



Child Care and Early Learning Centre Family Information Guide August 2026



Shine On

Welcome to the YMCA of Northeastern Ontario!

The YMCA puts the interest of your child as its top priority and values parents and guardians as the experts of their children. We look forward to embarking on a partnership with you to ensure your child reaches their full potential.

We hope that you find the enclosed information helpful in your child care journey with the YMCA. At the YMCA, we have an open-door policy, and your feedback is always welcome and appreciated. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any member of our Child, Youth & Family Development team.

Thank you for choosing the YMCA of Northeastern Ontario Licensed Child Care Services.

Respectfully,

Rob Groccia,
Vice President Operations,
Child Care

Table of Contents

Good Start Checklist	3
Inclusion and Communication	5
Weemarkable	6
Program Information	7
Financial Information and CWELCC	10
Policies and Procedures	16
Health & Well-Being Policies	24
Anaphylaxis Policy	25
Governing Bodies	29
Addressing Parental Concerns	30
YMCA Curriculum	32
Program Statement	34
Purpose, Vision, Values and Other Services	42

Good Start Checklist

We Want to Hear from You!

- Spend time with your child's educator in the morning when you arrive to share any pertinent information that will help us care for your child.
- Notify the program if your child has any food or other allergies.
- Let us know about your child's toilet training needs.
- If your child is sick or will be absent, please call the program by 9:00am.
- If you move, change jobs or change any of your telephone numbers, please let the program know.
- Notify the program if someone different will be dropping and/or picking up your child.
- Have a back-up plan for child care when your child is ill and cannot attend the program.
- Please remember that your child is busy learning through play and will get messy. When dressing your child for care in the morning, please remember this when choosing clothing.



Getting Started: What Should Children Bring?

- Label all your child's clothing and personal items, including diaper cream.
- Keep two extra sets of clothing at the Centre for your child.
- Indoor running shoes and socks are required. (Flip-flops and crocs are not considered safe for play.)
- Bring outerwear each day for your child (remember to label everything).
- Bring non-aerosol sunscreen (labeled with your child's name).
- Sheets will be provided for the cribs and cots in your child's room. We will wash them weekly.
- Provide a blanket and pillow (optional) for nap time. Blankets are to be taken home on Friday to be washed and returned on Monday morning.
- Comfort items such as blankets and stuffed toys are welcome, however, the YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- Provide a weekly supply of diapers and wipes, if needed. Cloth diapers may be used only if a disposable liner is provided, and soiled cloth diapers must be taken home daily.
- Outside food is not permitted to ensure a safe environment for all our children. If your child has food restrictions, please notify the Child Care Supervisor so arrangements can be made.
- School-aged children must bring a lunch that meets our Bagged Lunch requirements (page 26) on all non-instructional days.

Good Start Checklist

Infant/Toddler

- 2 complete changes of clothing
- Seasonal outdoor clothing
- Lightweight and breathable blanket for rest time (*Toddler Only*)
- Diapers and wipes
- Bottles and/or sippy cups
- Refillable water bottle
- Formula or expressed milk, if your child has not yet transitioned to milk. (For children under two years of age, the Health Unit recommends 3.25% milk.)
- Sunscreen (non-aerosol)
- Hat
- Appropriate indoor footwear (flip flops and crocs are not considered safe for play)



Preschool

- 2 complete changes of clothing
- Seasonal outdoor clothing
- Blanket for rest time
- Diapers/Pullups and wipes (if needed)
- Sunscreen (non-aerosol)
- Hat
- Appropriate indoor footwear (flip flops and crocs are not considered safe for play)
- Refillable water bottle

School-Aged

- Complete change of clothing
- Seasonal outdoor clothing
- Backpack or gym bag
- Appropriate indoor footwear (flip flops and crocs are not considered safe for play)
- Hat
- Refillable water bottle
- Nut-free lunch*
- Sunscreen (non-aerosol)
- Insect Repellent (Optional)

**On PD Days, please provide your child with a nutritious, nut-free lunch. The YMCA provides morning and afternoon snack unless your child has a specified diet. Families will be notified in advance of any special hot lunch days during PD Days or school breaks.*

Inclusion and Communication

Inclusion

In keeping with Our Purpose, Our Vision and Our Values, the YMCA believes in the development of healthy and confident children. We're committed to treating children with respect and dignity to help them grow in a safe, nurturing and learning environment to reach their full potential.

Diversity and social inclusion are central to our work at the YMCA. We believe that all children and families should have an inclusive and respectful experience in our programs.

- Every child is a unique individual and adds value to our program.
- Parents and families are involved, consulted and informed partners with YMCA educators and volunteers.
- YMCA educators and volunteers strive to ensure the environment and programs are adapted to meet the needs of all children.
- YMCA educators and volunteers seek out community partners to enhance our ability to support children with special needs through training and consultation.
- Specialized Services are available in many of our programs through Community Partnerships.

Privacy Policy

The YMCA strives to ensure that volunteers and staff conduct their relationships with each other, participants and all other Association contacts with integrity, good judgment and fairness. The YMCA respects the rights of individuals as to the protection of their personal information. The YMCA is committed to maintaining the confidentiality, privacy and accuracy of personal information it collects, uses and discloses about its participants, members, donors, parent/guardians, children, staff and volunteers.

Parent/Guardian Partnership

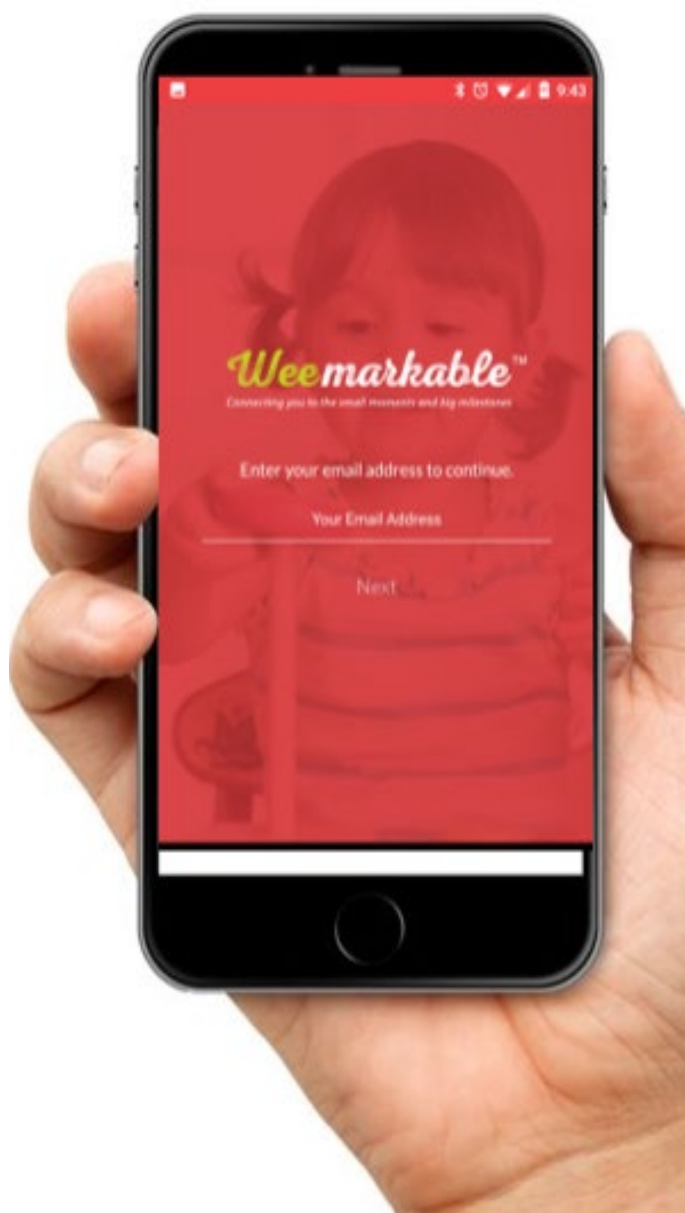
Parental involvement is a key element to the success of your child's experience in YMCA Child Care.

Participation can include verbal or written feedback, sharing information about your child's development, attending meetings or events.

In addition, the YMCA sends out an Annual Family Survey to help provide us with feedback to ensure that we are providing your child with the best possible care. The surveys are shared with the educators to give them your positive feedback and/or recommendations.



Weemarkable



Weemarkable App

We're making it easier for our YMCA Infant, Toddler and Preschool Child Care families to connect to the small moments and big milestones of their child's day, through our YMCA app – Weemarkable. Weemarkable is the window into your little one's day - from wherever you are. It's the app you love to get notifications from - as you receive messages and photos sharing in their excitement and fun. It keeps your mind at ease with the ability to access important child care notices, photos, milestones, educator observations, menu information and direct to educator messaging with just a tap. And most importantly, even when you can't be with them, it's Weemarkable how connected you'll be. Please speak to your supervisor and enroll in Weemarkable today.

It's the app you love to hear from...

- Follow all your children registered in YMCA Infant, Toddler and Preschool Child Care on one feed.
- Direct messaging to and from your child's educators.
- Review your child's weekly menu.
- Daily educator observations about their play, nap and meals.
- Integrated with YMCA [Playing to Learn](#) Curriculum.
- Important notifications, such as centre closures due to weather, sent directly to your mobile device.
- Photos of your child engaged in learning.
- Add additional followers, such as grandparents, to your child's profile and customize the content they can view completely safe and secure.

YMCA Child Care families can access it free for Apple and Android devices.

Program Information

Hours of Operation

At the YMCA, our standard hours of operation range from opening between 6:30 am-7:30 am and closing between 5:30 pm-6:00 pm, depending on the program.

It is important to note that centre operations are determined by community needs. Please see your center's posted hours of operation, and/or feel free to speak with the child care supervisor.

Child Care Services Offered

We are pleased to offer the following Licensed Child Care and School-Age Services:

- Full Days for Infant, Toddler and Preschool Children
- Before and After School for School-Aged Children
- PD Days and School Breaks for School-Aged Children
- Summer Programs (July & August Full Days) for School-Aged Children
- Family Grouping for Infant to School-Age Children

Flexible Child Care Services

The YMCA understands the diverse needs of families when it comes to having access to high-quality, flexible child care. As we continue to assess and listen to the needs of our communities, we do our very best to accommodate them. We are pleased to offer matched part-time (full day) care (2 or 3 days a week), matched with another family (Toddler, Preschool & School-Age).



Waiting List

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario belongs to centralized child care waitlist registries for all children through your local municipality.

