as staff of the Y Academy on Main are required by the state to ensure that children's meals conform to USDA Guidelines. Healthy Lunch Suggestions follow. Please use an ice pack to keep your child's lunch cold. We will not be able to heat lunches because of time and "hot spots" that microwaves cause. Please put preheated lunches in an insulated thermos to help lunch stay warm. Please be conscientious of what and how much you pack for your child.

MyPyramid for Preschoolers



Use MyPyramid to help your preschooler eat well, be active, and be healthy.

You are the most important influence on your child. You can do many things to help your children develop healthy eating habits for life.

HEALTHY LUNCH SUGGESTIONS

- Fat Free or Low Fat Milk, 100% Fruit Juice or Water to drink
- Fruits – ¼ - ½ cup (Fresh, canned in water or own juice)
- Vegetables – ¼ - ½ cup (Fresh, canned, raw or cooked) – in salads or bite sized pieces
- Protein – meat, fish, poultry, cheese, eggs, peanut butter, beans, or nuts
- Whole Grains – bread, tortillas, pasta, rice

Please DO NOT send gum, candy, fruit snacks, soda/sugary/energy type beverages, or fast foods with your child!! We WILL NOT serve them nor allow the child to have them while in our program.

Please vary your child's lunch providing them with a variety of textures and flavors and provide them with appropriately sized portions and a few choices (too many choices may be hard for some children). Children are encouraged to eat healthy foods before unhealthy foods. We are mandated by the state to monitor children's lunches to ensure that they meet the USDA Guidelines. Foods that do not meet these guidelines will be sent home. Please refer to the MyPyramid.gov website for more information and suggestions. And as always the staff is available to give suggestions as well.

ORAL HEALTH – DUE TO COVID-19, WE HAVE SUSPENDED TOOTHBRUSHING DURING PROGRAM HOURS FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE!

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Every family is encouraged to involve themselves in the program as much as they wish. Ways to support the program include bringing in preschool wish list items or snack items, donations of materials, offering to share a particular skill or craft, participating on field trips, offering to help make or prepare activities, or simply giving suggestions. Parents are invited to give their input about the program by speaking with the teachers of the Y Academy on Main. All parents are welcome to visit the program at any time. Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns with their child's classroom teachers but in the event that your child's teacher is unable to resolve the problem/issue/concern, the following people should be contacted in this order:

- 1) The Y Early Education Director (Lisa Porter)
- 2) The Y Child Care Director (Kara Younger)

- 3) The Y CEO (Grady Vigneau)
- 4) The Y Board President

Complaints may be verbal or written, and will be addressed as quickly as possible with feedback to parents. The program is licensed by the state of Massachusetts through the Department of Early Education & Care (ECC). Complaints or issues that affect our qualification for licensure may be directed to the Office at (413) 788-8401.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Most parents today lead busy lives - they have full time jobs, go to school or both! With this in mind, we are respectful of their time and try to arrange our communications and contacts in a way that will fit into their schedules. It is important that we develop close communication with each parent whose child attends the Y Academy on Main program. This relationship begins at the enrollment meeting and continues through regular contacts with your child's teachers. We encourage parents to help us make decisions in all matters concerning the education and well-being of their children at the Y Academy on Main. We respect and welcome parent input. We encourage parents to visit and share their comments.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent Conferences are held twice a year – Fall and Spring. At this time parents will receive a written progress report detailing their child's development. Parents are welcome to set up a time to discuss their child's progress at Preschool at any time during the year. All information is kept confidential.

DAILY COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to share information about their children on a daily basis with their child's teachers. If any changes occur in a child's health or home environment, please alert his/her teachers. Since teachers are often busy working with children, it is best to **schedule time** with your child's teachers or the Director for any in-depth discussions about your child (anything more than a 5 minute talk). Feel free to email your child's teachers or the Director. The teachers will get back to you ASAP. Please be respectful of the staff's personal time and their need to follow the Y's policies regarding confidentiality. Do not approach them outside of the classroom in public places, YMCA hallways or the Y parking lot with concerns, questions or conversations about your child or the program. Always schedule a time to have a meeting about these things in private.

PARENT INFORMATION BOARD

Notices are posted on the Classroom Parent Information Board. These include the monthly activity plans, Special Events, Field Trip Sign ups, and the Wish List. Please check this board in your child's classroom daily for information about the activities of each day and special events.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial assistance is available through the Y to eligible families made possible by the United Way and the YMCA Sustaining Campaign for Youth & Families. Parents may request an application and must submit appropriate proof of income. A limited amount is available on a first come first served basis. Awards are based on family size, income, expenses, and amount of funds available. We also accept Voucher Day Care through Child Care Resources and NACCRRRA (National Network of Child Care Resource and Referral which is a military subsidy).

TUITION/PAYMENTS

Monthly tuition payments are due at least 1 month in advance. Payments are based on yearly tuition, not attendance. The yearly tuition is divided evenly into either 10 monthly payments (for a school year) or 12 monthly payments (for extended year to include the summer program). An initial \$150 non-refundable* deposit is due upon acceptance to the program. This amount will be subtracted from your LAST month's tuition bill. *Non-refundable terms apply to those who decide to not use our program once a child is accepted. This amount will also be kept for administration and penalty charges if you choose to terminate your contract early. **IF** a child is NOT accepted into our program, then we will refund the whole initial deposit.

