

YMCA STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

In order to protect YMCA staff, volunteers and program participants, at no time during a YMCA program may a staff person be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff can see them.

- Staff must never leave a child unsupervised.
- Restroom supervision: Staff will make sure that suspicious or unknown individuals do not occupy the restroom before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff (not being alone with the child.) If staff are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. Always send children in pairs and, whenever possible, with staff.
- Staff should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs, this includes, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. When this not feasible, staff should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
- Staff shall never abuse children, including:
 - Physical abuse – striking, spanking, shaking, slapping
 - Verbal abuse – humiliating, degrading, threatening
 - Sexual abuse – inappropriate touching or verbal exchange
 - Mental abuse – shaming, withholding love, cruelty
 - Neglect – withholding food, water, basic care
- Any type abuse will not be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.
- Staff must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Staff will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is to be used only in pre-determined situations necessary to protect the child or other children from harm, and is only to be administered in a prescribed manner and must be documented.
- Staff will conduct a health check of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Any questionable marks or responses will be documented.
- Staff will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion or culture.
- Staff will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
- Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, or staff.
- While the YMCA does not discriminate against an individual's lifestyle, it does require that in the performance of their job they will abide by the standards of conduct set forth by the YMCA.
- Staff must appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired. Clothes should completely cover the navel, midriff and lower back areas of the body. Low cut tops are not permitted. Ripped pants or jeans are not permitted.
- Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours is prohibited.
- Smoking or the use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents during working hours is prohibited.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing of intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
- Staff must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.
- Staff will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
- Staff may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to a staff member's home. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to administrator approval.
- Outside of the YMCA, staff are prohibited from communicating directly with children they meet in YMCA programs. This includes communication by means of telephone, cell phone or e-mail, including initiating or responding to messages or instant messages. Staff are not permitted to give any personal information, including home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers or e-mail addresses to children nor may they ask for this information from children.

- Staff are not to transport children in their own vehicle.
- Staff may not date program participants under 18 years of age.
- Under no circumstance should staff release a child to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA).
- Staff are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend training on the subject, as instructed by the supervisor.