Families can register using the following links:

North Bay: onehsn.com/nipissing/ux_2_0

Parry Sound:

onehsn.com/parrysound/ux_2_0

Sudbury: onehsn.com/sudbury/ux_2_0

or dial 311

Markstay: 1 (705) 853-1486

Timmins: 1 (705) 360-4381

Please note, there is no fee for a family to be placed on our waiting list.

Available child care spaces are to be filled by families on the waiting list according to the ordinance of sequential dates as indicated on their child care request. However, priority will be given to: families transferring from other YMCA Child Care Centers, children attending the school where we have a school-age program, and siblings of YMCA registered children and our own staff's children and the children of staff within the school.

If families cannot be reached, contact will be attempted again the next business day. If they cannot be reached, or do not return our call within 2 business days, the next person on the list will be contacted. A family has 24 hours after initial contact has been made to confirm their acceptance of the child care space.

Families on the waitlist can contact the supervisor at any time to determine their standing on the waiting list.

Program Information

Tour

Once you have been contacted by administration, you and your child will be invited for a tour and orientation. This practice will help to ensure families are well informed about our program philosophy, curriculum, and that our programs meet your child and family's needs. If the family and centre are a good fit, the registration process will continue.

Registration

To register, parents/guardians will receive a registration package. All forms must be returned one week prior to your child beginning child care. It is crucial that all information be completed, including a pre-authorized payment form with either a void cheque or credit card information, immunization record and emergency contacts to ensure the safety of your child. If a child's care is being paid for by more than one payer/account, both payers must sign our pre-authorized agreement.

Personal Belongings

Items that are brought into a program from home must be labelled with the child's name. Please be advised that the YMCA is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

Your Child's Toys

Our centres have a variety of age-appropriate toys and activities for your child to enjoy, and children are encouraged to share as part of their learning experience. We ask that children keep their personal toys at home.

Fun Can Be Messy

Even the oldest children can get wet during water play or cover themselves in paint. Although all paints and markers in our centres are washable, we suggest children wear comfortable, washable clothing you wouldn't worry about being spoiled.

Keep an extra set (or two) of clothing at the centre for your child. This extra set should change seasonally, and as your child grows. We are careful about looking after each child's personal items; however, we cannot be held responsible for loss or damage to items left at the centre. Please leave all sentimentally important toys and belongings at home.

Sleep Supervision and Position Requirements

YMCA staff are required to follow the guidelines set out in the *Joint Statement on Safe Sleep* from the Public Health Agency of Canada which states that infants under 12 months of age are to be placed on their backs to sleep until such time that they can independently flip over onto their stomachs.

Your physician may recommend otherwise in writing. It is preferred that infants under 12 months do not have any blankets or toys in the crib. The YMCA staff will monitor your infant and remove the item from the crib as soon as they fall asleep.

Families will be consulted respecting their child's sleeping arrangements at the time the child is enrolled and at any other appropriate time, such as at transitions between programs or rooms or upon a parent's request. YMCA staff routinely perform direct visual checks of sleeping children. Anytime a staff member observes a significant change in a child's sleeping patterns or health during sleep it will be communicated to parents and/or guardians.

Program Information

Returning in September

In the spring of each year, we ask that all families complete a "September Child Care Needs" form so that parents/guardians can confirm their children's registration for September. This confirms your child's space and is the basis for billing your child care fees for September. If your child does not need their child care space in September, you must provide two weeks' written notice. If notice is not given, parents/guardians will be billed accordingly. Timely notice for withdrawal allows the YMCA to register a waiting family in child care for the start of school.

Early Drop-Off/Late Pick-Up Policy

An early/late fee of five dollars for the first ten minutes and one dollar per each additional minute will be applied for any hours outside of your registered/agreed upon hours of care.

Early hours would apply during the summer months for our school-age summer camp programs where you have the option to register for Full Day (8:30am to 4:30pm) or Extended Day (7am to 6pm) care. If you register for Full Day care and drop off/are accepted into the program before 8:30am, you will be billed an early fee. Hours may vary by district.

The person dropping off/picking up the child will be asked to sign an early/late pick-up form. Applicable fees will be added to your next payment. If there is an emergency and you are going to be late, please call your centre and/or arrange for someone else to pick up your child. Program registration may be suspended at the discretion of YMCA Management due to consistent early drop-offs or late pick-ups

School Holidays

Care is provided on non-instructional days such as winter vacation, March Break and PD days at most locations. Please discuss arrangements with your supervisor to determine which locations offer this service, as it is based on enrollment.

Vacations & Statutory Holidays

Operating costs for child care programs are prorated, which means that our daily rate is based on the number of days annually. Therefore, there is no reduction in fees for vacation, illnesses, absences, snow days, or statutory holidays, including weather conditions or events out of our control.

YMCA Child Care Programs will be closed on the following statutory holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day.

If a statutory holiday falls on a weekend, our centres will be closed the Friday before or the following Monday. Programs may also close early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, depending on the centre requirements. Fee payment is required for all statutory holidays if they fall on your regularly scheduled days.

The YMCA usually closes its centres for one week during the winter holiday break to allow its staff some well-deserved time with their families to recharge. This often falls on the week including December 25th, please note that during the closure week, families will only be billed for statutory holidays.

Financial Information

Program Cancellations

The YMCA will endeavor to keep programs operating which meet the needs of the community. The YMCA reserves the right to limit program components, and/or locations based on enrollment. Notice will be provided to families should we have to close a program or component.

Program Closure

Any interruption in child care services due to circumstances beyond our control will be communicated to child care families via Weemarkable and via email for School Age families. If a closure occurs while your child is onsite, we will contact you or your emergency contact for you to pick up your child. Closures are not applicable for a refund of your child care fees. If our program is located in a school, we follow the guidelines of the school.

Child Care Fees

Daily fees vary based on the community in which families reside. A list of child care fees can be found on our website, in this document (pg. 11-13) or parents/guardians may ask for a printed copy at any time. We do our very best to keep fees affordable, but from time to time, annual cost of living and increased operational costs are considered in order for us to ensure our programs are in keeping with high-quality standards. Therefore, child care fees are subject to change and a minimum of one month's notice in writing will be provided to families.

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program (CWELCC)

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario is enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program (CWELCC).

We have long advocated for a high-quality licensed child care system that is affordable and accessible. As experts in early learning and child care, we have developed and honed a research-based early learning curriculum that is now

delivered across Canada.

Through CWELCC funding, fees for children under age 6 are capped at a maximum of \$22.00 per day.

Annual Administration Fee

For families registered in the North Bay, Parry Sound and Timmins Districts, there is a \$10 annual administration fee per registered child over the age of 6. This fee is payable upon registration, once your child ages out of CWELCC, and renewed each September while your child is in care.

Fee Payment Schedule and Accepted Payment Methods

Child care fees are paid through pre-authorized payment; either paid fully on the 1st of the month or split between the 1st and the 20th of the month, for the month. We accept void cheque, VISA or MasterCard as methods of payment.

Viewing your Payment Schedule

Your payment schedule will be available to view on the Avocado Parent Portal on the 12th of the month prior (i.e. October's payment schedule will be available on September 12th). Your Parent Portal account will be set up by the Registration and Billing Department upon registration using the email address provided by the payer (unless otherwise advised). You will receive an email from the system prompting you to set up your account.

To view your payment schedule:

- Visit ymcaneo.my.site.com/#/app/ and login,
- Once logged in, select "My Profile",
- Select "Account Statement" then select the "Summary" view to show you your total payment for that date.

If you are experiencing difficulties logging in to your portal, please reach out to the Registration and Billing Department, and they will assist you in resetting your account.

Financial Information

North Bay/Parry Sound and Sudbury

Enrolled Program	Age Range	Base Fee
Early Learning Full Day – 0 to 3.8 years		
Infant	0 – 18 months	\$22.00
Toddler	18 – 30 months	\$22.00
Preschool	30 – 44 months	\$20.79
School Age – 3.8 to 5 years		
Before School Only North Bay / Parry Sound	44 months – 6 years	\$9.00
After School Only North Bay / Parry Sound	44 months – 6 years	\$12.00
Before & After School	44 months – 6 years	\$12.00
PD Days & School Breaks	44 months – 6 years	\$18.43
School Age Summer Camp	44 months – 6 years	\$18.43
School Age Summer Camps Extended Hours (Pre & Post)	44 months – 6 years	\$22.00
School Age – 6 to 12 years		
Before School Only North Bay / Parry Sound	6 – 12 years	\$12.00
After School Only North Bay / Parry Sound	6 – 12 years	\$16.75
Before & After School	6 – 12 years	\$27.90
PD Days & School Breaks	6 – 12 years	\$44.70
School Age Summer Camp	6 – 12 years	\$44.70
School Age Summer Camps Extended Hours (Pre & Post)	6 – 12 years	\$55.85
Non-Base Fees		
Annual Administration Fee	Children who do not qualify for CWELCC	\$10.00 annually North Bay & Parry Sound Only
NSF Fee	All	\$30.00
Early Drop Off / Late Pick Up Fee	All	\$5.00 for the first 10 minutes \$1.00 per each additional minute

Financial Information

Manitoulin/Markstay

Enrolled Program	Age Range	Base Fee
Early Learning Full Day – 0 to 3.8 years		
Infant	0 – 18 months	\$17.55
Toddler	18 – 30 months	\$15.00
Preschool	30 – 44 months	\$12.50
School Age – 3.8 to 5 years		
Before School Only	44 months – 6 years	\$5.30
After School Only	44 months – 6 years	\$10.60
Before & After School	44 months – 6 years	\$10.60
PD Days & School Breaks	44 months – 6 years	\$12.00
School Age Summer Camp	44 months – 6 years	\$12.00
School Age – 6 to 12 years		
Before School Only	6 – 12 years	\$5.70
After School Only	6 – 12 years	\$11.45
Before & After School	6 – 12 years	\$11.45
PD Days & School Breaks	6 – 12 years	\$22.90
School Age Summer Camp	6 – 12 years	\$22.90
Non-Base Fees		
NSF Fee	All	\$30.00
Early Drop Off / Late Pick Up Fee	All	\$5.00 for the first 10 minutes \$1.00 per each additional minute