LATE PAYMENTS

You will be charged an additional \$10 a day for a late fee after the 15th of each month. Monthly payments are due on the 10th of each month with a 5-day grace period.

Tuition contracts must be signed by the parent. The contract is written for either 36 or 48 weeks and indicates the need for Early/Late Enrichment Care or both. **You must give at least a 4-week PAID notice if you are terminating the contract.**

TRANSPORTATION

Most of our field trips are local, within walking distance. Occasionally we will use the F.M. Kuzmeskus Bus Company for fieldtrips that are further away. Parents/guardians will be notified prior to these events and signed permission slips will be required for any trips that require being transported by bus. Parents have already signed a general permission slip for children to participate in walking fieldtrips. Occasionally we will ask that one be signed if the trip we are taking requires parents to pay in order for their child to participate.

HEALTH AND MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

Dispensing medication – ALL Prescription and Non-Prescription medications will only be administered with both parental and physician written permission (**a prescription bottle will not suffice as physician permission**). This means that a Medication Consent Form must be filled out legibly which details the name of the medication, the exact dates and times that the medication needs to be administered, why it's being administered and what the possible side effects are of the medication. ALL medications must be provided to the school in their original containers. In the case where medications are split between home and school, the school must have the medication in the original bottle. At no time or under any circumstances are medications for chronic health conditions, allergies, and asthma to travel between home and school. We must at all times have those medications in our possession which may mean that you will need a second prescription or have the pharmacy split the amount between two containers. In the case of controlled substances such as medications used to treat ADHD, parents will need to come at a time that is convenient to the staff to follow our protocols for handling such medications. These types of medications need to be counted when they are brought into school in front of the parent, the parent needs to sign off on the amount counted and then it will be stored in a locked box inside our first aid cabinet. Any time that medication is administered the pills will be counted before and after administration and signed off on by two staff members. Topical medications will be administered with parental written permission. All medications must have the first dosage administered by the parent at home in case of an allergic reaction. All medication will be kept in locked areas out of children's reach. Emergency medications will be kept out of a child's reach in our classroom Emergency Backpacks which accompany us whenever we leave the classroom. All long-term, emergency or daily medications must be in date and replaced by the expiration date regardless of the amount left. All administration of medications will be logged in the child's file.

The Department of Early Education and Care as per the state of Massachusetts now requires all schools to have Individual Health Care Plans (in addition to the Medication Consent Form) for any child who has been diagnosed with a chronic health/behavioral condition which requires medication as part of the child's preventative/controlling course of treatment to be filled out legibly by the child's physician. These conditions include but are not limited to ADHD, Autism, other Behavioral conditions which are being medicated, Allergies such as food, medication, seasonal, etc. in which emergency medications may need to be administered, Asthma in which emergency medications may need to be administered and chronic health conditions that may cause symptoms that we may otherwise send a child home for (i.e. frequent bouts of diarrhea for which an illness is not the cause). In the case of Asthma and Allergies (regardless of what the physical cause is) Asthma/Allergy Action Plans will also need to be legibly filled out by the child's physician. Any of the above forms mentioned will only be valid for one year or until changes in the child's condition and/or medications occur. At that time, all forms will need to be renewed. Please remember that we need one set of medical forms per diagnosed condition (not one set per child). Please know that if a child comes to our program having been diagnosed with what we consider to be a chronic health condition that may need to have emergency medications administered you will be required to provide us with those necessary medications regardless of whether they are only needed in certain instances or not. Conditions can change on a dime and if

a child with asthma or an allergy suddenly experiences an attack and we don't have those emergency medications on the premises then that child's life could be in real danger. At no time will a child with a diagnosed condition in which emergency medications may need to be administered be allowed in school if we do not have the appropriate forms filled out and the required medications in hand at all times. It's a matter of liability and the safety and well-being of the child in our care at stake. If in the case that a medication is being stopped then we need a signed order from the physician to stop use of a medication. If in the case of a diagnosed condition that no longer exists or no longer needs treatment then we will need a signed letter by the physician stating as such. All forms sent to us by the physician/parents are subject to approval by the Y Academy on Main staff and their Health Care Consultants. If forms are not written legibly, completely or use medical terminology/abbreviations then those forms will be denied and returned to be filled out properly and the child may not return to school until we have them. All Y Academy on Main staff must be trained in the child's illness, medications being used, and their side effects and in the administration of those medications either by the child's physician, the child's parent with the physician's signed permission or the Y Academy on Main's Health Care Consultants. All Y Academy on Main staff that may be responsible for the administration of any medication has been trained in the Massachusetts Standards of Medication Administration in Child Care.

ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL

Studies have documented that the primary way disease is transmitted in child care settings is by contaminated hands. Children sneeze or cough into their hands and rub their noses and then handle objects and each other. The best way to break this cycle is through a rigorous hand washing program.

In order to prevent illness of teachers and children in our school we engage in the following recommended child care hygiene practices:

- ✓ Children are taught proper hand-washing techniques (use running water & soap, scrub front and back of hands, wrists and between fingers, rinse well, dry with a disposable towel).
- ✓ Teachers assist children with nose blowing in order to reduce contamination of the child's hands. If children sneeze or cough into their hands, they will be asked to wash their hands.
- ✓ Children wash their hands when they arrive at school, after toileting, before snack and lunch and before handling food.
- ✓ Teachers wash hands upon entering and leaving the school, after assisting children with nose blowing and toileting, after toileting themselves and before handling food.

