

GROW LEARN DISCOVER



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Early Learning Programs | Parent Handbook YMCA OF THE CHIPPEWA VALLEY

YMCA-CV.ORG



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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

YMCA Mission

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy body, mind, and spirit for all, we build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities.

Core Values

Honesty: Telling the truth.

Caring: Speaking kindly, using nice words, including others – when appropriate.

Respect: Keeping hands and feet to yourself, treating all in kind ways.

Responsibility: Following all behavior expectations.

Objectives:

- Create a comfortable environment that allows each child to develop self-confidence, self-awareness, and a positive self-image.
- Create an opportunity for positive social interaction, and to help foster an awareness of personal potential.
- Provide a program that allows for the individual uniqueness of each child by planning a wide variety of experiences.
- Establish an atmosphere of stability, safety, and trust.
- Provide a program that stimulates each child's natural creativity, curiosity, and eagerness to learn.
- Foster an atmosphere of openness and encourage parent participation and input for the benefit of each participant.
- Continually strive to improve and refine the program by providing creative and comprehensive childcare services.

Purpose & Philosophy

The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community focuses on nurturing child development, healthy living, and social responsibility by providing a safe and healthy place to learn foundational skills and develop healthy, trusting relationships. The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley is dedicated to offering a quality and caring childcare experience for children during the times parents cannot be there. Programs are set up to accommodate family schedules and offer children a chance to grow and develop in a positive setting, conducive to developing values and skills.

Goal

The goal of the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community is to supplement and strengthen the kind of learning and guidance provided by the child's parents and/or guardians.

Mandated Reporters (Abuse & Neglect)

As a child care center, all staff members are required to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the County's Child Protective Services (CPS) office. We are Mandated Reporters, and we must, by law, notify the proper authorities if we suspect that any child is being improperly treated. A background check, including a fingerprint check, must be conducted on all employees prior to employment as a precaution toward the safety of all children.

Licensing

YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community programs are licensed through the Department of Children and Families, Division of Children and Family Services. DCF 251-Licensing rules for Group Day Care centers will be posted throughout the center for parent review and references.

The program will display the group day care license near the entrance for parent/guardian review. This license will reflect days, hours, and months of operation, ages of children to be served as well as the

maximum number of children to be served at any given time. The most recent licensing inspection report will be posted next to the license including any non-compliance or enforcement actions. The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community will comply with all laws governing facilities and operations.

Program Structure

The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community is overseen by the Chippewa Falls Executive Director who is overseen by the CEO of the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley. The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley is governed by the Board of Directors. The Chippewa Falls Early Learning Community has an Early Learning Community Director and Early Learning Community Assistant Director.

Delegation of Authority for the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community is as follows:

- Association CEO-Derek White; dwhite@ymca-cv.org
- Chippewa Falls Executive Director-Kara Goossens; kgoossens@ymca-cv.org
- Early Learning Community Director-Vicki Hayes; vhayes@ymca-cv.org
- Early Learning Community Building Coordinator-Dona Crank; dcrank@ymca-cv.org
- Lead Teacher
- Assistant Teacher/Support Staff

Program	Ages	Capacity	Age	Ratio
Early Learning Community	4 weeks – 5 years	162	Birth – 2 years	1:4
630 Miller Street			2 – 2.5 years	1:6
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729			2.5 – 3 years	1:8
			3 – 4 years	1:10
			4 – 5 years	1:13
			5 – 6 years	1:17
4K Cardinals Chippewa Falls	Must be 4 years old or before Sept 1 st		4 -5 years	1:10-per CFAUSD

Hours of Operation

The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community is open year-round, Monday through Friday from 6 am – 6 pm with the following exceptions:

- Staff Development Days (four days per year designated at the beginning of each year) *see attached sheet.
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

If an emergency closing is necessary, parents will be notified as soon as possible.

REGISTRATION/TUITION

Confidentiality

Children's records are confidential. The Wisconsin Administrative Code on confidentiality states "Persons having access to children's records do not discuss or disclose personal information regarding the children and facts learned about the children and their relatives." This does not apply when the person has been authorized in writing by the parent to receive information, any agency assisting in planning for the child when informed written parental consent has been given, or agencies authorized under s.48.78. Stats.

Enrollment

Enrollment is not guaranteed without confirmation from the Administrative Coordinator. Program registration consists of completing and submitting the fees and forms listed in the confidential Child Records/Files. Registration fee and security deposit (1st payment) is required to secure a spot in the program. Payments are non-refundable. A child's start date is a minimum of 3 business days from the date the forms are turned into the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community.