Financial Information

Timmins

Enrolled Program	Age Range	Base Fee
Early Learning Full Day – 0 to 3.8 years		
Infant	0 – 18 months	\$22.00
Toddler	18 – 30 months	\$19.85
Extended Toddler	18 – 30 months	\$22.00
Preschool	30 – 44 months	\$19.14
Extended Preschool	30 – 44 months	\$22.00
School Age – 3.8 to 5 years		
Before School Only	44 months – 6 years	\$8.00
Extended Before School Only	44 months – 6 years	\$12.00
After School Only	44 months – 6 years	\$11.00
Before & After School	44 months – 6 years	\$12.00
Extended Morning Before & After School	44 months – 6 years	\$13.70
PD Days & School Breaks	44 months – 6 years	\$18.90
Extended PD Days & School Breaks	44 months – 6 years	\$22.00
School Age Summer Camp	44 months – 6 years	\$18.90
Extended School Age Summer Camp	44 months – 6 years	\$22.00
School Age – 6 to 12 years		
Before School Only	6 – 12 years	\$11.60
Extended Before School Only	6 – 12 years	\$22.10
After School Only	6 – 12 years	\$15.30
Before & After School	6 – 12 years	\$26.80
Extended Morning Before & After School	6 – 12 years	\$37.30
PD Days & School Breaks	6 – 12 years	\$47.00
Extended PD Days & School Breaks	6 – 12 years	\$57.00
School Age Summer Camp	6 – 12 years	\$47.00
Extended School Age Summer Camp	6 – 12 years	\$57.00
Non-Base Fees		
Annual Administration Fee	Children who do not qualify for CWELCC	\$10.00 annually
NSF Fee	All	\$30.00
Early Drop Off / Late Pick Up Fee	All	\$5.00 for the first 10 minutes \$1.00 per each additional minute

Financial Information

Government Financial Assistance

YMCA Licensed Child Care programs hold a purchase of service agreement with regional municipal offices. Families can apply for child care fee subsidy by visiting your local municipality's website or by contacting:

North Bay: 1 (705) 474-2125 ext. 15558

Parry Sound: 1 (705) 746-7777

Sudbury: 1 (705) 674-4455 ext. 4279

Manitoulin-Sudbury: 1 (705) 862-7850

Timmins: 1 (705) 268-7722

YMCA Financial Assistance

As a charity that serves all segments of our community, the YMCA provides financial assistance in times of need. This is short-term support made possible due to the generosity of our donors, members, volunteers, staff, corporate and community partners. For more information on how to apply, please speak with your child care program supervisor.

Changes/Withdrawal from Care

The YMCA requires **10 business days'** written notice for all removal of care or withdrawals from care. For camps, the YMCA requires **20 business days'** notice. Please visit our website or speak with your program supervisor to complete the *"Request to Modify Existing Care"* form. We are unable to change your billing until this form is completed and signed-off on by your program supervisor.

Returned Payments (NSF)

If a payment is returned for any reason, the balance owing plus the applicable service charge of \$30.00 will be due. If the balance due is not paid within 7 days of being notified, child care may be suspended until payment is received in full or special arrangements are made with our Child Care Registration and Billing Department.

Collection of Bad Debts

If your care has been suspended due to non-payment or you have departed the YMCA's care with a balance owing on account, the following procedure will be followed. Please note, any outstanding debt with the YMCA including but not limited to Membership and Health, Fitness and Aquatics will jeopardize your use of the YMCA facilities.

1. An email sent to collect bad debt or offer a payment plan.
2. A reminder email and phone call.
3. A letter sent in the mail.
4. A final phone call attempting to collect the full outstanding balance.
5. If none of the above prove successful, the balance will be sent to a collections agency, and access to the YMCA of Northeastern Ontario and its services will be terminated.

Tax Receipts

The YMCA will make available through your portal, your child care tax receipt on or before February 28th of each year, for the prior year's fees. Your tax receipt is accessed through your Avocado Parent Portal, once the tax receipts are available, you will be sent an email.

To access your tax receipt:

- Visit ymcaneo.my.site.com/#/app/ and login,
- Once logged in, select "My Profile",
- Select "Tax Receipt" then select the appropriate year and division ("Child Care").

Should you experience any difficulties, please contact the Child Care Registration and Billing Department (ccbilling@ymcaneo.ca), and they will assist you.

Financial Information

Refund/Credit Policy

There is no reduction in fees for vacation, illnesses, absences, snow days, or statutory holidays, including weather conditions or events out of our control. Fee payment is required for all statutory holidays if they fall on your regularly scheduled days.

Any interruption in child care services due to circumstances beyond our control will be posted on our website, Facebook page and/or Weemarkable. Closures are not applicable for refund of your child care fees. If our program is in a school, we follow the guidelines of the school.

Should you need to make changes to your care or withdraw from care, you are required to comply with our policy for changes in care and withdrawal of care, which states that 10 business days written notice is required (unless otherwise specified). Credits will be processed once paperwork is approved by the program supervisor and submitted.

In circumstances where your child(ren) cannot attend care due to behavioral issues, a staffing issue or other matter within the control of the YMCA, you will be issued a credit/refund for the applicable days.

Families that are still in care will receive their refunded days as credits on their file. These credits will be applied towards future payments. Families always have the option to request their credit be refunded to their original method of payment which can take up to 2 weeks to process. Families no longer in the care of the YMCA have the option of leaving their credits on file for use in other departments within the YMCA of Northeastern Ontario, or have a refund be issued to their original method of payment, which can take up to 2 weeks to process.

Policies and Procedures

Safe Arrival/Departure Policy

Each YMCA location ensures the safe arrival and departure of children through a guided, step-by-step process that all Educators are familiar with.

Safe Arrival procedures include:

- Morning Wellness Check Phone Calls, for all children in all programs
- Afternoon Wellness Check Phone Calls with School and/or Transportation Providers to confirm attendance, and
- Afternoon Wellness Check Phone Calls to Parent/Caregiver for school age children

If a scheduled child does not arrive at their Before School Program, Full Day Child Care program or Home Child Care Program, the following steps will be taken:

1. The supervisor (or designate) will call the parent to ask where the child is.
2. In order to ensure a written record of the call, the time of call will be recorded on the Attendance Sheet or the Log Book in the appropriate column. (see appendix A for examples)
3. The first call will be made in the early morning (i.e. 9:00 am); if the parent does not answer the phone call, the supervisor will leave a message asking the parent to return the call.
4. If the supervisor has still not made contact with the parent by late morning (i.e. 11:00 am) a second attempt will be made to contact the parent.
5. If a half hour later the parent has still not contacted the child care centre, the supervisor will begin reaching out to the Emergency Contacts (1, 2, and 3) to inquire about the child's absence. (see steps next page)

Steps to follow if a parent cannot be contacted to confirm their child's whereabouts:

- If unable to speak with any parent, staff will then attempt to contact the emergency contacts (1, 2, then 3) to ask for their assistance in locating the parent of the child or the child.
- If unable to reach any parent or emergency contact person, the supervisor is to inform the Manager and, **within 15 minutes** of not hearing from anyone about the child's whereabouts, the next step is initiating the YMCA emergency procedure, which is contacting the police (911) and/or Children's Aid Society (C.A.S.).
- A final attempt is made to contact the parent; leaving a message, when possible, about having to contact the police and/or C.A.S. with the time and date.
- Staff are to document in their Log/Message Book the attempts to contact including the date, time and person called and the outcome.
- Additional safety measures per location may be developed unique to that centre.

Safe Arrival of Children (From School)

It is the responsibility of the child's parent to arrange for transportation to and from school to child care. We ask families to provide a written release (**Consent for Transportation of Children (by bus or taxi)**) containing the information of the bus line and approximate time of arrival and/or departure.

Please note that it is the expectation of school boards that children attend the school located within the zone of their residence or the address where a student is picked-up and dropped-off on a daily basis.

Families who have registered their

Policies and Procedures

child(ren) or who wish to register their child(ren) to attend an out of zone school are required to complete an optional zone form that can be obtained from the out of school zone, however, transportation is not guaranteed. This must be taken into consideration before accepting school-age children into care.

Important guidelines for the safety of children upon arrival to our child care programs:

- YMCA staff will escort your child to and from the bus into the YMCA program;
- If in a school where we have a YMCA program, our staff will greet the school-age children into our program. All JK/SK children are escorted by either our child care staff or a school official (and then signed-in by our YMCA staff).
- If the parent has made arrangements for the child to be **transported to and from school via taxi**, the taxi driver must consistently be the same person and must be listed as an authorized pick-up person for your child; and
- Child care staff sign in children immediately upon arrival.

Steps to follow when a child does not arrive from school to our YMCA school-age program:

1. Child care staff is to check if there were phone messages regarding the child's absence.
2. If no messages were received, verify with the child's school to determine if the child has been reported absent and note this on the attendance list (sign-in and out sheet).
3. If the child was or reported absent, there is no need to worry about them. If the child was not reported absent, contact the bus or taxi company to determine whether they are delayed.
4. If bus or taxi company are not

delayed or cannot confirm the child's whereabouts, contact the parent to inquire about the child's absence (Parent 1 first. If not successful, Parent 2); leave a message, if necessary.

Steps to follow if a parent cannot be contacted to confirm their child's whereabouts:

1. If unable to speak with any parent, staff will then attempt to contact the emergency contacts (1, 2, then 3) to ask for their assistance in locating the parent of the child or the child.
2. If unable to reach any parent or emergency contact person, the supervisor is to inform the Manager and, **within 15 minutes** of not hearing from anyone about the child's whereabouts, the next step is initiating the YMCA emergency procedure, which is contacting the police (911) and/or Children's Aid Society (C.A.S.).
3. A final attempt is made to contact the parent; leaving a message, when possible, about having to contact the police and/or C.A.S. with the time and date.
4. Staff are to document in their log book the attempts to contact including the date, time and person called and the outcome.
5. Additional safety measures per location may be developed unique to that centre.

Safe Arrival of Children Walking Unaccompanied (Walking to and from our YMCA programs)

If a parent requests that their child walk from the YMCA to their school or from school to the YMCA, it is the responsibility of the parent(s) of the child to reinforce the appropriate safety rules. The YMCA strongly encourages supervision of children 12 and under at all times and we will not consider this situation for a child that is under the age of 10. If the family is persistent, we will consult with our VP,

Policies and Procedures

local MOE Program Advisor and C.A.S. if deemed a child protection concern.

Parent(s) wishing their child to walk to school or from school must complete a Consent for Walking Children acknowledging their role and responsibility and that of the YMCA.

In the event a child that is approved to walk does not arrive at the YMCA program within 15 minutes of the agreed upon time, following the direction of the supervisor, the YMCA staff shall follow the YMCA's emergency procedure as noted below:

1. If no message was received by the parent, contact the school to determine whether the child was present or absent.
 - If they were absent, no other contacts are required.
 - If they were present and did not yet arrive and the school cannot confirm the child's whereabouts, contact the parent to inquire about the child's absence (Parent 1, if not successful, then Parent 2); leave a message if unable to speak with them.
2. If parent is unavailable or you could not reach them, you would then contact emergency contacts (1, then 2, then 3).
3. If unable to reach any parent or emergency contact person, the supervisor is to inform the Manager and **within 15 minutes** of not hearing from anyone about the child's whereabouts, the next step is initiating the YMCA emergency procedure, which is contacting the police (911) and/or Children's Aid Society (C.A.S.).
4. A final attempt is made to contact the parent; leaving a message, when possible, about having to contact the police and/or C.A.S. with the time and date.
5. Staff are to document in their log book the attempts to contact including the date, time and

person called and the outcome.

