



EARLY LEARNING PARENT HANDBOOK

YMCA Mission Statement

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy mind, body, and spirit for all.

Early Learning Philosophy

YMCA Early Learning programs strengthen families and boost youth development by offering learning readiness experiences and comprehensive child development programs with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our programming at the Y addresses the holistic development of young children by supporting brain development, early literacy, development of healthy habits, and strong parenting skills. Early learning builds a foundation for future and ongoing achievement and success.

PARENT NOTIFICATION OF THE LICENSING NOTEBOOK

Child Care Organizations Act, 1973 Public Act 116

Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs

The center does not keep a licensing notebook, but internet is available onsite. Reports from at least the last three years are available at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

Updated January 2025

Handbook Information

This program handbook contains the policies and procedures of the YMCA Child Care Department in outline form. Please take the time to read the handbook and keep it in a convenient location for reference. The handbook is meant to serve as a reference guide. It is not meant to cover every aspect of the child care program or every situation that may arise. Caregivers should feel free to contact the child care office with questions concerning the contents of the handbook.

Handbook Terms

Throughout the handbook, the term "Caregiver" will be used to refer to the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child in care. The term "Provider" will be used to refer to the YMCA Child Care Department.

Handbook Changes

The Provider reserves the unilateral right to add, delete, modify or amend the policies and procedures described in the handbook at any time. If there is information in this handbook that is not clear please bring to the attention of the Provider and we will work together to make policies more user friendly to families.

Handbook is Property of Program

The handbook is the exclusive property of the YMCA Child Care Department and is intended for the exclusive use of the caregivers of enrolled children. The handbook may not be copied or distributed to any third party without the expressive written permission of provider.

DEI Statement/Cultural Plan

All children deserve an early childhood education that is responsive to their families, communities, and racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. As an early learning staff, we are committed to respecting each child's culture and diverse needs and will always do our best to fulfill those needs. Students are encouraged to use their home language, share cultural celebrations and traditions, and express their feelings and opinions inclusively. Family is the root of our program, and we involve the family in all aspects of what we do for children. We will maintain and conduct all practices in relation to enrollment, guidance, and all other terms and benefits of child care services provided, in a manner that does not discriminate against any child, caregiver, family, or staff member on the basis of age, race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, income, faith, sexual orientation, or cultural background.

YMCA DEI Statement: We are an association made up of people from every walk of life, working side by side to strengthen communities. Together we strive to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, income, faith, sexual orientation, or cultural background, has the opportunity to live life to its fullest and is celebrated as a valued part of our community.

Special Needs Care and Inclusion

Our programs are not set up to offer one-on-one care, but we will do our best to accommodate the needs of all children in our program. Provider will accept and care for children with special needs if the child's needs can be reasonably accommodated by the program. A two-week trial period may be initiated to help understand the needs of the child and family.

Confidential Information

Each child has a right to confidentiality. All information pertaining to children in our programs, including all reports, records, and data are confidential and used for internal purposes only. Information pertaining to children enrolled in the program will not be released to third parties without the express written permission of Caregiver, unless required by statute, court order, or licensing mandate.

Admission Requirements and Registration

The Y Early Learning Center welcomes potty-trained children ages 2 years, 9 months to 6 years old. Registration is required for each school year and summer session before a child can attend.

Our online registration process is available at www.kzooymca.org. At the time of registration, a non-refundable registration fee, along with all applicable weekly fees, must be paid before attendance is permitted. This registration fee cannot be applied toward other child care costs. Tuition rates vary based on part-time or full-time enrollment.

To ensure accessibility for all families, we offer various resources to help reduce or eliminate tuition costs—please see details below. Once a child is registered online, all required paperwork, including immunization records, must be completed and approved by the Provider before attendance.

If you need assistance with online registration, please contact childcare@kzooymca.org to schedule an appointment for support.

Bills and Payments (we are a PRE-PAID SERVICE)

We are a prepaid service and use an automatic payment system. Automatic payment options include: debit or credit cards (VISA or MasterCard) or EFT from a checking or savings account. A payment agreement is required at the time of registration. Late payments or returns may result in a \$20.00 late fee. If payments are delinquent, the child care department reserves the right to terminate child care services. If for any reason during the program your financial situation changes, please let us know so we can do our best to work with you.