Tables are cleaned and sanitized several times a day according to EEC guidelines. These times include at the start of each day, before and after any meal time or cooking project and at the end of the day.

MILD ILLNESS

COVID-19: PLEASE REFER TO ATTACHED ADDENDUM REGARDING OUR POLICIES FOR COVID-19 STARTING ON PAGE 25 OF THIS HANDBOOK

If a child becomes ill during the program, a quiet area will be provided for them to rest. A parent will be contacted if such an illness requires the child to leave the program. **In most cases your child will need to remain home for the whole next school day after the symptoms have stopped without the use of medications.** Most of these illnesses spread rapidly through a preschool program and this policy is set to help prevent further contamination and illness to others.

Some of the common conditions for which a child will be sent home or must not come to school are:

Temperature - A child will be sent home if she/he is unable to participate in the class activities and has an oral temperature of 101 degrees or higher. **Your child needs to be fever free without the use of fever reducing medications for at least one full school day before returning to the program.** His or her activity level and appetite should also be relatively back to normal.

Diarrhea - A child who has had 2 or more episodes of watery stools will be sent home and must stay home at least one full school day AFTER the diarrhea has stopped. If your child has an allergy or condition which regularly causes diarrhea, please alert the teachers of this. **Please do not send a child who has had diarrhea within the 24 hour period prior to the beginning of each school day.**

Vomiting - A child who has had 2 or more episodes of vomiting will be sent home and must remain home until vomiting has stopped for one full school day. Stomach viruses are highly contagious and can spread through a classroom rapidly. **Please do not send a child who has vomited within the 24 hour period prior to the beginning of each school day.**

Impetigo - This skin infection is characterized by crusted sores which usually appear first in the facial area. Children with this condition **must be on antibiotics for at least one full school day and all lesions should be dry before returning to the program.**

Strep Throat - Strep throat is often indicated by a rash and temperature combined with a sore throat. This condition requires antibiotics and your child **must not return to the program until she/he has been on medication for one full school day. A child may not attend the program while waiting for the results of a strep test.**

Chicken Pox - When a child has chicken pox she/he may not attend the program until all sores are dry and healed over. Children may attend the program after exposure and during the incubation period. Please notify the program when your child has the chicken pox so that we may notify other parents of the exposure.

Head Lice Head lice are very small, light brown insects (less than one-eighth of an inch long) which live only in people's hair. They crawl from head to head or from a person's personal items like a pillow or hat to a head. Head lice can cause intense itching and may make a person very uncomfortable. If your child is found to have a case of nits and/or live lice, you will be asked to treat your child for lice, using medicated shampoo especially meant of treating lice. (In the case of live lice we will send your child home to be treated). Please follow the instructions exactly as they are on the product box, including combing the nits from your child's hair. You will be asked to fill out a Verification of Treatment for Head Lice form and will be required to have your child's head checked by a staff person upon returning to the program. We understand that removal of the nits from your child's hair is a tedious process but it is necessary to prevent re-infestation. If your child is found to still have live lice, your child will be sent home and you will be asked to treat your child again. We will not send a child home for nits but you are still expected to comb and remove as many of the nits as possible to prevent re-infestation from happening.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOUR CHILD IS WELL ENOUGH TO ATTEND SCHOOL IF AND ONLY IF THEY ARE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DAY'S ACTIVITIES.

ABSENCES

If your child will be absent on a given day, please call the YMCA at **413-773-3646 (ext. 431)** to let us know. It is unsettling for both staff and children when a child is absent without explanation. You may leave a message at any time on the Y Academy on Main voice mail if you know your child will be out.

If your child is ill with a contagious disease please notify the program so that we may alert the other parents of exposure and take the necessary precautions at the program. We do send out notices of possible exposure to contagious illnesses but these are always sent by keeping the ill child's name confidential.

EXCLUSIONS

All contagious illnesses must be reported to the Early Education Director or staff person in charge. All parents will be notified whenever there has been a contagious disease reported. The name of the ill child will never be revealed. All reportable diseases will be reported to the MA Department of Public Health and the staff will take necessary precautions and follow exclusion policies as directed by the Dept. of Public Health for any child with a contagious or reportable disease.

In situations when one or more cases of a vaccine-preventable or any other communicable disease are present in a school, all susceptible, **including those with medical or religious exemptions**, are subject to exclusion as described in the Reportable Diseases and Isolation and Quarantine Requirements. **THIS NOW WILL INCLUDE ANY PRESUMED OR CONFIRMED CASES OF COVID-19.**

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of serious, life threatening accident or illness, emergency assistance will be obtained through BHS Ambulance and Franklin Medical Center. Under no circumstances will a victim be left alone, or other children left unsupervised. Parents will be contacted directly after securing emergency assistance. If a parent cannot be reached immediately, the Early Education Director or certified staff member will accompany a child to the hospital if possible based on the program's current staffing. All parents must sign a statement on their child's forms giving the program permission to obtain such emergency medical services. If an emergency occurs while on a field trip, the child will be transported by ambulance to the closest medical facility.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

Emergency evacuation drills are conducted every other month at different times of the program day as determined by the Director. Children and staff practice using different evacuation routes so that the children and staff will be familiar with them. The Director will maintain documentation of the date, time, and effectiveness of each drill in the Fire Drill Log. This documentation will be maintained for five years. These Emergency Evacuation Plans will be posted at all exits. During an emergency evacuation the teacher in charge will be responsible for taking the attendance information and for leading the children out of the building. Assistant teachers and other staff will assist in the evacuation and check for stragglers. A staff member will make a visual inspection of each classroom before exiting the building. All classrooms, once evacuated, will meet on the Church lawn, or in case of an emergency, the library, and wait for the go ahead by a Program Director (or Executive Director) before re-entering the building.