6. Additional safety measures per location may be developed unique to that centre.

Important for families to understand:

The YMCA is not responsible for children

until they arrive

(signed-in) at the YMCA program or **after they leave** (signed-out) the YMCA program.

Safe Departure procedures include:

- Authorization in writing for all adults picking up a child.
- Advance notification from Primary Caregiver when another Authorized Person will be picking up a child.
- Contacting the Primary Caregiver if another Authorized Person arrives without advance notification.
- **Consent to Release to Supporting Agencies** Form that must be completed, signed, and dated by the Parent/Caregiver and Supervisor/Site Lead that will allow children to participate in school-sanctioned extra-curricular activities and/or receive third-party support during YMCA program hours.
- **Consent For Walking Children** Form that must be completed, signed, and dated by the Parent/Caregiver, Supervisor, and Manager to allow a child at least 10 years of age to arrive at and/or leave the YMCA program unsupervised.
- Procedure for Educators to follow if a child has not been picked up by the end of the program day.

Arrival and Departure

The safety and well-being of all children participating in YMCA Child Care programs is of the utmost importance to us. Parents and Guardians or their designates are required to personally

Policies and Procedures

escort their child into the program and to pick up their child at the end of the day. It is imperative that the YMCA educators are aware you have arrived or that you are departing with your child. Please speak with the YMCA educator that is present when you drop off or pick up your child. Arrival and Departure times are acknowledged and/or recorded by a YMCA educator.

When Someone Else Picks Up Your Child

Please notify the educators when an alternate person is picking up your child. For safety purposes, no child shall be released to a person not authorized by the parents/guardians for pick up. These persons must be listed on the child's Registration Form as an Emergency Contact and/or Authorized Pick-Up Person and will be required to present government issued photo identification upon pick up. Any additional persons authorized to pick up must be in writing. Please note that the YMCA will not release a child to any person under the age of 16, unless we have a written letter from the legal guardian giving permission for further consideration.

Parenting Plan for Custody Agreements

The topic of divorce or legal separation can be very difficult for children, and everyone involved. Ensuring that the YMCA has a clear and legally binding custody agreement in place at the time of registration is imperative for all parties. The parent or custody agreement should clearly outline who has sole or joint custody for drop-off, pick-up, and communication purposes.

Please note: The YMCA cannot deny access or information to any legal parent or guardian without a current legal custody agreement

YMCA Child Guidance Procedure

At the YMCA, we believe that everyone has

the right to feel safe and welcome while participating in our programs. We promote respectful interactions between children and their peers and between children and adults.

As early childhood educators, we understand that children may become frustrated and will need our support to redirect their actions for positive outcomes.

Our educators receive ongoing support and training internally and externally through our community partners/experts to help guide children's behaviors in a positive way.

Some of the strategies we use include, but are not limited to:

- Acknowledge the child's feelings and restate how they are feeling.
- Try to involve the child in solutions or ideas of how to help them with their problem; and
- Support positive interactions and help guide challenging behavior.

As educators the following strategies are used, but are not limited to:

- Redirection (I.e. Would you like to do a puzzle or read a book together?).
- Use logical and natural consequences (I.e. How do you think that makes your friend feel?).
- Setting limits for all children (I.e. Use your words, hands hurt.).
- Role modeling and praise, providing choices and time for children to adjust and plan for transitions.
- Educators can anticipate reactions or behaviors by observing or to be close by to assist.

All educators, volunteers and placement students will follow our core values of inclusiveness, integrity, kindness, respect and well-being. They will ensure that every

Policies and Procedures

child has a sense of belonging, develops a sense of self, health and well-being, every child is an active and engaged learner who explores their world with body, mind and senses and is a capable communicator who expresses themselves in many ways. Educators support children in developing strategies to remain calm and to regulate their emotions while recognizing the effects of their actions on others.

Any practice based on a negative control technique is not part of the YMCA Child Guidance Practices and Core Values and will be addressed promptly with the supervisor and documented accordingly (following our “Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions” Procedure).

The following **Prohibited Practices** that put children at risk or inhibit their growth, self-esteem and healthy development are unacceptable:

- a) **Corporal punishment** of any child;
- b) **Physical restraint** of a child, such as confining a child to a highchair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- c) **Locking the exits for the purpose of confining a child**, or confining a child to an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the YMCA’s emergency management policies and procedures;
- d) **Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language** directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or

frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;

- e) **Depriving a child of basic needs** including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
- f) **Inflicting any bodily harm** on children including making children eat or drink against their will; or
- g) **Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or engaging in a prescribed sexual act**, as those terms are defined in the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*.

Measures Used to Deal with Contravention of Policies and the Use of Prohibited Practices:

- Performance goals include full compliance regarding all YMCA Policies and Procedures. Supervisors conduct pre-licensing checklists prior to a license expiry date and use the Compliance Action Plan provided by the Ministry. Staff, students and supervisors will all be included in compliance action plan items through assisting with the development of an action plan or fulfilling action plan details in their role. These checklists and action plans will be reviewed with the manager for further processing if required.
- Any reports involving breach of the above prohibited practices and all YMCA Child Care Policies or Procedures are taken seriously and will be addressed with YMCA Management and our Human Resources Department.
- Individuals who violate the prohibited practices and this procedure are subject to disciplinary and/or corrective action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer assignment.

Policies and Procedures

- Communications will occur with all appropriate governing agencies as required throughout the process (example: Ministry of Education, Employment Standards, Police, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teacher's, Children's Aid Society, etc.).
- Human Resources and Child Protection Policies are reviewed upon hire and annually thereafter.

Withdrawal of Service by the YMCA

The YMCA is an inclusive organization that strives to meet the needs of children and families. In situations where the program is having difficulty meeting the child's need, it may be deemed, in the interest of the family and/or YMCA, to end care.

Admission and withdrawal of children is at the discretion of the YMCA. In each situation where it may be necessary to withdraw services, the YMCA of Northeastern Ontario considers the following:

- Reasonable care has been given in assessing the child's needs, including the program's ability to support those needs;
- Special resources and other outside agency supports have been exhausted or are unavailable and we are unable to best meet the needs of the child; and
- Two weeks' written notice of withdrawal will be given to parents/guardians.

In extreme circumstances, suspension or termination of care may be immediate due to health or safety purposes without 2 weeks' notice. The following additional situations may be considered cause for suspending or terminating care:

- Non-payment of program fees.
- Chronic late pick-up.
- Situations that require specialized

services that the YMCA is unable to provide.

- Parents/Guardians or children who exhibit unsafe or unacceptable behavior towards children and families, staff, students or volunteers.
- Refusal by parent/guardian to meet with the YMCA staff and/or consent to the use of support services for children if deemed necessary.

Accident or Incident Reporting

Children are active and curious. It is not uncommon for young children to experience cuts, scrapes, and bruises while running, jumping, and playing. All YMCA staff hold valid certification in Standard First Aid and CPR-C (Adult, Child and Infant CPR) and have been trained in emergency procedures. When an accident or incident occurs, YMCA staff will record the details on the YMCA Child Care Accident/Incident Report and provide you with a copy. Depending on the nature of the incident, a courtesy call may be made to parents/guardians for information/instruction purposes.

In the event a more serious incident involving your child occurs, YMCA staff have been trained to respond based on the severity of the injury. YMCA staff will either call emergency support services (911) and/or you or your designated emergency contacts to take your child for medical evaluation/support.

Serious Occurrence Reporting

Serious incidents are reportable by the YMCA to the Ministry of Education within 24 hours of the supervisor becoming aware of the incident. Details regarding the serious occurrence will be posted near the entrance of the program for 10 business days. A serious occurrence incident is defined as; a life-threatening injury or illness, an allegation of abuse and/or neglect by a staff, student, or placement volunteer, a missing or unsupervised child, unplanned disruption

Policies and Procedures

of normal operations, or the death of a child.

Our Legal Duty to Report Suspected Child Abuse

We all share a responsibility to protect children from harm. This includes situations where children are abused or neglected. Ontario's Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) provides for protection for these children.

Section 72 of the Act states that the public, including professionals who work with children, must promptly report any suspicions that a child is or may be in need of protection to a children's aid society (CAS). The Act defines the phrase "child in need of protection" and explains what must be reported to a CAS. It includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, neglect, and risk of harm.

For more information, please contact your local CAS or the following link:
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/child-welfare-and-child-protection-services>

Student and Volunteer Supervision

The YMCA promotes opportunities for personal growth, community involvement and volunteerism.

Students and volunteers are welcome in our licensed child care programs/centres. All volunteers and students participate in an orientation and review of all relevant policies and procedures. All Students and Volunteers provide a Current Health Assessment and Up-To-Date Immunization Record. They are required to obtain and submit a Police Record Check (Vulnerable Sector), current within six months. Students and volunteers do not have unsupervised access to children in any of our licensed child care programs and are never counted in ratios. They are always paired and mentored by a YMCA educator and overseen by the program supervisor.

Police Record Check (Vulnerable Sector)

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario places a high regard of trust in the integrity of its employees and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable people attending YMCA programs.

The YMCA recognizes its responsibility to promote safe environments and practices and to protect children and vulnerable persons from abuse and exploitation. To help with this mission, we require all employees, students and volunteers to obtain a Police Records Check (Vulnerable Sector) and must be dated within six (6) months prior to commencement of employment or volunteer service. This policy is in addition to our Association's Safeguarding Children Policy regarding the recruitment and selection of employees and volunteers.

The YMCA must ensure that all staff, volunteers and students obtain a new vulnerable sector check every three (3) years or upon request and provide offence declarations for every year that vulnerable sector checks are not required.

Safeguarding Children Policy

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children share a responsibility to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm. The YMCA recognizes its responsibility to promote safe environments and practices to protect children and vulnerable persons.

YMCA Educators are trained to recognize the indicators of neglect and abuse and are legally required to report any suspicions that a child may require protection. The role of the child protection agency is to investigate and determine if there is any proof of abuse or neglect and implement supports for the child and their family. It is important that YMCA educators ensure all reports are kept confidential, including only discussing with the family

Policies and Procedures

that a report has been made if the child protection agency authorizes them to do so.