Rates and Fees

Rates are subject to change annually (see attached Rates and Fees Sheet). Payments are non-refundable.

Attendance

Parents/guardians are required to record attendance daily by signing enrolled child(ren) in and out at the kiosk. Staff will check the sign in and out throughout the day to ensure proper documentation of each child's arrival and departure. Staff will maintain responsibility for every child in their care while signed in. Each month a calendar will be given for children's attendance. Dates and drop off/pick up times are required. These times are not to exceed 10 hours per day. If you have any questions regarding this, please reach out to the director. We schedule staff according to these calendars/schedules. It is imperative that we are notified as soon as possible if your child will not be attending the program on a normally scheduled date.

Scheduling Changes

Two weeks' notice is required for schedule changes, which affect the number of days or hours that your child will attend. The Early Learning Community Director will work with you under special circumstances, which require shorter notice.

CONTINGENCY PLANS

Attendance will be kept in each classroom daily and arrival/departure times recorded. During early AM arrival and late PM pick-up, teachers will be kept aware of children they are responsible for, as rooms are condensed and employees leave the center. Teachers will know the names of each child and their whereabouts at all times. Rosters with children's names, birthdates and scheduled hours of attendance will be with the appropriate teachers at all times. ProCare will also be used to check children in at the beginning of the day and out at the end of the day. Children will be tracked on ProCare when they move from classroom to classroom at the beginning and end of the day or during visiting times.

Fire and Tornado evacuation plans will be practiced monthly, as required by State authorities. The Office will document dates of fire and tornado drills on a form provided by the State. Smoke detector checks are conducted by an outside agency and are included in an exemption of our DCF License. Emergency numbers are posted in each classroom either on or near the telephone. The attendance forms and list of phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts are kept with the Teachers in each classroom at all times to ensure that all children are accounted for and all families can be notified. Please be sure to update any changes to your contact information as soon as possible so we always have current information available. Lead Teachers and administration are allowed to keep cell phones accessible for emergency or alternative communication.

Emergency Supplies: Blankets, a portable radio and flashlight, with extra batteries for both, are kept in the center and in classrooms at all times. Emergency provisions such as clothing, blankets, water are located in each classroom and will be used as needed. Some of these provisions will be the items that are on location for individual children, but will be used by any child needing them due to the emergency situation.

In case of an emergency that would require an evacuation, children will be evacuated by all available staff through the nearest exit, paying special attention to children and adults with physical and/or mental disabilities. Maps of the most efficient fire exit routes are posted in each room. All staff members will be oriented in the designated fire exit from each location. Children will exit single file to the nearest exit and will continue moving 30 feet from the building. The attendance forms and list of phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts will be taken out by the Lead Teacher in each classroom to assure that all children are accounted for, and all families can be notified. The Director or Supervisor will call the fire department at that time and parents will be notified. If possible, children will be assembled inside the Chippewa Falls YMCA. If we are unable to return to the building following an evacuation, the children will be taken to PowerTex until parents, or another authorized adult can be reached and come for them. Children will be transported by private vehicle or will walk with teachers since PowerTex is directly adjacent to our building. A bus could be called, but it would likely take much longer to arrive than just walking with the children.

In case of emergency that would result in lock-down or prevent evacuation, children will be evacuated from all classrooms lined by windows by using alternative exit doors that are located in each classroom. If possible and/or necessary, all children will be moved through the interior door into the Chippewa Falls YMCA space. If children were to stay at the Early Learning Community, we would safely transition them to the farthest interior rooms and shut all doors. The attendance forms and list of phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts will be taken by the Lead Teacher in each classroom to assure that all children are accounted for and all families can be notified. The Director or Supervisor will call emergency personnel as soon as possible and parents will be notified. In the event of a tornado warning, a battery-operated weather radio or a Smartphone will be used to keep track of weather conditions.

In the event of a tornado warning, children will move single file and will be taken to the most interior classroom areas by all available staff members. The attendance forms and emergency contact information will be brought along by the Lead Teacher in each classroom. Staff will engage the children in activities until we are assured by the authorities that the danger has passed. Parents will be notified if conditions worsen.