Emergency Contingency Plan:

1. **In case of fire, natural disaster or situation necessitating evacuation of building** - children will be taken across the street to the library and parents will be notified on local radio stations (WPVQ 95.3 & WHAI 98.3), all attempts will be made to contact parents by phone so children can be picked up promptly.
2. **In case of Loss of Water** - If the center is open, there will be water for toilets in bathrooms and drinking water in refrigerator and sanitizer or wipes will be used for hand-washing.
3. **In case of Heat Loss or Power Outage** - The center will close and parents will be contacted by phone and broadcast on local radio stations (WRSI & WHAI).
4. The center will maintain a daily attendance list that is current. Parents and staff are responsible for signing children in and out of the center at arrival and departure times. The attendance list will be kept by the classroom door and be readily accessible in case of an emergency evacuation. The teacher in charge will be responsible for taking the attendance list and accounting for all of the children in the class once they are safely out of the building.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Child Abuse is damage to a child for which there is no "reasonable" explanation. Child abuse includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual molestation and emotional abuse. The increasing incidence of reported child abuse has become a critical national concern. It is a special concern of the Y because of the organization's role as an advocate for children and its responsibility for enhancing the personal growth and development of both children and adults in all Y programs.

For the protection of children, families, members and employees, the Y in Greenfield has established guidelines to aid in the prevention and reporting of child abuse cases. These guidelines are available on request through the Early Education Director to any parent. It is

Mandatory that all staff read and sign this document indicating they understand its content. As a licensed program, the Y Academy on Main staff are considered mandated reporters of any suspected abuse/neglect to a child.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

A. When a sign of possible abuse/neglect is seen, regardless where the abuse may have happened:

1. Program staff will immediately inform the Early Education Director & Youth and Family Director.
2. The Youth and Family Director will immediately inform the Executive Director who will advise the President of the Board.
3. The Y Academy on Main staff will provide a log with the dates, time, and specific details observed, but not limited to the type and location of physical marks or evidence of neglect.
4. The Early Education Director will inform the Department of Child and Family Services (DCF) by filing a 51A form (suspected abuse & neglect). DCF will provide further instructions.
5. Specific program staff will be made aware of suspected abuse to allow further documentation.
6. Further investigation will be determined by DCF.
7. The Department of Early Education & Care (EEC) will also be notified immediately if applicable.

B. In the event the reported incident or suspicion involves an employed staff person or volunteer, and occurring either in the program or during a program related activity, the steps below will occur within 24 hours:

1. The Youth and Family Director will immediately inform the Executive Director.
2. The Youth and Family Director will inform DCF and EEC immediately.
3. The Youth and Family Director will contact the staff member or volunteer concerning suspicions and informing him/her of step #2.
4. The individual will be released from all duties involving supervision of children until all allegations have been cleared or are substantiated. Suspension of employed staff will be with pay, unless the allegations have been substantiated.
5. Staff and volunteers may not contact children or parents involved in an alleged child abuse incident.
6. The staff person in question will be immediately terminated from their position if the allegations have been found to be true.

BACKGROUND RECORD CHECK PROCEDURE

The YMCA Preschool program will adhere to the following process for Background Record Checks:

The EEC review of Licensee(s) / Reviewer(s)

- Anyone with authorization to access the BRC Program Portal must be approved by EEC.
- The Licensee will notify EEC of any change in Licensee or Reviewers and submit appropriate forms to your EEC Licensor for submission.
- The Licensee must only allow approved and current Reviewers access to the BRC Program Portal.

Current Employees, Interns, Volunteers

- The Licensee will submit BRC's at least every three years for all current employees, interns, volunteers, Reviewers and Licensee.
- The Licensee will keep in the employee's personnel file the BRC Consent form, photo identification, and any letters of provisional and/or final suitability generated within the BRC Program Portal.
- A BRC will be submitted whenever the program receives information that may indicate a new background records check is appropriate.
- Programs WILL NOT receive information regarding any adverse findings within the BRC process. All results and findings will be communicated directly between the BRC Unit and the individual applicant via email and the applicant's BRC Program Portal.