Process for Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions

The following processes are in place to monitor compliance and contraventions:

- Supervision of program areas on a regular basis is conducted by supervisor or designate.
- All YMCA educators' interactions and observations are monitored three (3) times per year (or as required) to ensure they:
 - Provide constant supervision of all children;
 - Use appropriate voice-tone;
 - Provide positive verbal reinforcements (feedback);
 - Respond to children in a gentle and welcoming manner;
 - Are positive role models for children;
 - Establish and maintain control of their play space, and
 - Show genuine enjoyment for their educator role.
- YMCA Full Day & School Age Quality Assessment Tool is a monitoring tool used three (3) times per year to ensure we continue offering high-quality educational care and programming designed to promote all areas of healthy child development while building on social strengths and overall well-being in our programs.
- Annual Performance Assessment Plans for all staff include Coaching/Mentoring Documentation Forms and Collaborative and Inquiry Forms.
- Scheduled and spontaneous coaching and mentoring conversations with all staff occur.
- External Agency reviews and audits (Quality Assurance, YMCA Play in Action, YMCA Making the Connections, Health and Fire Inspections, Ministry of Education annual license reviews, etc.).
- Discussion pertaining to child care policies occur before starting work or placement, as part of the orientation process, and occasionally as needed for review at staff meetings and with individual educators/cooks throughout the year.

The Ministry requires a thorough knowledge and policy review of the following procedures:

- Anaphylaxis, Emergency Management Procedures, Evacuation & Lockdown, Fire Safety, Individual Anaphylactic Plans (I.A.P.), Individual Medical or Support Plans (Medical or Specialized Needs), Medication, Playground Safety, Police Records Check (Vulnerable Sector), Program Statement & Implementation (includes Prohibited Practices and Process for Monitoring Compliance & Contraventions), Procedures for addressing with Parent Issues or Concerns, Ratios and Group Sizes, Sanitary Practices, Serious Occurrences, Sleep Supervision, Staff Training & Development, Supervision of Volunteers and Students, Waitlist Procedure, COVID-19 Policies, and Safe Arrival/Dismissal Policies.

The YMCA maintains sign-offs for all staff, volunteers and students to verify compliance.

Health & Well-Being Policies and Procedures

Well-Being

Illness in group settings is often unavoidable. If your child shows symptoms of ill health such as fever, vomiting or diarrhea, your child will not be admitted to care. In the case of discharge from eyes or ears and rashes unknown by staff, a physician's note may be required stating the nature of the illness and that the child is cleared to return to group care. If your child develops symptoms of ill health while in our care, you will be contacted to pick up your child. For children to attend care they must be well enough to go outside and participate in all aspects of the program. Exclusion periods vary per illness. Please speak to the supervisor or refer to your local health unit guidelines to determine when your child can return to care.

Head Lice

Head lice and nits are usually present in our community at any given time. To child care centres and schools, this nuisance is usually more prevalent after each major school break. Throughout the year, spot checks will be conducted on children and staff. If a child has either nits or lice, contact will be made to immediately have the child picked up. The child must then be treated, and all nits must be removed prior to admittance to the program. There are no exceptions to this policy to ensure the lice is contained to be best of our ability. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated in this matter.

Chronic Illness and Children with Medical Needs

When a child is under a doctor's care that requires on-going medication or treatment, it is considered a 'chronic illness'. Illnesses such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc. are considered chronic, which simply means the child requires ongoing care. In most cases, children with chronic illnesses attend YMCA programs with no difficulties.

However, it is up to the supervisor and

manager to assess the child's chronic illness at the time of registration or when the illness has been identified to ensure the YMCA is able to manage the illness and/or condition. Families are required to complete an "Individual Medical Plan" (IMP) in cooperation with or reviewed by the supervisor and signed off by all staff, students and volunteers prior to their child beginning care.

Infectious & Communicable Diseases

The YMCA follows the Ontario regulations under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Working with our Local Public Health partners (Sudbury and District, Manitoulin, North Bay, Parry Sound, and Northeastern Public Health), the YMCA has developed guidelines for proper disinfection and follows their direction regarding reporting of communicable diseases and exclusion periods from our programs.

Medication

Prescription medication must be prescribed by a licensed physician or accompanied by a doctor's note before it can be administered. Parents/guardians must complete and sign a Medication Consent form that includes the required dosage and administration times. Over-the-counter medication will only be administered with a licensed physician's note that identifies the medication name, dosage, and timeframe for use. All prescription and non-prescription medication must be in its original container, labelled with the child's name, purchase date, medication name, dosage, storage instructions, and the appropriate measuring device. Expired medication will not be accepted, and children will not be admitted into care if their required medication is expired.

Please note parents/guardians must sign an Authorization for Non-Prescription Over-the-Counter Medications form.

*****All medication must be given to a YMCA staff member. It can never be left in the cubby area or backpack. *****

Health & Well-Being Policies and Procedures

Anaphylaxis Policy

We strive to minimize the risk of exposure to known allergens to the children in our care. If a child has an anaphylaxis allergen, it is the parent's responsibility to inform staff of a child's allergy at the time of registration and update us if any changes occur. Parents are asked to provide and/or complete a detailed "Individual Anaphylactic Plan" (IAP) for their child and to train the supervisor prior to the first day of care. Allergy lists are posted in all program areas, in cooking areas and are attached to educator's clipboards. An Anaphylaxis Alert Poster is placed at the entrance of the center/program.

Children who require an EpiPen must bring a current, non-expired EpiPen to the centre in order to be admitted to the program.

Nutrition

Our full day child care programs offer a variety of nutritious morning snacks, lunches and afternoon snacks prepared by an on-site cook or caterer. School-age programs receive a morning and afternoon snack. To ensure that your child receives a well-balanced meal, our menus follow Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide and are planned in consultation with our Local Public Health partners in Manitoulin, North Bay, Parry Sound, Timmins, and Sudbury, as well as the Ministry of Education. Our weekly menus are posted for your information with any menu changes noted. Infants are fed according to their individual needs in partnership with parents. Any special dietary and feeding arrangements based on written instructions from the parent of the child must be followed. Families are required to provide their own specialty items (including infant formula or baby food). Due to children with allergies and food restrictions, the YMCA requests that certain foods from home not be brought into our programs. These items are posted. There may be special circumstances where families may wish to bring food,

such as celebrations, however, they must be first approved by the child care supervisor.

To support children with food allergies, food intolerances, and dietary restrictions related to religious or cultural beliefs, families must meet with the child care supervisor to review the menu, identify restrictions, and determine appropriate accommodations.

Where appropriate, the YMCA of Northeastern Ontario will provide:

- An alternative protein for children who are vegetarian or do not consume pork, selected to align as closely as possible with the meal being served.
- Soy milk for children requiring a dairy-free alternative.
- Lactose-free dairy products for children who are lactose intolerant.

If a family declines an alternative offered by the program, they will be responsible for providing an appropriate substitute. For children with celiac disease or gluten intolerance, the program does not provide gluten-free alternatives. Families must supply clearly labelled food products. Families are also advised that YMCA child care kitchens prepare gluten-containing foods daily and, while reasonable precautions are taken, a completely gluten-free environment cannot be guaranteed.

For anaphylactic allergies, the program will assess whether the allergen can be reasonably eliminated from the centre or the child's room, based on the specific allergen and the ability to manage it safely.

Any accommodation must be reasonable and must not negatively impact the health, safety, or well-being of other children in the program.

Health & Well-Being Policies and Procedures

Nuts and Other Allergens

We are a peanut/nut sensitive environment. If you provide food for your children, please ensure that all food does not contain nor may contain nuts or peanut products. Please check with your child(s) program for a list of food restrictions.

Bagged Lunch Guidelines (including Food from Outside)

These Guidelines apply to any food item being supplied by the caregiver, outside of the centre's kitchen and/or caterer.

Families are reminded that they are responsible for providing a healthy, nut-free lunch for their child(ren) over the age of 44 months (school-age programs) during any non-instructional full-day attendance, such as PD days, school breaks, and summer programs. All YMCA NEO Licensed Child Care programs offer nutritious morning and afternoon snacks to all participants each day.

Bagged lunches should:

- Follow Canada's Food Guide
- Be in a labelled lunch bag
- Consist of foods that do not contain or have not come into contact with nuts or peanuts
- Contain a refillable labelled water bottle

Here are a few suggestions to create interesting, healthy and delicious peanut/nut free snacks and lunches for your child(ren).

- Breads: Bagels, bagel crisps, whole wheat bread, buns, whole grain crackers
- Fruit: Apple, banana, blueberries, pears, oranges, fruit salad
- Vegetables: Broccoli, carrot sticks, vegetable juice, radishes, cucumber
- Milk and Dairy: Cheese, milk, yogurt tubes, smoothies

- Meats and Alternatives: Cold cooked chicken, hard-boiled egg, tuna, turkey, roast beef, hummus, falafel
- Extras: Dried cereal, muffins, granola mix

You can also access a copy of the Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide at

<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

Infant Food and Beverages

The YMCA requires written feeding instructions from parents for all children under one year of age. These instructions are kept in the child's file. Baby food will be served in a bowl or plate rather than directly from the jar. Any leftover formula, milk, or expressed milk will be discarded after it has been offered to the child.

Expressed Milk

Expressed milk must be clearly labeled with the child's name and stored safely in accordance with public health requirements. To ensure children's health and safety, staff follow proper handwashing, storage, preparation, and feeding procedures. Any leftover expressed milk will be discarded after feeding, and children will be closely supervised to prevent sharing of bottles or cups.

Outdoor Play

The YMCA strives to make outdoor play safe, adventurous and fun for all children. We follow the Child Care and Early Years Act which requires that children who are enrolled in full day care have two hours of outdoor play each day, weather permitting. Before and after school programs have 30 minutes of outdoor play each day. Please ensure that adequate clothing is provided so that your child can participate comfortably in these daily outdoor activities.

Health and Well-Being Policies and Procedures

Extreme Weather

During extreme weather alerts, including, cold, heat, smog, wind chill advisories children will not participate in the outdoor program and an alternative indoor plan will be implemented.

Sunscreen Policy

Parents/Guardians are asked to provide personal non-aerosol sunscreen from home. Each full day program uses sunscreen with SPF of 30 or higher that offers UVA and UVB protection for all children over one year of age. This will be applied both morning and afternoon during the summer months. Sunscreen from home must be nut free and labelled with their child's name.

Insect Bite Prevention (Mosquitoes, Ticks, and Black Flies)

As part of our outdoor programming and field trips, children may be exposed to mosquitoes, ticks, black flies, and other insects. While the risk of serious illness from insect bites is low, the YMCA encourages families to take preventative measures to help protect their children during outdoor activities.

The Ontario Ministry of Health recommends the following precautions when spending time in wooded areas, tall grass, or other outdoor settings:

- Wear light-coloured clothing to make insects and ticks easier to see.
- Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, closed-toe shoes, and socks.
- Tuck pant legs into socks when appropriate.
- Use an insect repellent containing DEET, following the manufacturer's directions and avoiding the eyes, mouth, cuts, and scrapes.
- Check children thoroughly for ticks after outdoor activities, paying close attention to the scalp, armpits, groin, and behind the knees.