Inclement Weather will not cause the center to close, unless we are told not to open or remain open by City or State officials. We do advise all parents to do what is safest for your family and to consider the safety of our staff as well. If we need to close for any reason, staff to child ratios will be maintained until all children are safely able to leave. Every effort will be made to have our program open for our regular hours during inclement weather. Any closings or delays would be posted on local television and radio stations. A notice would be sent via ProCare.

In the event of a lost child, staff will check all areas of the center. If the child cannot be found, the child's parents and/or emergency contact and the police will be immediately notified.

Other Emergencies

If the center should lose the use of heat, water or electricity before the center opens; parents will be notified as soon as possible and will be asked not to bring their child that day. Notice will be sent alternative emergency communication such as ProCare, local TV and/or Radio, phone calls and/or email.

If the center should lose the use of heat, water or electricity while children are in attendance, every effort, within the constraints of our licensing capabilities, will be made to move children to rooms that are not

affected. If this is not possible, parents will be called and asked to pick up their child/ren within one (1) hour.

When there is only one staff person on site we will ensure that an emergency provider is available within 5 minutes. That person will be trained on Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS), Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and will sign a document agreeing to serve as an emergency back-up. Information will be posted in all rooms.

Insurance

"Early Learning Community" will provide Limited Liability Insurance as required by the State of Wisconsin. "Early Learning Community" is not required to provide accident insurance; therefore, it is the parent's responsibility to have adequate health and accident coverage for their children. Parents are responsible for all medical costs incurred with respect to their child/children while attending our program. To be sure that your child is covered, please indicate your doctor's information on the Child Care Enrollment Form. If an injury, resulting in a doctor's visit, occurs while a child is attending Early Learning Community, the office must be notified immediately so we can submit an Incident Report to the State licensing office.

Custody Issues

"Early Learning Community" must have current custody paperwork on file to enforce the custody boundaries.

Injuries – Minor & Severe

Every known injury will be recorded in our accident / incident medical log books, but not every injury will be immediately apparent. It is possible that a child could injure themselves but not cry out or indicate anything to the teacher. In these situations, we will do all that we can to find out what actually happened but may be limited to surmising a situation. Any head injury is considered an "emergency," and parents will be notified as soon as possible. Other injuries will be treated with soap and water and a bandage, as needed. If warranted, emergency services will be contacted or the child will be transported to the nearest Hospital Emergency Department or Urgent Care Center (see Health Policy, for more detailed information).

When children are off-site for walk or field trip, staff will take along emergency contact information, attendance sheets and a first aid kit in case an injury occurs to children or staff. The injury will be recorded in the medical log book upon return to the center. A cell phone will be carried along, in case help is needed.

Entries regarding a specific child made in a medical log book will be available to that child's parent in accordance with DCF 251.04(7)(b) ACCESS TO RECORDS & REPORTS – PARENTS. To protect a child's confidentiality, centers are strongly encouraged to have separate entries for each child involved in an incident such as biting. When parents ask to review the medical log book, the center will show the parents only the entries pertaining directly to their child so all other children's information is protected. Required reporting procedures will be followed with DCF for all accidents and injuries.

Arrival and Departure

If a child who is scheduled to arrive at the center, via transportation other than the parent, does not arrive within 60 minutes of the specified time on the written agreement signed by the parent, someone from the office will call the parent to inform them that the child has not arrived. It is the parent's responsibility to notify "Early Learning Community" of all scheduling and transportation changes.

Parents who need transportation for their children can contract with transportation vendors that serve the community. The transportation company driver or designated adult is required to escort the children into the building upon arrival. The only exception to this rule is for children arriving on a school bus. A "Early Learning Community" employee will be responsible for getting children off the bus and into their classroom.

Parents or authorized adults are required to bring children into the building, to their classroom or

designated area, and to sign the children in at the beginning of the day (documenting arrival time) and sign them out at the end of the day (documenting departure time). This process will take place electronically through the use of the ProCare Software system. This practice creates a smooth transition for the children, allows them to say good-bye to their parent(s), and ensures that the parent/guardian know that the child has safely arrived in the classroom with an adult to supervise and 31 care for them. This is a great time for parents/guardians to exchange any important information with the care provider. Staff will also take daily attendance via ProCare to know the names and number of children at the center at all times.

Children will only be released to persons listed on the enrollment form. If anyone other than the child's parent or usual pick-up person (someone who is listed on the enrollment form) is to pick up a child(ren), we will need to be notified in writing or by a telephone call in advance (email or text message are acceptable forms of written notification). The person picking the child(ren) up must be prepared to show a driver's license or other photo ID.