Prospective Employees

- The Licensee must assure that a BRC for each new employee over 15 years of age, has been completed prior to offering provisional employment.
- The candidate must submit a signed Consent Form for BRC along with a photo ID.
- The Licensee/ Reviewer will submit the Consent form to BRC unit via the BRC Program Portal (https://brcprogramportal.mass.gov/users/sign_in)
- Once the BRC is submitted in the BRC Program Portal, a Fingerprint Appointment notification letter will be generated automatically and sent to both the program on the portal and the individual applicant via email.
- The applicant is responsible for scheduling the fingerprint appointment within 14 days of receiving this letter.
- Once the fingerprinting has been processed, the three remaining components of the BRC check will be processed.
- If no adverse findings are found, the program and the individual applicant will be notified of the applicant's final suitability determination.
- If adverse findings are found, the program and the individual applicant will be notified of the applicant's provisional status, and the employee may be offered provisional employment pending the determination of final suitability. Provisional status means that an applicant may work in the program only under the direct supervision of an employee who has a determination of final BRC suitability until all matters regarding the applicants BRC status are cleared and final suitability has been issued.
- All communication regarding results, additional documentation needed by the BRC unit will be communicated via email and the applicants BRC portal page directly with the applicant, not the program.

STAFF

As a licensed child care program, all staff at the Y Academy on Main meets qualifications through the state Department of Early Education & Care, including a confidential criminal records check, sexual offenders check and DCF background check. Every staff person is required to take part in a Program Orientation before beginning their job duties as outlined in their signed job description.

We maintain a staff/child ratio of no more than 1:10. We encourage parents to spend a few minutes getting to know our staff by setting up an individual appointment with our Director, or spending a few minutes at pick up time.

All staff are trained in first aid, administration of medications in child care and at least one staff person at all times is certified in CPR.

All educators are certified by the DEEC or are working toward their certification. All educators are required to attend and document yearly professional development trainings. We have aides and volunteers in the classroom who also obtain training hours and have years of experience working with young children. They are all dedicated to the safety, well-being, and education of all our students.

PLAN FOR VOLUNTEERS

All potential volunteers wishing to participate in the Y Academy on Main program must apply and interview with the YMCA's Volunteer Recruiter. The recruiter will assess their interests, experience, and determine preliminarily if the Y Academy on Main would be an appropriate choice for their volunteerism. The recruiter will meet with Y Academy on Main Director to discuss potential volunteers and the Y Academy on Main Director will meet with the appropriate classroom teachers to discuss best days and times before making the final determination if the volunteer can meet the program's needs. Once suitability has been determined the Y Academy on Main Director will meet with the volunteer to discuss days and times of service, and what the volunteer would be interested in doing in the preschool classrooms. A list of possible service ideas will be generated between volunteer and Director. All volunteers will receive an orientation to the program. At no time will a volunteer be left with children unsupervised. All volunteers will be under the direct supervision of an EEC licensed educator. All volunteers will meet EEC compliance with the program's Background Record Check policy. All volunteers are responsible for logging

their hours of service with the volunteer recruiter. At any time, the volunteer, the recruiter and/or the preschool director may terminate volunteer services if needed.

PLAN FOR STUDENT INTERNS

As an EEC licensed program, we are often a possible source to host and supervise student interns from various colleges. The Y Academy on Main Director will collaborate directly with college program coordinators for Student Interns. Interns will follow all policies of the preschool program, as well as the student intern policies of their college. Parents must sign permission forms allowing student interns to complete assignments that may involve observations of individual children, or as part of a group. At no time will student interns be left unsupervised with children and all student interns will be under direct supervision of an EEC licensed educator. The following is a list of responsibilities for student interns. Y Academy on Main Educators serve as mentors to student interns and will directly support them in their responsibilities in addition to meeting regularly with college faculty regarding the student intern's progress.

Student Teacher Responsibilities

Professional Behavior

- Participate fully during your time in the classroom
- Build positive relationships with children, parents, and colleagues.
- Communicate regularly with cooperating teacher.
- Be open to constructive feedback.
- Maintain confidentiality, do not discuss children or families outside of the practicum placement
- Immediately communicate concerns or problems with supervising college faculty.

Classroom Involvement

- Take initiative, ask questions, be curious
- Become familiar with any curriculum materials, guides, etc.
- Observe and listen to the children.
- Observe cooperating teacher's behaviors: verbal and non-verbal cues, transitions strategies, language, problem solving, behavior guidance, etc.
- Plan and implement activities and daily routines according to the practicum requirements.

STAFF MEETINGS AND STAFF TRAININGS

Staff meetings are held monthly. Staff Meetings will be at least two hours in length. They are mandatory for all Preschool staff members to attend.

Annual written evaluations will be done on the performance of all staff members by their direct supervisor. A self-evaluation will also be done by staff members and the results will be compared and discussed. The staff member will sign and receive a copy of these evaluations. Another copy will be kept in the staff member's file in the Personnel Office. Bi-monthly supervision evaluations will also be conducted on each staff person and copies of such evaluations kept in their personnel file.

All Preschool staff are required to attend trainings to increase their skills and competence in working with Preschool children. EEC requires at least 20 hours of training per year. Documentation is required. At least 33% of this training shall be in the area of Diverse Learners. Information about trainings and workshops approved by EEC will be made available to the staff by the Early Education Director. All staff are required by the state to register on the Department of Early Education and Care's Professional Qualifications Registry.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION YMCA IN GREENFIELD Child Care Department

Board President & Board of Directors

Executive Director: Graydon Vigneau ext. 416

Human Resources & Business Manager: Jane Kane ext. 417

Child Care Department Director: Kara Younger ext. 452 or ext. 432

Early Education Program Director: Lisa Porter ext. 431

The YMCA Preschool Program is licensed by the Dept. of Early Education & Care

REFERRAL SERVICES

The Y Academy on Main knows the importance of helping families work together to be their best. We also recognize that at times families can have difficulties because of economic, social, and inter-family member stress caused by substance abuse, death, loss of a job, parental separation or divorce. In these situations the Y will make available to families referral services such as:

Children & Youth Services

Child & Family Services, Greenfield	413-774-6252
Child Care Focus, Northampton	413-582-4218
Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies	800-345-0131
Child at Risk Hotline	800-792-5200
Children's Protective Services, MSPCC, Springfield	413-734-4978
Holyoke	413-532-9446
Department of Early Education & Care	413-788-8401
Franklin County Women & Violence Project	413-774-5489
Franklin/Athol Child Care Services, Voucher	413-772-2177
Parental Stress Line	800-632-8188
REACH Early Intervention	413-774-3785
WIC in Franklin County	413-376-1160
WIC State of MA	800-942-1007
Baby Safe Haven Hotline	877-796-4673

Consumer Products

US Consumer Products Safety Commission Hotline	800-638-2772
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Child Abuse Prevention/Support

Child at Risk Hotline	800-792-5200
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children	800-843-5678
Parental Stress Line	800-632-8188
National Runaway Switchboard	800-621-4000
Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline	800-422-4453

Medical Support, Medicare & Medicaid

Medicare	800-633-4227
Social Security Administration	800-772-1213
MA Department of Public Health	800-627-7968
Bureau of Environmental Health	617-624-5757
MA Dental Society	781-893-4610
MA Medical Society, Physicians	800-322-2303
MA Health (Medicaid)	800-841-2900

Domestic Abuse Prevention/Support

NELCWIT, Greenfield	413-772-0871
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Behavioral & Mental Health Support

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	800-273-8255
Parental Stress Hotline	800-632-8188
Franklin Medical Center	413-773-8557
Franklin County Family Network/Community Action	413-774-2318
WMASS Health Network	877-414-4447
CHD Outpatient Behavioral Health Services	413-774-6252
The Collaborative for Educational Services	413-586-4900
Clinical Support Options	413-774-1000
ServiceNet	413-585-1300

COVID-19 Addendum 21-22

Due to COVID-19, many of our policies and procedures have been altered. Our COVID-19 related changes can be found in our COVID-19 Addendum below. Procedures and policies noted in the COVID-19 Addendum supersede and override any conflicting policies noted below until further notice. All other procedures and policies remain as detailed in the program handbook unless noted here.

In the event that COVID conditions change, our policies will be updated to maintain alignment with best practices as defined by the Department of Early Education and Care and the recommendations of our Health Care Consultant and Local Department of Public Health.

1. Enrollment

Supply Expectations

Masks

Current mask protocols are noted below. These expectations may change if health recommendations change.

- All children at the Y Academy on Main will be required to wear masks while inside the classroom. Masks will not be required while outside.
- All staff will be wearing masks in the classrooms. Fully vaccinated staff are not required to wear masks on the playground. Unvaccinated staff are required to wear masks on the playground at any time when they are closer than 6 feet to another person.
- Teachers may take off their masks briefly in the classroom to take a drink, eat or read to the group (from a distance). Unvaccinated staff will be a minimum of 6' from another person when doing so.
- Masks are required at drop off and pick up by all adults and any child over the age of 2 entering our child care spaces.

Clothing

We will be spending more time outside. This may include time outside in a light rain or on a wet playground. Please be sure that your child has seasonably appropriate outdoor clothing. This includes rain boots and rain jackets on wet days and shoes that can handle grass that is damp with dew. For children who are more inclined to explore the playground with their full bodies, we encourage a pair of rain pants also.

Water Bottles

We encourage you to use a water bottle that has a closing or flip top lid to keep the mouth piece covered.

2. Communication

Parent/Teacher Partnership

Group gatherings may look different this year and we are evaluating how best for families and teachers to connect in safe and healthy ways. For example, parent/teacher conferences or other meetings may happen using a virtual platform as opposed to in-person. Family group gatherings may be restricted to outdoors only. Please feel free to email your child's teachers at any time as this will be the most effective means of communication between all of us.

Communication

- Families will be updated of any closures via phone call and/or email. If there are changes/updates to our program procedures, these will be shared via email.
- The Director is responsible for notifying families if and when an exposure occurs. This information will be shared with families via phone and/or email.

3. Attendance

Health Awareness Protocols

- Families will be asked to maintain physical distancing whenever possible during drop off and pick up. Adult family members, any authorized pick up or drop off person and any siblings/children over 2 will be required to wear masks at drop off and pick up.
- We ask that families minimize the number of people dropping off/picking up and to keep this as consistent as possible.
- Families are asked to be aware of their child's health each day before coming to the program. Please conduct an informal health check each day. If your child is experiencing any COVID symptoms, please keep them at home and consult your child's doctor. These symptoms include:
 - fever, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting, abdominal pain, and unexplained rash.
- Staff will actively monitor children throughout the day for symptoms of any kind, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting, abdominal pain, and unexplained rash.
- Children who appear ill or are exhibiting signs of illness will be separated from the larger group and isolated until able to leave the facility. If any child or staff appears to have severe symptoms, we will call emergency services immediately. Before transferring to a medical facility, notify the transfer team and medical facility if the individual is suspected to have COVID-19. Severe symptoms include the following: extreme difficulty breathing (i.e. not being able to speak without gasping for air), bluish lips or face, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, severe persistent dizziness or lightheadedness, new confusion or inability to rouse someone, or new seizure or seizures that won't stop.
- The program has a non-contact thermometer on site to check temperatures if a child is suspected of having a fever (temperature above 100°F). Special care will be taken to disinfect the thermometer after each use.