From May 1 to September 30, YMCA staff may apply insect repellent that has been provided by the family, with written parental consent.

If you find a tick on your child or suspect they have been bitten, please consult your healthcare provider and notify the Camp Director. Additional information about tick prevention and Lyme disease can be found on the Ontario Ministry of Health website.

Off-Premises Activities

Throughout the year, trips are made available based on the interests of the children. A permission form will be given to parents/guardians outlining the planned destination, method of transportation, time, date and learning objectives. These forms must be signed and returned to your child's educator for your child to participate. Children participating in off-site activities are always supervised by an adult. Furthermore, students or volunteers are never counted in ratios or left alone with a child or a group of children. Parents and/or family members are welcome to volunteer for their child's planned trips. Please contact us if you would like to do so.

Please note: All volunteers for field trips must be 18 years of age and provide a Current Health Assessment and Up-To-Date Immunization Record. Prior to volunteering, they are required to obtain and submit a Police Records Check (Vulnerable Sector), current within six months and/or sign a declaration for special occasion volunteering.

Emergency Management

The YMCA has developed clear policies and procedures for emergency management. If our child care centre is located in a school, the YMCA adopts the schools emergency management procedures.

Health and Well-Being Policies and Procedures

Our staff roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined in the event of an emergency, the most important being that staff will ensure that children are kept safe, are accounted for and are always supervised during an emergency.

All YMCA staff, students and volunteers are required to sign-off on the “Emergency Management Plan for Child Care” annually and when changes are made.

If an emergency occurs, every attempt will be made to contact parent(s). If they cannot be reached by telephone, parents/guardians will be informed by Weemarkable, email and/or social media postings.

The YMCA conducts monthly and annual emergency drills so that the children and staff are well-prepared in the event of an emergency.

Preventing Unauthorized Access

To help ensure the safety and security of all children in our care, all centre doors remain locked during hours of operation and access is controlled through a buzzer entry system. Families and authorized visitors are required to use the buzzer for entry, allowing staff to verify and monitor everyone entering the building. These measures help prevent unauthorized individuals from accessing the child care centre and support a safe environment for children, families, and staff.

In addition to controlled entry, all staff are trained to approach and assist individuals they do not recognize by asking if they require help and determining the purpose of their visit. Staff also conduct regular building and outdoor area sweeps in accordance with our Safeguarding Children Policy to ensure our environment remains secure and that any potential concerns are identified and addressed promptly.

Safe Schools Act

The Safe Schools Act, 2000 puts into law various ways to increase safety, respect and responsibility in Ontario schools. Mandatory suspension or expulsion includes all school related activities, including the YMCA Program.

Smoke/Vape Free Policy

YMCA Child Care programs are smoke and vape free. Smoking, vaping or handling a lit cigarette, e-cigarette, tobacco or cannabis (medical or recreational) on YMCA premises, including all indoor and outdoor areas is strictly prohibited under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017. Failure to comply could result in a penalty of up to \$5,000.00.

Water Safety Guidelines

Sensory exploration is an integral part of the YMCA curriculum. A part of sensory exploration is the use of water play tables, splash pads, sprinklers and hoses. When these items are used, a staff member must be positioned directly in the area of play. If no other outdoor play activities are taking place at the same time, all staff members are expected to supervise the water play activities. Portable wading pools are not to be used for water-based activities.

When visiting a regulated public pool, the YMCA supervisor must ensure that the following is in place:

- A qualified lifeguard is always on duty.
- Rules and regulations of the public pool are followed.
- Children are directly supervised by an adult (18 years or older) at all times.
- Parents are advised and have signed-off permission for their child to participate in the field trip.

Governing Bodies

Licensing and Quality Assurance

The delivery of safe and reliable programs and services is important to the YMCA. That's why we take great pride in our own program integrity support and the good work of our community partners and the Ministry of Education in the following initiatives:

Ministry of Education

All of our locations are licensed through the Ministry of Education. Licensing requires a yearly renewal with the Ministry which includes an inspection by a Program Advisor. Inspections include:

- ensuring that proper ratios are met;
- Child Care & Early Years Act standards are met;
- as well as quality of our programs and staffing.

Municipal Quality Assurance Programs

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario is part of the municipal quality assurance program. This involves unannounced visits by a Quality Assurance Program Specialist. During these visits, the Specialist conducts an assessment to ensure overall quality indicators are met. The Specialist then generates a report and is shared with staff.

YMCA Program Integrity

With our [YMCA Playing to Learn](#) and [YMCA A Place to Connect](#) curriculums, we are subject to annual assessments by YMCA Canada. These Advisors visit using a checklist tool to determine a score. These scores are shared with the staff to allow staff to make any necessary changes to reach a higher score in the next assessment and celebrate their achievements.

Our management team and Program Integrity Specialists visit our sites regularly to ensure that standards are met in all areas. We also use the [YMCA Playing to Learn](#) Play in Action and the [YMCA A Place to Connect](#) Making the Connections assessment tools to determine quality.

We work closely with supervisors and staff to ensure any changes are implemented to address any areas that could be improved.

College of Early Childhood Educators and Other Bodies

The College of Early Childhood Educators is the professional self-regulatory body for Early Childhood Educators in Ontario. The College mandate is to protect the public interest and ensure quality standards of practice of early childhood education.

The YMCA is responsible for verifying that their membership is current and clear prior to employment. Employees are responsible for renewing their membership annually.



Addressing Parental Concerns

Resolving Parent Issues and Concerns

YMCA staff are dedicated and committed to connecting, partnering, and engaging parents/guardians to provide the best possible care for each child. Daily conversations benefit the child, family, and the staff and help provide consistency to understand the child and plan for their success. These daily interactions provide families and educators with an opportunity to discuss their child's progress and any concerns or challenges.

In these situations where an issue or concern arises, the YMCA takes these concerns very seriously and will together work with the family as a YMCA team to reach a resolution in a timely, confidential, fair, respectful manner in keeping with our YMCA Core Values. All parent issues or concerns are taken seriously and will be responded to within a 24-hour time frame of being advised.

Steps for Resolving Parent and/or Guardian Issues or Concerns

Every effort will be made to resolve issues or concerns with the Educator, Centre Supervisor or Program Manager. The person who raised the issue will be contacted, the issue or concern will be reviewed, and the YMCA will outline the findings and will explain how the YMCA proposes to resolve the issue/concern to the mutual satisfaction of both parties whenever possible.

The YMCA recommends the following process to help resolve a concern or issue:

1. Speak to the educator/staff person involved;
2. If unresolved, speak with the program supervisor;
3. If unresolved, contact the Manager;
4. If unresolved, contact the Vice President Operations, Child Care;
5. If unresolved, contact the Chief Executive Officer; or

6. If still unresolved, contact the Board Chair.

Possible Nature of Issues or Concerns and Steps for Parents/Guardians to Report

Program Room-Related

(E.g.: sleep, feeding or diapering, toilet training, daily activities, etc.)

- Bring forward your issue or concern to the educator directly or the Supervisor.

General, Centre or Operations

(E.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting list, menus, etc.)

- Bring forward your issue or concern to the Supervisor and/or Manager.

Concerns about a YMCA Educator or Supervisor Conduct

- Bring forward your issue or concern to the individual directly or to the supervisor.
- If it's concerning the educator, then the supervisor or management will address the issue or concern.
- If it's concerning the supervisor, the issue will be addressed by management or the Vice President Operations, Child Care.

Student/Volunteer-Related

- Bring forward the issue or concern to the educator responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or the supervisor.

Important: All issues or concerns about an educator, student or volunteer's conduct that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor immediately.

Addressing Parental Concerns

Steps for YMCA or Staff in Responding to Issue or Concern

1. Address the issue or concern at the time it is raised; or
2. Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 24 hours.
3. Document the issues/concerns in detail (YMCA Incident Report):
 - a. Date and time issue received;
 - b. Name of person who received it;
 - c. Name of person reporting it;
 - d. The details of the issue/concern; and
 - e. Any steps taken to resolve it and/or information given to the parent regarding next step.
4. If the person notified is unable to address the matter, provide contact information for the appropriate person.
5. Ensure the issue/concern is investigated by the appropriate party within 24 hours or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. If there are delays, document reasons in writing.
6. Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent/guardian who raised the issue/concern

suspect child abuse, neglect or there is a disclosure.

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

If after the above-noted processes have been tried and fair resolution to the mutual satisfaction of both parties, the YMCA would encourage parents and/or guardians to contact the Ministry of Education, Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch or any of the relevant regulatory bodies where they see their issue or concern may fall, such as, but not limited to; the local Children's Aid Society, local Public Health, local Police, local Fire Department, The College of Early Childhood Educators, and/or the local Municipality for Children's Services.

Each program has contact information of the above-noted regulatory bodies.

Concerns about Suspected Abuse, Neglect or a Disclosure

Concerns about suspected child abuse, neglect or disclosure are reportable to the local Children's Aid Society. Everyone, including the members of the public and professions working closely with children is required by law to report suspected cases of abuse, neglect or disclosure. If a parent or guardian expresses that a child is being abused or neglected, that person will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society directly. The YMCA also has a legal duty to report once informed, or if a staff, student or volunteer

YMCA Curriculum

YMCA Playing to Learn (Full Day)

Our YMCA Playing to Learn curriculum focuses on small group, play-based, inquiry programming provided by qualified educators who engage in play with your child. Throughout the early years your child will be learning through developmentally appropriate play experiences that will prepare them for school.

The goals and approaches of both YMCA curriculum and philosophy, standards and recommendations are from the Ontario Ministry of Education framework including:

- Minister of Education's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy;
- "How Does Learning Happen?", Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years.

For more information about the YMCA Child Care goals and approaches to supporting children and their families, please visit our website at ymcaneoc.ca or request a copy of our YMCA Child Care Program Statement from your supervisor.