Intoxication

If a parent or other authorized person arrives to pick up a child and that person appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, all reasonable steps will be taken to prevent the person from leaving with the child, including offering to call a cab or another contact person. While staff cannot legally withhold a child from the legal guardian, we will not hesitate to call the local authorities if we feel the child is in danger.

Concealed Carry

DCF 251.06(2) © addresses the presence of firearms and ammunition in a licensed group child care center as follows: DCF 251.06(2) © Firearms, ammunition and other potentially dangerous items may not be kept on the premises. Weapons are banned in all areas of the business. Employees, even those licensed to carry concealed weapons, will be prohibited from carrying weapons while at work.

Media Relations

Any media related issues will be directed to, and handled by, the Center Administrator and Director.

Along with enrollment, "Early Learning Community" and YMCA of the Chippewa Valley is granted the right to use child(s) photograph or image with or without child's name, both singly and in conjunction with other persons or objects and presentations, advertising, publicity, and promotion relating thereto.

Pest Management

Integrated Pest Management techniques are utilized to control pests, including insects and vermin. "Early Learning Community" always seeks out natural non-toxic prevention/treatment for any pest situation. When those measures fail, and pesticide is only viable option, families and staff will be notified of application in advance.

HEALTH PROCEDURES

Sick Child Policy

Children must be healthy to attend. Care is taken to sanitize toys and equipment and food is handled properly. However, children do get sick while they are in our care, even with the many precautions that are taken. Parents/guardians are required to pick up a sick child if the child's temperature is 100.4 degrees or higher. The temperature will be determined by the teacher using the manufacturer recommendations of the thermometer. The teacher will take the temperature a second time with another thermometer to compare the readings.

When children are mildly ill they require more attention and comfort, which places extra pressure on child/adult ratios. It is a balancing act to meet the needs of the individual child and family while

acknowledging that other children, families and employees / teaching staff need to be protected from infectious illnesses. In addition, our program is NOT licensed to care for mildly ill children. Sick children will be isolated and observed until they can be sent home, to prevent the spread of illness. Anytime a child is isolated they will be kept within sight and hearing of a staff member and will be kept as comfortable as possible. The cot/mat and any bedding used will be washed and disinfected before being used again. In all cases, the parent/guardian will be notified. Parents are expected to pick up their child or arrange for the child to be picked up by someone on the emergency contact list within an hour. If the parent/guardian is unavailable, the emergency contacts listed on the registration form will be called. Please be sure to notify program staff of any changes in parent/guardian or emergency contact information.

Children who are sent home with an elevated temperature of 100.4 degrees or more may return to the center 24 hours after the fever is gone. You may not mask the fever with a fever reducing medication, such as Tylenol. If the fever returns you will again be asked to remove your child from the center until the fever is gone. Children may return to the center the same day if parents have a doctor's note stating that the child does not have a contagious illness that jeopardizes the health of the other children.

Children who vomit one time or have two diarrhea/loose stools will be sent home, as this is usually a symptom of illness. They will not be allowed to return for 24 hours or until the symptoms are gone.

Medication

Medication will be stored in a separate, labeled container, away from children's reach. Entries are to be made in the medical logbook for each time medication is administered. If medicine is missed, the Early Learning Community Director will notify the parent.

Staff will administer medication to a child only under the following circumstances:

- The prescription is in the child's name and the parents/guardians have completed a medication authorization form, listing the medication, and specific directions as to time and dosage.
- A medication authorization form has been completed for non-prescription medications.
- Diaper cream, sunscreen, insect repellent, and lotions can be applied with written parental permission and do not need to be recorded in med logs.

Communicable Diseases

When a diagnosis of a communicable disease is made, the exposed children shall be watched for symptoms. All parents/guardians shall be notified through a posting in the Parent App, with respect to confidentiality. A child may be readmitted, without a statement from a physician after a communicable disease, if the child has been absent for the period designated by the Department of Health and Family Services.

Sanitation

Cleanliness and the strict implementation of our health policy are top priority in our Center.