Absences

- If your child is ill and will not be attending school, please call by 9:00 am to let your child's teachers know that they will not be in. Please inform us of the symptoms your child may be experiencing so that we can track any illnesses in the classroom.
- Families are asked to contact their child's doctor to discuss any COVID related symptoms and whether covid testing is recommended.

4.School Closures

COVID Related Closures

Communication of closings

- All closings or changes in program schedule will be communicated to families and staff via phone and/or email. All non-urgent changes will be communicated to families a minimum of 48 hours in advance. Unanticipated/urgent closures will be communicated to families as rapidly as possible via phone and/or email.

Reasons for closings

- The program will be required to close at any time if directed to do so by the local or state department of health (or the relevant federal agency). The program may also close pro-actively to address any health related concerns or to clean and disinfect the program space.
- In the event a child or staff member has come in contact with someone who has or is suspected of having COVID-19 or has been diagnosed with or has a probable case of COVID-19, we will consult the local Department of Health. They will determine the length required for any closures of either individual classrooms or the program as a whole.

5.Financial Arrangements

Tuition

Billing in the event of a COVID related closure:

- Families will not be reimbursed for days in which the program is open but for which their child does not attend whether the reason for absence is illness or otherwise.
- If your child is sick or must remain home due to symptoms or contact with someone who may have COVID-19, you will not be refunded any days missed.

6. Health, Safety & First Aid Procedure

Management of Infectious Diseases (Covid-19 and other communicable illnesses)

Monitoring for Symptoms of Illness:

Staff will actively monitor children throughout the day for symptoms of any kind, including:

Fever or chills
Cough
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
Fatigue
Muscle or body aches
Headache
New loss of taste or smell
Sore throat
Congestion or runny nose
Nausea or vomiting
Diarrhea
Unexplained rashes

Children exhibiting signs of illness requiring exclusion will be separated from the larger group.

- We will use a non-contact thermometer to check the temperature if a child is suspected of having a fever (temperature above 100 F). Special care will be taken to disinfect the thermometer after each use.
- **We will strictly enforce the following guidelines:**
 - Any individual with a fever (100.0 F or above), repeated cough, shortness of breath, gastrointestinal upset, new loss of taste/smell, muscle aches, chills/shaking, or any of the other signs of illness will not be permitted in our program. Stay home and away from other people, and contact your healthcare provider to see if you should be tested for COVID-19. Return to school should be in accordance with your child's physician orders and in conjunction with our program policies on communicable illnesses.
 - If you or your child have a positive test for COVID-19 or are symptomatic and presumed to have COVID-19, you should stay home and away from others for a minimum of 10 days from the first day symptoms appeared AND until you or your child have been fever-free for 72 hours (with no fever-reducing medications) and had significant improvement in your other symptoms.
- We will remind families to regularly monitor themselves and their children for COVID-19 symptoms and to keep their children home if they have a fever or any other symptoms. We will remind staff to regularly monitor themselves as well.

In the event of a sick child or staff member with COVID:

- The contact information for the local board of health (Greenfield) is:
Jennifer Hoffman, Health Director: 413-772-1404 ext. 2100
Megan Tudryn, RN, Public Health Nurse: 413-824-5855
Office Address: 20 Sanderson Street, Greenfield, MA 01301
Phone: 413-772-1404

Fax: 413-772-2238

- For those who do not live in Greenfield please contact the local board of health for the town in which you/your children/staff reside for instructions about quarantine and release/return to care and/or work dates.
- We will notify Rachel Katz, our Health Care Consultant and we will contact the Greenfield Board of Health.
- We will also report any confirmed cases or close contacts to the Department of Early Education and Care per their reporting requirements.
- We will close off areas visited by the individual. We will open outside doors and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. We will wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- We will clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment (e.g., tablets, touch screens, keyboards) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- We will notify custodial staff so that they may also do a more thorough cleaning and disinfection.
- An outside company may be contacted to do a thorough disinfecting of any locations in which the ill individual was in.

If a child or unvaccinated staff member has been exposed to COVID-19, regardless of whether the individual has symptoms or not:

- The child or staff will not be permitted to enter the program space and will be sent home. Exposed individuals will be directed to stay home for at least 14 days after the last day of contact with the person who has COVID-19 (or the current quarantine recommendation from DPH).
- We will consult Rachel Katz, our health care consultant, and the local board of health for guidance on quarantine for other children and staff and what additional precautions will be needed to ensure the program space is safe for continued child care services.
- If an exposed child or unvaccinated staff member subsequently tests positive or their doctor says they have confirmed or probable COVID-19, they will be directed to stay home for a minimum of 10 days from the 1st day of symptoms appearing AND be fever-free for 72 hours without fever reducing medications AND experience significant improvements in symptoms. Release from isolation is under the jurisdiction of the local board of health where the individual resides. **If this is the case, notify the Director immediately.**
- If a child's or unvaccinated staff's household member tests positive for COVID-19, the child or unvaccinated staff must self-quarantine for 14 days after the last time they could have been exposed (or the current quarantine recommendation from DPH).
- Vaccinated staff are not required to quarantine as long as they are not experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms.