Infant (Infancy to 18 months)

- Ratio is 1:3 / maximum room is 3:10
- Infants' individual schedule is followed (consultation from the family is required)
- Infant daily record is documented (sleep times, eating, diapering)
- A significant play experience is written daily on Weemarkable
- Parent/educator conferences available upon request
- Opportunities for exploring indoors and outdoors, songs and stories, discovering creative and sensory materials, imitation play, and lots of time for hugs and cuddles



Toddler (18 months - 30 months)

- Ratio is 1:5 / maximum room is 3:15
- Toddlers follow a flexible group schedule
- A daily record is documented (sleep times, eating)
- A significant play experience is written daily on Weemarkable
- Parent/educator conferences available upon request
- Program includes opportunities for exploring indoors and outdoors, music and movement, discovering creative and sensory materials, puzzles, stories, blocks, dramatic play, learning to play with others and make choices

Preschool (30 months to 5 years)

- Ratio is 1:8 / maximum room is 3:24
- Preschool children follow a flexible group schedule
- A significant play experience is written daily on Weemarkable
- Parent/educator conferences available upon request
- Program includes opportunities for exploring indoors and outdoors, creating with the arts (visual, dramatic and music), discovering science, engaging in mathematics and literacy activities, developing social skills, gross and fine motor skills and problem-solving skills

YMCA Curriculum

YMCA A Place to Connect

(Before, After School, PD days and school breaks)

YMCA A Place to Connect provides exemplary school-age practices meaning going to the next level with the design and implementation and programming, every aspect of the environment, each part of the curriculum, and the educator's understanding and responsiveness to children and families.

In the YMCA School-Age Program, exemplary practice will:

- Embody the Charitable Purpose, Vision and Values of the YMCA;
- Support parental intents for their children;
- Help build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities.

School Age Program

(3.8 years to 12 years)

- Kindergarten ratio is: 1:13
- Primary/Junior School Age ratio is: 1:15
- Junior School Age ratio is: 1:20
- Children enrolled in the school-age program have the option of attending before and/or after regular school hours and on non-instructional days (PD days and school breaks)
- The program includes opportunities for physical activities indoors and outdoors, dramatic performances, works of art, nutritious snacks, interest clubs while developing leadership skills, problem solving skills, moral understanding and intrinsic value

Family Grouping (where available)

(Infancy to 12 years)

Since September 1, 2017, the Ministry of Education has introduced a new family grouping for licensed child care centres. This new group allows the placement of children of different ages (Infancy to 12

years) in the same group in the same play activity room.

Ratios: Up to a maximum of 15 children; and no more than six children under two years of age. There are no reduced ratios permitted at any time for this age grouping.

Family age groups also play a key role in supporting the unique and diverse child care needs of our various cultural and linguistic communities and provide opportunities for families wishing to have siblings of different ages together.

In recognizing that children develop and learn at different paces, the family age group creates opportunities to consider each individual child's abilities and interests. How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years helps educators to plan for and create environments and experiences that respond to the varied abilities and each child's unique characteristics and background while maintaining safety and YMCA Values.



Program Statement

Program Statement

Welcome to YMCA Licensed Child Care.

Our program statement describes how our programs support and foster early learning. It will outline our view of the child, our philosophy and pedagogy as well as the goals and approaches used to ensure healthy child development. It will also outline how we evaluate our programs to maintain quality and how we support the professionals who work with the children. The YMCA Child Care Program Statement is reviewed annually to ensure it is aligned with the Ministry of Education's Policy Statement.

Our View of the Child

Every child is special in the eyes of their parents and/or guardians, and those who love them. The children are also special to us. As Educators of young children, we know that each child is an individual of great human worth and potential. Every child is different: in their looks, their growth patterns, their genetic make-up, their previous experiences, the way they think, and in every aspect of what makes them human beings. We appreciate, value, and celebrate each child's uniqueness, and we view the child's growth and development as occurring in a holistic manner.

At the YMCA, we understand that children learn through play. Play by definition is enjoyable, spontaneous, active, and undertaken without external goals and sanctions. This means children are self-learners and do not require an adult to choose what or how they should learn. When the child's natural activity of play is supported by caring and responsive professionals in positive, developmentally appropriate learning environments, we believe, a child will flourish. The child's innate competence, capacity, curiosity and potential will be maximized.

"[YMCA Playing to Learn] is a wonderful, academically sound, and highly accessible document. At the heart is a view of children, teachers and parents as capable and competent. This is one document that will be highly valued in the field, not just sitting on a shelf."

Jean M. Clinton, BMus MD FRCP(C), Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences, McMaster University

Our Statement on Play

Each child can reach their full human potential through play. Our intention is to provide the best possible environment that allows the best possible play for all children in our care. We endeavor to meet the play needs of all children and must do whatever possible to support their natural urge to play.

Play helps the child to be both engaged with everyday realities and to be absorbed in an ecstatic self-forgetfulness. It ensures involvement, enjoyment and various forms of success. Play can be powerful or profound, but it is always purposeful.

Play is a vehicle that propels learning and development. Play and development are intertwined; neither precedes the other. All domains of development are supported by play, and play has the additional benefit of being self-initiated and therefore a joy rather than a chore. Play makes discovery fun, but it also propels the child into the vast realm of learning. Play provides a way for children to be healthy in body, mind and spirit.

Play fosters **skill** development. It offers opportunities for gaining new skills as well as refining existing ones.

Play is directly linked to the child's learning. **Cognitive** development and academic success are enhanced by every play experience.

Play is **physical** and increases activity

Program Statement

levels, fitness, balance, gross motor skills and fine motor actions. A wide range of scientific, mathematical, perspective-taking and other cognitive processes in discovery and other types of play.

Play is **social** and aids in **language** learning while supporting social skills development. Self-concepts and emotions are better understood through play, as is the building of **emotional** intelligence. Important **self-regulatory** skills may be acquired and reinforced through play.

Play builds **resilience** and can help children **manage stress**. There are often therapeutic benefits to play. Typically, children direct their play in ways that address their own socio-emotional issues.

YMCA Curriculum

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario has been successfully implementing our national curriculum YMCA Playing to Learn in all child care programs for children 0-6 since 2007; all YMCAs across Canada have also adopted this curriculum.

YMCA Playing to Learn 2nd Edition was published in 2015. This edition incorporates new research, best practices, knowledge, and experience. There is more information on infants and toddlers, and it has a greater focus on the social and emotional development of the young child.

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario has been implementing YMCA Healthy Child Development and High-Five since 2008 and has now launched our school-age curriculum, YMCA A Place to Connect for children 5-12 as of September 2020.

The YMCA has been involved in shaping the development of the provincial early learning framework by sharing YMCA Playing to Learn and our training materials to support educators in implementing a play-based approach. The goals and approaches of the YMCA curriculum align in philosophy, standards, and

recommendations with the provincial frameworks below. It is gratifying to see the Ministry of Education embrace play and adopt a very similar approach.

Curriculum Connections

How Does Learning Happen?	YMCA <u>Playing to Learn</u>
Responsive Relationships	Relationships
Learning Through Exploration, Play and Inquiry	Discovery Through Play
Educators as Co-Learners	Play Partnerships, Planning Process, Reflective Practice
Environment as Third Teacher	Aesthetics, Current Interests Evident in all Learning Centres, Scaffolding & Extending
Pedagogical Documentation	Two weekly documentations are completed by each Educator and posted for families
Reflective Practice and Collaborative Inquiry	Planning Process, reflecting on over-riding interests and development of the children



YMCA Curriculum Goals & Approaches

"The YMCA Playing to Learn is a curriculum guide built on the importance and value of play for young children. The document makes, and backs up, arguments of why and how children's play is essential to the healthy social, physical and cognitive development of all children." Martha Friendly, Executive Director of the Childcare Resources and Research Unit

YMCA Curriculum Goals & Approaches

1) Promoting Health, Safety, Nutrition, Well-Being and Inclusiveness:

Keeping children healthy and safe is a priority at the YMCA and we understand that the well-being of a child is a parent's number one concern. Therefore, we have developed comprehensive, research-based procedures to support children. Some of the procedures in place at the YMCA include:

- Safe supervision of children,
- Working with community agencies to support ISP,
- Child protection procedures and training,
- Sanitation and disinfection procedures,
- Menu planning following the Canada Food Guide, Ministry of Health and Health Unit recommendations,
- Communicable disease prevention,
- Emergency procedures,
- Standard First Aid and CPR/C training

2) Supporting Relationships:

At the YMCA, we understand that young children flourish in all areas of development when they are in positive and responsive relationships with adults.

YMCA Educators build a foundation of trust with children by being available, sensitive, responsive, and caring. We work

alongside community agencies to ensure all children are supported through individual program plans.

YMCA educators create an inclusive and respectful environment to foster positive, equitable, and collaborative relationships. When children feel safe, secure, valued and a contributing member of their world they are able to explore, discover, try new things, grow, learn and develop. To support your child's care, growth and development, YMCA educators interact and communicate with parents on a daily basis sharing observations, documentations, and reflections.

3) Encouraging Children to Interact, Communicate, & Self-Regulate:

The YMCA believes that it is the role of the adult in a child's life to support them to learn how to interact effectively with the world around them including other children, adults, and the environment.

Generally self-regulation involves gaining a degree of control over one's bodily functions and impulses, managing one's emotions, changing one's behaviors and maintaining focus or attention on something or someone.

"The better a child can stay calmly focused and alert, the better he integrates the diverse information coming from his different senses, assimilates it and sequences his thoughts and actions." Shanker 2012

"Caring consistent relationships with adults, provide external supports that serve as the basis for developing self-regulation." Gillespie & Seibel 2006

Some of the approaches implemented by YMCA Educators to set the stage for positive interactions among children include:

- Educators provide small group experiences that allow for more individualized adult attention,

YMCA Curriculum Goals & Approaches

- Educators role model inclusive, respectful, and collaborative interactions with children and other adults,
- Educators ensure the learning environment is flexible so they can respond in the moment and build on or scaffold the children's interests,
- Educators ensure toys, equipment and materials are plentiful and available to children at all times,
- Children are given freedom to make choices,
- By engaging as a play partner with children, educators are able to demonstrate pro-social skills including promoting discussion, problem solving when conflict arises and understanding how their actions affect others, and
- Educators attend training that address self-regulation and resilience.

4) Fostering Exploration, Play & Inquiry:

Children are born with a natural sense of curiosity and wonder. They play naturally.

As parents and educators, we watch children explore their world through their senses, repetition of tasks, imitation, asking questions, pretending. But what are children really doing? Children are putting together all the pieces of how the world works through exploration, play and inquiry.

YMCA Educators understand the importance of play. They foster, expand and scaffold this natural talent called “play” by being:

- Active participants,
- Architects of the play space,
- Keen observers & reflective practitioners,
- Planners & reporters, and
- Collaborators.

Observing a day-in-the-life of a YMCA Child Care program, you will note that the majority of activities are directed by the children. Children decide where, when, what and how they wish to play. Their decisions are based on their interests and curiosity. The educator responds by adapting the environment by adding new toys, materials and equipment, posing questions, and being a play partner. This sets the stage for further play, inquiry, discovery and learning. The educator's role is to support play so that learning and development flourish.