- We ask that parents assist us in keeping germs to a minimum and meet our State licensing requirements by supporting and following our sanitation policies. One of the main ways of doing this is to wash your hands upon entering our classrooms.
- Children must wash their hands when entering the classrooms. Parents are asked to help with this.
- Staff and children of all ages are required to wash their hands with soap and water frequently. Hand washing is always done when entering the classroom, before eating, after using the bathroom, and after other classroom activities.
- Our staff is responsible for the cleanliness of their rooms. They must sweep after each meal, mop at least once a day, clean their sinks and empty their garbage.
- All toys and equipment are disinfected and sanitized as needed throughout the day and in depth, weekly.
- Changing tables are cleaned and disinfected after each diaper change. The staff is supplied with, and encouraged to use, gloves when changing diapers and handling any bodily fluids or secretions.
- Children's bathrooms are also cleaned and sanitized daily, or more frequently, if needed.

- Our carpets are cleaned on a quarterly basis. Our staff may be required to attend Spring and Fall cleaning days at the Center as well.
- A cleaning company is hired to provide monthly, deep cleaning to garbage cans, refrigerators, microwaves, the kitchen facilities, laundry machines, etc.

PARENT/GUARDIAN

Parent/Guardian Visits

Parents/Guardians are welcome and encouraged to visit their children whenever they wish throughout the scheduled program. All visits must be in accordance with any court documents. Legal documentation must be provided if any decisions are made by the court that may affect visitation. See the Early Learning Community Director for questions.

Parent/Guardian Communication

Most communication is done using our Parent App and various other forms of communication. Please ensure you are actively using the Parent App. Parents and staff are equally responsible for communicating with one another.

In addition to the Parent App and in-person communication, the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community will publish monthly class newsletters, post lesson plans to inform parents of classroom activities, and post a daily schedule with a tentative timeline as what the day will bring.

Babysitting

In accordance with national YMCA programming, at no time are staff members allowed to babysit or care for children enrolled in any YMCA childcare program outside of the program's operating hours and in the personal homes of their own or the enrolled families, unless the child is a relative. Please see the Early Learning Community Director for questions.

Pets

Parents/Guardians will be notified in advance of any pets that may be visiting the Early Learning Community. Parents/Guardians should make staff aware of any pet allergies their child(ren) may have.

Records and Files

A completed file, which is required for enrollment, must contain a record of physical exams and immunizations. Children under 2 years of age are to be given a physical exam by a licensed physician at least every six months after admission. Children over 2 years of age are to be given a physical exam by a licensed physician at least every two years after admission. A report signed and dated by a state licensed physician must be provided for the child's file as evidence of a current physical examination.

NUTRITION POLICIES

Nutrition Policies

Time Present:	Number of meals/snacks:
2.5 - 4 hours	1 snack
4 - 8 hours	1 snack and 1 meal
8 - 10 hours	2 snacks and 1 meal
10 hours or more	2 meals and 2-3 snacks

Menu Planning

Cooks are required to be trained annually and will be responsible for planning the snack/meals which includes age-appropriate foods. A variety of foods will be offered to represent diversity.

Special Diet Needs

Children's specific needs and allergies must be listed on the enrollment form and posted in the program area for staff. Parents must inform the program if a child requires a substitute food item during the program hours. In such cases, the parents will be expected to bring the item and a doctor's note may be required.

Nut Free Zone

The Early Learning center is a nut free zone. We do not serve items that contain nuts or nut products. We also ask that any special treats brought from home are store bought and nut free.

Meal Service Routines

- All children and staff must wash their hands with soap and water before eating.
- Staff and children will sit together at tables and chairs that are appropriate for the size and age of the child.
- Lunch will be served family style.
- Children under 1 will be fed by staff. Children one year and older are encouraged to feed themselves.
- Children will be encouraged to try food from each of the food groups offered.
- Food will not be withheld, or force fed and will not be used as a reward.
- The tables will be washed with soap and water followed by a sanitation solution, before and after snacks and lunches.

Safe Food Practices/Cleanliness

Storage of Perishable Foods:

- Refrigerators will be maintained at 40 degrees F or below and freezers at 0 degrees F.
- A clearly visible thermometer will be kept in each unit.
- Foods out of their original sealed packaging will be covered, labeled, and dated.

Storage of Non-Perishable Foods:

- Foods will be stored off the floor and in clean, dry, ventilated, and lighted storerooms or areas.
- Foods out of their original sealed packaging will be stored in metal, glass, or food grade plastic containers with tight fitting covers and will be labeled and dated.
- All foods will be stored in such a manner as to prevent contamination.

Special Treats

Special treats will be provided on occasion with an emphasis on healthy food choices such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and milk. Treats must be store bought and include the manufacturer's label with ingredients.