Exclusion protocols and procedures

- If your child is experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms, they should not come to school. If your child will not be in, we ask that you contact us to let us know by 9 am that morning. We ask that you describe your child's symptoms so that we can effectively track any illness in the program. We also ask that you contact your child's physician, if they are experiencing symptoms that may be COVID-19 related.
- If your child is experiencing symptoms of illness but has not had close contact with someone with COVID-19 or probable COVID-19 or been diagnosed with COVID-19, they must remain home until the symptoms have resolved and they have been symptom free for the time period appropriate for the symptom they are experiencing. This is noted in our Program Handbook under our standard exclusion policies. Depending on the symptom, severity and current community health status, we may ask for a note from your child's physician to return to the classroom.
- For non-COVID-19 related symptoms or illness, all other exclusion criteria listed in our Program Handbook apply.
- If a child or staff member have a positive test for COVID-19 or their doctor tells them that they probably have COVID-19, they should stay home and away from others for a minimum of 10 days from the first day symptoms appeared **AND** been fever-free for 72

hours (with no fever-reducing medications) **AND** had significant improvement in all other symptoms.

- If a child or unvaccinated staff member has had close contact with someone with COVID-19, but are not currently sick, the child or unvaccinated staff member should stay home and monitor for fever, cough, and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day of contact with the person sick with COVID-19 (or the current quarantine recommendation from DPH). They should NOT go to work or child care and should avoid public places for at least 14 days.

Communication Regarding Illness

Families will be notified via phone and/or email regarding any exposure (or potential exposure).

Infection Control

Compliance with our program's Infection Control Policy will be monitored regularly by the Child Care Department Director. All staff are responsible for bringing any situations of non-compliance to the Child Care Department Director. The Y Academy on Main maintains and complies with an Integrated Pest Management Plan. All staff are trained in standard precautions and are expected to follow standard precautions when coming in contact with blood or bodily fluids.

Hand Washing

1. We will be washing our hands more regularly throughout the day.
2. Staff and children shall wash hands with liquid soap and running water, using paper towels to dry, at the following times:
 - a) upon arriving at school
 - b) after coming in from outside
 - c) before eating or handling food
 - d) after toileting or diapering
 - e) after coming into contact with body fluids and discharges (such as nose-blowing)
 - f) after handling school animals and equipment, if any
 - g) after cleaning
 - h) at intermittent times during free play
 - i) before and after any use of sensory play items or sensory tables
3. Additionally Staff will also wash their hands:
 - a) before and after administering medications
 - b) after performing cleaning tasks; after handling trash or using cleaning products.

Equipment Cleaning

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting:

- Cleaning schedule: all areas, materials, furniture, and equipment used for child care are properly cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected according to the frequency per EEC guidelines. Additional targeted, enhanced cleaning will occur on high touch items and anything that has been in contact with bodily fluids, saliva, coughs or sneezes.
- Surfaces are cleaned with soap and water first, then disinfected or sanitized using Simple Green D, an EPA-approved disinfectant/sanitizer for use against the virus that causes COVID-19. A mixture of 24 oz of water to 2 tbsp of bleach may also be used.
- While cleaning and disinfecting, staff must wear gloves as much as possible. After cleaning and disinfecting, they must immediately wash hands for at least 20 seconds, whether gloves were worn or not.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions will be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. These items will be cleaned with water and detergent, rinsed, sanitized with an EPA-registered sanitizer, and air-dried or cleaned in a mechanical dishwasher.

Oral Health

At this time, we are not tooth brushing as noted in the Oral Health Procedures detailed in the Program Handbook due to the potential for contamination.

Medication Administration Policy

- Medication will be administered as detailed in our program handbook.
- Additionally, staff will wear a cloth face mask and gloves when administering any medication. A face shield and over shirt will also be worn when administering inhalers or nebulizers
- Staff will also perform proper hand hygiene before donning gloves to administer medication and again after administering.
- Gloves will be added to the bag containing emergency medications.
- Medication will be administered according to the child's individual health care plan and/or medication consent form.
- Nebulizers will only be administered if absolutely necessary. Nebulizers will be administered in a room separate from the other children and staff will wear a mask, face shield, over shirt and gloves when administering.

7. Volunteers, Work Job Students & Student Teachers

Volunteers, work job students and college student teachers will be required to follow the same protocols as our Y Academy employees.



**Y ACADEMY
ON MAIN**
FRANKLIN COUNTY'S YMCA

2021-2022

Parent Handbook & Policies + Covid-19 Addendum

PLEASE READ, SIGN AND RETURN TO PROGRAM

I acknowledge that I have received and read in its' entirety the Y Academy on Main Program's Parent Handbook and Policies and the Covid-19 addendum. I agree to abide by the policies that are referred to in this Handbook. I understand that failure to do so may result in disciplinary action which could include termination of my child's enrollment in the Y Academy on Main Program.

Child's Name: _____

Printed Parent(s) Name: _____

Parent(s) Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please note that your signature indicates to the Directors and Staff of the Y Academy on Main Program that you have **actually** read the Parent Handbook and Policies in its' entirety and you will be held accountable for upholding our program's policies. This will be kept in your child's permanent file.