For example, an initial interest in bugs was scaffolded for two weeks and extended into the interest of insects and worms. In the environment, we would see the evolution of the interest identified on the program plans and linked with Daily Play Experiences. Whatever the children currently know about bugs, insects and worms is enhanced when the environment is transformed to promote independent and co-learning opportunities. A butterfly cove and ant farm could be set up to stimulate conversation and respect for nature while building on their existing knowledge new information is provided. Upon invitation to play, the educator becomes a play partner to promote inquiry and discovery following the child's lead.

We may investigate the parts of an ant, grab our magnifying glasses and head outdoors on a special adventure searching for bugs. As we scaffold learning by studying life cycles of caterpillars and bees, we might extend it to include plants and trees. When we interact with children, we introduce new vocabulary and experiences related to their interests. The activities provided in the math centre could allow opportunities to compare and classify things that grow from seeds. Planting seeds could lead to a hypothesis regarding how long it will take to grow and they might create a graph to chart the growth. The spontaneous exploration will occur

YMCA Curriculum Goals & Approaches

naturally, and the educator will respond by being a keen observer, recorder, modeler and responder.



5) Providing Child-Initiated & Adult-Supported Experiences:

Children and parents are warmly greeted upon arrival and after a brief check-in to share news from the evening before, the children get down to the serious business of playing.

The room is set up with a variety of activities that support the observed interests of the children. The children might join some friends at the creative art table to work collaboratively on a collage, or they might work on a Lego structure they safely stored on the counter to complete the next day.

There are no expectations imposed by the educator or curriculum on where children play, or whom they play with, or how long they play at one activity. That is for the child to choose based on their interests.

You may overhear a small group of children in the dramatic play centre dressed in costumes acting out a scene of being “mama, papa, and baby at the doctor”.

The educator has been assigned the role of “doctor” by the children and takes this opportunity to ask the children questions that expand their understanding of what happens at a check-up.

Tomorrow the educator supports the children's interest by adding books about doctors and hospitals to the dramatic play center hoping to build on the children's interest and spark more questions and play; resulting in more learning.

6) Planning Learning Environments to Support Every Child's Learning:

YMCA Child Care programs are located in a variety of facilities including schools, community centers, and YMCA-owned buildings.

At the YMCA we understand that the parent is the child's first teacher, the YMCA Educator is the second teacher, and the learning environment is the child's third teacher.

The YMCA's unique approach to planning and creating learning environments supports children's play so that early learning and healthy development are maximized.

YMCA learning centres are designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the children.

We have created home-like environments that include calm colors, soft furnishings, and items from nature like plants and pets, photographs and accessories that are intended to make children feel comfortable and safe.

YMCA Educators understand that children learn holistically not in one area of development at a time. We understand that riding a tricycle involves gross motor and fine motor skills, but the play children engage in while riding a tricycle involves many more - communication skills, social skills, etc.

Therefore, you may find books, paper and crayons in the block area because children are using these items to figure out how to build a bridge from one shelf to another. Or you may find play dough in the

YMCA Curriculum Goals & Approaches

dramatic play area where children are making pizza. And on a beautiful day you

7) Incorporating Indoor, Outdoor, Active, Rest & Quiet Activities:

YMCA educators design a daily schedule that meets the needs of the children and provides for a balance of activities throughout the day.

Consideration of the care requirements, age, developmental level, energy level, and interests of the children are included.

Generous blocks of time for children to explore, play, and inquire are included both indoors and outdoors.

The daily schedule is not rigid and is designed to operate in small group settings wherever possible. One small group of children may be on a walk in the community, while the other small group may prefer to stay indoors and make playdough cookies.

Periods of active and quiet play are interwoven throughout the day both indoors and outdoors.

Outdoor play is to be included as part of the daily program. All children attending for more than six hours per day will be involved in a minimum of two hours of outdoor play, weather permitting. For before and after school children, a minimum of one-half hour outdoors per day is required.

At the YMCA, we don't let the weather stop us from having fun in nature. The children love to bundle up in warm dry clothes and head out to jump in puddles or make snowballs. In very poor weather, active play takes place indoors so that children get the physical activity their bodies require.

YMCA educators are trained to keep transitions from activity to activity to a minimum, so children get to play more. However, young children thrive on regular

may see indoor furniture moving outdoors to take advantage of the weather. schedules and feel secure when they can predict what will occur throughout the day; therefore, snacks and meal times are consistent as is the rest period in the afternoon for young children.

8) Fostering Engagement & Communication with Families:

At the YMCA we understand that a parent is the most important person in a child's life. YMCA educators play a supporting role with parents or guardians. YMCA educators and parents communicate on a daily basis about children's activities and health.

YMCA educators keep a record of each infant, toddler, and preschool age child's learning and development in their observations and daily play experience that are available to parents to read each day on Weemarkable.

Getting to know family members is critical and including them in the program helps a child to feel a greater sense of belonging. Other strategies to engage parents include:

- Posting planning documents that include observations of children's interests and activities introduced by YMCA educators,
- Play experiences that describe play and its connection to learning,
- Parent/Guardian and Educator interviews/collaborative conversations,
- Celebrations & events,
- Parent/Guardian surveys,
- Displays of children's artwork, projects and creations,
- Photographs of children at play.

YMCA Curriculum Goals & Approaches

9) Individualized Support Plans and Inclusive Programming:

Each YMCA centre develops and reviews strategies for dealing with children who have special requirements as each child is different and each centre will have their own environment and structures. The YMCA Child Care will ensure that an up-to-date individualized support plan is in place for each child with individual circumstances and includes:

- a) A description of how the child care centre will support the child to function and participate in a meaningful and purposeful manner while the child is in our care;
- b) A description of any support aids, or adaptations or other modifications to the physical, social and learning environment that are necessary to achieve clause (a); and
- c) Instructions relating to the child's use of the supports or aids referred to in clause (b) or, if necessary, the child's use of or interaction with the adapted or modified environment.
- d) A plan that is developed in consultation with a parent of the child, the child (if appropriate for the child's age) and a regulated health professional or other person who works with the child in a capacity that would allow the person to help inform the plan.

10) Involving Community Partners:

While our range of community partners is broad, the largest and most important is the education system. Many of our centres are located in schools, so relationships with principals, faculty and other staff are critical.

The YMCA works closely with local community agencies and partners in order to support the children and families in our programs. We view the community as a valuable resource and our staff plan learning opportunities to engage the

community in our programs and we also invite other agencies to provide in-service training for our educators to extend their knowledge and skills.

The YMCA actively seeks out opportunities to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community through networking opportunities, community planning tables and conferences.

11) Supporting Educators' Continuous Professional Learning:

The YMCA is committed to the ongoing professional development of all our educators. What the educator learns will benefit the children once the information is passed along and it will reinforce for the educator what has been learned.

YMCA Educators attend a series of YMCA curriculum training sessions throughout their career with the YMCA. Additionally, the YMCA provides opportunities for educators to attend external learning events and conferences. Furthermore, they are required to keep legislated training requirements like First Aid/CPR-C certification which includes Infant, Child and Adult CPR.

In keeping with the YMCA's Charitable Purpose, Vision and Values, and our commitment to our children and families, the YMCA recognizes and supports the profession of Registered Early Childhood Educators and the College of Early Childhood Educators. While the YMCA recognizes the professionalism of ECE's rests with the individuals, we believe that championing the standards of practice and code of ethics will have a direct impact on the quality of all child care, which is why we extend these guidelines to all early educators as part of our YMCA Best Practices. Registered ECEs must ensure they are always in good standing with the College of ECE.

YMCA Curriculum Goals & Approaches

On a day-to-day basis the child care centre supervisor is responsible for the leadership, mentorship, coaching and development of educators. Based on the learning needs of the educators, the supervisor may meet with staff to suggest strategies, conduct learning huddles to focus on a particular area of YMCA curriculum with the entire team, conduct regular staff meetings to reflect and plan, invite speakers from other YMCA departments or community agencies to attend the center, or provide materials including links, articles, and various readings to supplement educator's professional learning.

At the YMCA of Northeastern Ontario, our Program Integrity Specialists (Curriculum, Quality Assurance & Professional Development), who are also the Northern Champions for YMCA Playing to Learn and YMCA A Place to Connect, assist the manager and supervisors greatly in all areas of staff training and professional development.

12) Documentation:

YMCA educators participate in a continuous cycle of observation:

- Documenting play and its significance
- Determining the children's interests
- Planning activities that support their interests
- Discussion with team members
- Reflection that informs the planning of activities and the learning environment

Links are made between theory, research, YMCA Curriculum, the YMCA Program Statement, pedagogy and children's interests to inform the YMCA educators planning.

You will see this cycle reflected in the toys, materials and equipment provided in the

play areas, the furniture arrangement, the creative work of children, the activities children are engaging in, on the planning documents posted weekly for parents to read and discuss with the educators, in daily play experiences on Weemarkable and in photographs and written descriptions of activities.

This process of continuous program assessment is called reflective practice. On a daily basis educators are observing and engaging with children and evaluating the effectiveness of the learning environment to build on children's interests. The educators are reviewing the planning process daily and discussing the environment to look back on what did and didn't work and then plan for the future. They also meet to ensure they are supporting children's learning and development through their activities, interactions and play space.

Annual Review

All YMCA educators, volunteers and placement students must adhere to several policies and procedures, our Child Care Program Statement including; Ministry of Education, Municipality/DSSAB, Municipal Quality Assurance, Fire and Health Regulations. All educators, volunteers and placement students will review our Child Care Program Statement prior to working in program with the children and annually thereafter or upon substantive changes or modifications.





Our Purpose

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario is a charity committed to helping individuals thrive in their communities through the power of connection and belonging.

Our Vision

A thriving Northeastern Ontario built on resilience, connection, and collective empowerment.

Our Values

- Inclusiveness
- Integrity
- Kindness
- Respect
- Well-being

The YMCA of Northeastern Ontario also offers a variety of programs that support the whole family.

Health and Wellness centres are located in North Bay and Sudbury.

The YMCA Employment Centre and Immigrant Settlement Services in Sudbury provides opportunities to assist in career development and outreach services.

YMCA Camps: Rotary's YMCA Camp Tillicum & YMCA John Island Camp provide an opportunity for children to experience camp.

For more information on these programs and services visit our website at ymcaneo.ca.

For More Information

For a conversation regarding your child care needs, please contact any of our child care locations or administrative office at:

North Bay: 705-497-9622 ext. 6222

Sudbury: 705-674-8315 ext. 2155

Timmins: 705-360-4381

A complete list of centres in each region can be found at ymcaneo.ca/child-care-locations/

When changes are made to our Family Information Guide:

- Families are informed and are offered a copy for review;
- Staff, students and volunteers review and sign-off; and
- Copies are available on our website.

Updated: July 2026