Child Development and Care (CDC) Assistance

The CDC program is administered by the State of Michigan and may cover all or part of eligible child care fees for qualifying families. To learn more or determine your eligibility, please visit their website. If you qualify, caregivers must submit a Provider Verification form before the program start date to ensure we can bill the state for attendance. Until official approval from CDC is received, caregivers are responsible for paying all child care fees. Once approval is in place, any applicable overpayments will be credited to the family's account and applied to future weeks of service or refunded.

Depending on the level of assistance a family qualifies for, a weekly copay may still be required. Caregivers receiving CDC assistance are responsible for any remaining balance not covered by the program.

GSRP and KC Ready 4s

Provider partners with both GSRP and KC Ready 4s. These organizations provide tuition support for qualifying families. Families must complete the Kalamazoo County PreK Application to determine eligibility. There are many resources available to assist families in completing the application. Visit www.dreambigstartsmall.org for more information.

Financial Assistance

For families who may not qualify for other sources of tuition support, the YMCA offers an internal financial assistance program. For more information or to apply please reach out to childcare@kzooyymca.org.

Fee Changes

Provider reserves the right to change the child care fee schedule or other fees at any time. If while enrolled in our program, a fee change presents a hardship to your family, please let us know so we can look at available resources.

Required Forms

The forms listed below must be fully completed prior to your child attending the program. Caregivers are solely responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information contained within these forms. Provider assumes no responsibility for keeping forms updated. These forms are available to download from our website or you can request hard copies from childcare@kzooyymca.org.

- Child Information Record
- Agreement and Permission Form
- Immunization Record and Health Appraisal signed by a medical professional

Please note these forms need to be completed or updated every school year and summer session a child attends to ensure your child has a placement in our programs.

Hours of Operation

The Y Early Learning Center operates Monday through Friday throughout the school year; subject to the holiday schedule listed below. The Center opens at 7:00am and closes at 6:00pm.

Holidays and Other Closures

All Programs are closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve and Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the day after
- Christmas Eve and Day, and the day after Christmas
- Select professional development days that will be shared at the beginning of the school year

When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the Program reserves the right to close to observe the holiday either the preceding Friday or the following Monday. The Program will provide thirty (30) days advance notice of a closure due to a weekend holiday.

The Program will be closed for one week between the end of the school year and the beginning of summer camp. It will also be closed for one week between the end of summer camp and start of the new school year. Families will not be charged for those two closure weeks. We are typically closed for the two weeks of winter break but may offer care if there is a high need. If care is offered, only families who sign up for it will be charged.

The fixed child care rate will not be adjusted for holiday closures, days that schools are closed, etc. The weekly fee is a set fee for the week.

Attendance Policy and Absences

Consistent attendance is essential to ensure children receive the fullest learning experience. The full weekly rate remains due regardless of absences, including sick days, personal days, funerals, appointments, holidays, and other missed days.

Each school year, families are allowed two one-week excused absences with proper notice. These weeks may be used separately or consecutively, but partial weeks or individual days will not be credited. Once these two weeks have been used, caregivers are responsible for all future payments, regardless of attendance.

Business Interruption and Virtual Learning Policy

The child care program may close due to unforeseen circumstances such as severe weather, power outages, fire damage, or communicable disease outbreaks. In such cases, caregivers must arrange alternate emergency child care. If the closure lasts fewer than five business days, no adjustments will be made to program fees.

For closures lasting **five or more business days**, our virtual learning policy will take effect. Weekly fees will be reduced to **35%** of the child's current enrollment level, either as a reduced payment or a credit applied to a future week.

Virtual learning will include:

- Ongoing communication with families through the caregiver communication app
- A weekly virtual class meeting (via Zoom, Teams, Google Meet, etc.)
- A weekly at-home activity using common household items
- A weekly teacher-led read-aloud
- Resources to support at-home learning, including learning packets, activity ideas, and suggested daily schedules
- Individual meetings with families as needed

Caregivers agree to resume in-person child care as soon as operations restart. Business interruption closures do not change the required notice period for terminating the child care contract.