EDUCATION

Curriculum/Programming

YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community program activities will provide each infant, toddler, pre-school, and school-age child with experiences to encourage several areas of development, including large/small motor, creative, social, intellectual, and cognitive opportunities. Daily moderate to vigorous activities will be offered. Programs will vary to meet the individual needs of the respective children and to reflect the creativity of our teachers/counselors. We utilize creative curriculum for our early childhood programs and focus on theme weeks.

Non-Discrimination/Anti-Bias Curriculum

The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community is committed to provide equal opportunities and does not discriminate by race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, creed, or special needs. We

believe that the anti-bias curriculum that we embrace supports children as they explore, celebrate, and understand differences.

Religious Training and Holiday Celebrations

All programs will celebrate generally recognized holidays along with holidays from various cultures. These celebrations will help children learn about, understand, and appreciate the diversity of various cultures and beliefs. Please bring any questions or concerns to the Early Learning Community Director.

Infant/Toddler Programs

- Wash In/Out: Please
- Children will receive individualized care and will be allowed to follow their own schedules. This schedule will simulate as much as possible that of home.
- Teachers will provide language development and other learning experiences for infants during normal routines, such as eating and diapering.
- Infants and toddlers will be provided with a variety of safe toys. Play will be emphasized as a learning and growth experience.
- All children will receive physical contact and attention including being held, rocked, talked and sung to.
- Soft music will be used during most hours of center operation.
- The position and location of a non-walking child, when awake, will be changed at least every 30 minutes.
- Leftover milk or formula will be discarded after each feeding. Bottles will be rinsed after each feeding.
- Infant bottles will be placed in water for warming and will not be propped when feeding.
- Commercial baby food that is opened and food that is center prepared will be covered, dated, and refrigerated. If not used within 24 hours, leftover food will be discarded.
- Children will be encouraged to experiment with self-feeding with their hands and spoons.
- All food and formula will be labeled with the child's name.
- Routines relating to activities such as bedtime, diapering and toileting will be used as opportunities for language development and other learning experiences.
- Drinking water will be offered to the children several times daily.

The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community will provide infant children with wipes, formula, baby food, and infant cereal. If you decline any of these products you must provide your own.

Lesson Plans

Staff members are required to plan developmentally appropriate class schedules and weekly lesson plans. They are ultimately responsible for curriculum and may draw from child-based curricula, including the WMELS (Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards) to ensure programs are developmentally appropriate. The programs will provide each child with experiences which will encourage the following:

Self-Esteem and Positive Self-Image will be developed by:

- Maintaining staff and child interactions which are warm, nurturing, and compassionate.
- Providing materials which help the child's progress and challenge the child's developmental level.
- Encouraging each child to develop his/her own independence and problem-solving skills with classroom materials and experience.
- Maintaining a daily routine which is consistent and predictable.
- Planning activities that are consistent with the child's development, interests, experiences, ethnicity, and cultural backgrounds. Cultural diversity will be evident in programs, supplies, snacks, and meals.
- Using positive communication between adult and child, and child and child.
- Stressing the importance of process, not products, and that each child is valued for individual

achievements.

- Allowing children time to transition from activity to activity. Children will not be required to wait in lines between activities.

Social Interaction will be encouraged through:

- Creative play experiences.
- Group time.
- Interaction at the meal table.
- Community programs and field trips set up to provide social interaction with outside sources when possible.
- Planned family activities.
- Teacher-directed planned activities.
- Music, songs, and finger plays.

Self-Expression and Communication Skills will be encouraged and developed through:

- Group story time where children participate.
- Acting out stories and plays.
- Readily available music and books.
- Creative play experiences.
- Teacher directed activities.

Creative Expression will be encouraged through:

- Readily available access to creative art materials and creative play equipment.
- Opportunities to use constructive toys.
- Exposure to the fine arts.
- Use of community resources.

Large/Small Muscle Development will be developed by:

- Using climbing apparatus, playground equipment, participating in group activities and classes at the Y, and gym equipment.
- Using puzzles, beads, blocks, art materials, pegs, stacking toys, and finger plays.
- Sensory activities

Intellectual Growth will be developed through:

- Learning centers that challenge children.
- Opportunities to participate in decision making.

Schedules will be planned to include an appropriate balance of the following:

- Active and Quiet Activities - Children are encouraged to engage with others and to have their personal time and space.
- Large Group Activities - Children are encouraged to interact in a large group, take turns, participate themselves, and allow others to participate with them.
- Small Group Activities - Children are assisted in developing particular skills. Those skills include cutting, tracing, balancing, hand-eye coordination, color and shape identification, board games, indoor, outdoor activities and more.
- Literacy Time - Children are exposed to age-appropriate literature and are encouraged to use their imagination, to build a vocabulary and to develop listening skills.
- Academic Achievement - Children will be provided with activities that stimulate learning, including literacy, science, arts, nature, fitness, sports, dancing, cooking, healthy habits, and social, and moral development. Holiday celebrations and cultural awareness will also be incorporated.
- Meal/Snack Time - Children will be encouraged to learn group cooperation, language development, personal discipline, social interaction, nutrition, and to try a variety of different foods.

- Rest: Children under 5 years old and in care more than 4 hours will be given an opportunity to nap or rest. If a child doesn't sleep after 30 minutes rest, they will be allowed to get up and have quiet activities.
- Individual Choice - Children will be provided with ample time throughout the day to make their own choices in selecting a variety of activities.
- Clean-up time - Children are taught to be respectful of people, places, and things. They will take part in the group effort to keep environments clean and safe through clean-up.
- Social Skills Development - The Y Core Values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are reinforced in all activities and built into all lesson plans. Children will also be encouraged to practice personal hygiene and participate in the care of their environment.
- Self Help Skills - Teachers will work towards accomplishing bathroom independence as part of their lessons in the two-year old room. Parents are encouraged to work toward this achievement at home as well.

Outdoor Activities & Field Trips

Children will take advantage of outdoor activities daily for at least 30 minutes each day (weather permitting). Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Parent provided sunscreen will be applied to children prior to going outside. Parents must provide sunscreen with an SPF of 50 or higher and provide written authorization to apply.

A variety of activities will be offered which may include walking field trips and field trips where other transportation is required. Advanced written notice will always be provided prior to the field trip. Staff to child ratios will continue to be followed off-site. A binder with emergency information will also be taken.

Swimming Lessons

The Chippewa Falls YMCA Aquatics department offers swimming lessons for an additional fee to children ages 3 and older. Adult supervision is always present in the pool and lifeguards are on duty. Please let the Early Learning Community Director know if you are interested.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Our center provides transportation for field trips only. We transport children in chartered vehicles. When transportation is contracted or chartered, the name, address and phone number of the contracting firm and after-hours contact information for a representative of the firm must be on file at the center.

Detailed information regarding field trips is located in the FAQ section of this Handbook. General safety rules and procedures regarding transporting children are as follows:

- Children under 3 years of age are not transported.
- A written permission form from parents must be on file for each child participating in a field trip. No child without a form will be allowed to be transported.
- Parents will be notified in advance of each field trip activity. Field trips are posted on the Activity Calendars.
- Children may not be left unattended in a vehicle.
- A second adult, in addition to the driver, must be present if more than 5 children under age 5 are in the bus, or if more than 3 children have a handicap that limits their ability to respond in an emergency.
- To be sure no child is left unattended on a bus, an attendance form will be carried along.
- Child tracking procedures will be strictly adhered to by every teacher. This means that a name-to-face attendance count will be checked whenever they board the vehicle and whenever they exit as well as periodically throughout the outing.
- General emergency numbers, emergency contact information for all children and a cell phone will be carried along by the teacher(s) in charge.

- A first aid kit will always be in the vehicle.
- The bus will be kept clean and uncluttered, with the aisle open for quick exiting.
- Should there be an accident, the center Administrator or Director must verbally inform the licensing office within 24 hours and provide a written report within 5 business days after the incident.
- In the event of an emergency, a center-owned or personal vehicle may be used to transport children.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Child Management Techniques

The goal of the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community is to guide children in becoming cooperative, happy, and responsible participants through positive, non-threatening teaching techniques involving problem solving, communication, and negotiation skills. Guidance shall not damage the child's self-image or embarrass the children involved. Emphasis will be placed on the positive to enhance self-esteem, respect, and self-control. Redirection is used whenever possible. Limits will be displayed and reinforced through active listening, examples: messages, giving information, contingencies, making choices, and natural consequences.

Environmental room arrangements and setting of limits shall be carried out to help each child learn self-control, how to make correct choices, identify feelings and develop a healthy understanding and respect for the feelings of others. The environment will provide optimal space for children to become involved in both group and solitary play. It will be arranged with specific areas, each with set limits and visually accessible to staff.

Children will use the art of communication and negotiation in settling any dispute that arises between them. Staff will encourage children to use active listening to help facilitate negotiation skills. Management of crying, fussing, or distraught children will be addressed through nurturing of individual needs by rocking/comforting, reading stories or one-on-one break away times.

Staff will demonstrate a calm demeanor, politeness, and gentleness with children through actions and tone of voice. These actions will help children learn self-control, identify feelings, and develop an understanding and respect of feelings for others. Every effort will be made by staff to enlist the cooperation of the child and parents to solve problems. Whenever possible, logical, and natural consequences will be used as a format for discipline. Any disciplinary action shall be carried out by staff only, not by volunteers, observers, or other children.

Discipline

Our goal is to guide children in becoming happy, responsible, and cooperative participants through positive teaching techniques. If behavior requires discipline:

- Discipline will be individual to each child and situation. Always considering each child and their needs, abilities, and development. No one single technique will work with every child every time.
- Discipline will be appropriate for the age and developmental stage of each child. Children 3 years of age and older may have a "Refocus Time" in which the child may be removed from the group in a non-humiliating manner and placed in a designated location to interrupt the unacceptable behavior for one minute for each year old that they are not to exceed 5 minutes.
- Discipline will be basically positive: training, not correcting; guiding, not punishing; arranging conditions for learning, not just inhibiting, and restricting. No child may ever be physically grabbed, squeezed, or spanked. Using verbal putdowns or humiliating a child is unacceptable. We will impose limits in a way which respects the child's feelings. We will continually strive to learn as much as possible about children and child development to understand their behaviors and feelings.

Examples of Infractions Requiring Discipline:

Inappropriate language, inappropriate touching, disorderly outbursts, deliberately hiding or changing the truth, physical aggression, intentionally ignoring staff, knowingly breaking expectations after being redirected, leaving area without staff permission, bullying, biting, vandalizing, stealing, possessing an object to cause harm to another person, etc.

Biting

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of children is our concern.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs:

- The biting will be interrupted, and it will be stated to “use gentle touches”.
- If the biting becomes an ongoing or consistent problem, the biting will be interrupted with a firm “No...we don't bite people.” Staff will stay calm and will not overreact. Staff will remove the biter from the situation. The biter will be given something to do that is satisfying.
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water. If it is determined that there was blood exposure, further steps will be taken under Procedure for Incidents Involving Blood Exposure.
- The parents of both children will be notified of the incident and appropriate forms will be filled out by staff. Note: If a bite requires medical treatment, a copy of the incident report must be sent to the licensing consultant within 48 hours.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.

Bullying Prevention and Response

Our goal at the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community is to provide an environment that is safe, caring, and respectful for all children. Bullying includes aggressive and hostile behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power between the bully and the bullied.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Physical, social and or emotional attacks
- Social exclusion and/or isolation
- Teasing, rumors, put-downs
- Anything based on sex, race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, learning disabilities or handicap.

Participants who engage in any form of bullying behavior will be subject to disciplinary action. We ask for parent support in providing the best experience possible for their child(ren) and all our children. We talk and work with the children on expectations and behaviors and ask that parents talk with their child(ren) to remind them of our expectations and rules.

WITHDRAWAL & APPEAL POLICIES

Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawal from the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community at Parent's Request: Two weeks' notice of withdrawal is required in writing to the Early Learning Community Director. The enrollment fee is non-refundable.

Withdrawal from Request of the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community: If the parents/guardians and the staff are unable to come to a mutually satisfying course of action after identifying and processing a concern, the Early Learning Community Director reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of the child.

Written notification prior to withdrawal is not required if the withdrawal is requested by the Director. The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community reserves the right to withdraw a child from the program for any of the following reasons:

- Non-payment of fees
- Repeated failure of parents to pick up the child on time.
- Failure to provide the center with current medical information.
- Chronic or disruptive behavior as discussed in the guidance policy.
- The program is not contributing to the child's emotional/physical development.
- Hostility and lack of cooperation on the part of the parents towards staff
- Conduct that endangers property, health, and safety of others engaged at the center or while under supervision of that authority.

Appeal/Complaints Process

Parents may appeal the Early Learning Community Director's decision to withdraw a child from the program. Appeals should be in writing to the Chippewa Falls YMCA Executive Director. The Executive Director will consider the appeal and a written decision will be mailed to the parents within one week of receipt.

Closure of a Center or Service by the YMCA

If the YMCA of the Chippewa Valley Early Learning Community should have to close for an indefinite period, the parents will be notified with as much advance notice as possible and any unused paid fees would be refunded.