Termination

Either Caregiver or Provider may terminate the child care agreement upon two week written notice to the other party. Written notice can be sent to childcare@kzooymca.org. When caregiver does not provide two week written notice, caregiver is still required to pay for the final two weeks of care, following the notice of termination whether or not the child attends the program. Provider reserves the right to terminate this agreement immediately without notice to caregiver if: 1) child care fees and/or other fees are not paid when due, 2) the child's continued participation in the program creates a direct threat of harm to the child, other children, or the provider's staff, 3) caregiver engages in inappropriate caregiver conduct (see below). We will do everything in our power to work with you to keep your child(ren) in our care but in the case we can't find a resolution, we reserve these rights.

Arrival and Departure Procedure

All children must be brought into the program by a caregiver (or other authorized person 16 older) and signed in. Children will be released from the program when a caregiver (or other authorized person 16 or older) notifies the staff of their arrival. All persons picking up a child must be listed on the child information record (CIR).

Child Release Policy

As a condition of providing child care services, caregiver must supply the name of at least one alternative person to whom provider may release the child to in the event of an emergency. Provider will not release the child to any individual whose name does not appear on the CIR. Before provider releases the child, the staff will require that the individual show valid photo identification. Should a caregiver wish to allow an individual not listed on the CIR to pick the child up, caregiver must contact the Child Care office before pickup.

Provider and staff respect the family's privacy, however, if questionable child release situations occur; the provider has a duty to maintain its role as the child's advocate. With respect to child custody disputes, until custody has been established by a court order, neither parent may limit the other parent from picking up the child, and the provider will release the child to a known, identified caregiver. Should a parent not be allowed to pick-up a child, provider must have a court order on file. Caregiver must be aware that the provider and staff are not properly trained to make assessments relating to intoxication or other impairments of any individual appearing to pick-up the child. Provider assumes no responsibility for any injury or harm to the child who has been released to a person on the CIR.

Late Pick-up

All caregivers are expected to abide by the care schedule set forth by the child care department. If a caregiver is going to be late picking up a child, the caregiver is required to notify the provider as soon as possible. A late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed for all late pick-ups.

If a child remains at program after 6:00pm and caregiver has not notified the provider that they will be late, provider will attempt to contact persons listed on the child information record to pick up the child.

If provider is not able to arrange for an authorized person to pick the child up by 6:30pm, provider will contact the police department for further instructions. The provider can under no circumstances take a child from the program to their residence, or the child's residence.

Communication and Engagement

We encourage open and ongoing communication between caregivers and staff. Caregivers are welcome to ask questions about the program or their child's care at any time. Lesson plans, group activities, and general updates will be shared through our caregiver app, and all families will receive an invitation to join their child's group after enrollment. If an alternative form of communication is needed, please speak with your child's teacher.

Caregivers are always welcome to visit the program to observe or spend time with their child. Formal communication includes home visits at the start of the school year (as needed) and conferences three times throughout the year. Families are also encouraged to complete a confidential program survey twice a year to help leadership improve program quality.

We value strong partnerships with families and encourage participation in activities such as Open Houses, Swimming/Tennis events with your child, classroom visits to share special skills and traditions, and our Family Fun Nights. Additionally, families are invited to join our Caregiver Committee, which meets quarterly—both in-person and virtually—to discuss program policies, special events, and ways to show appreciation for our teachers.

Children also have opportunities to share their experiences and interests. Staff document daily observations through anecdotal notes, capturing children's preferences to help shape classroom activities. Meanwhile, staff meet weekly or biweekly to discuss program improvements, address concerns, and ensure a high-quality learning environment.

Guidance Policy and Disruptive Behavior and Social and Emotional Well-Being

Each day, we prioritize nurturing children's social and emotional development. Through meaningful conversations and engaging activities, we create a safe and supportive environment where children feel valued and ready to thrive. In addition to implementing the Second Step curriculum, our dedicated staff closely monitors each child's well-being, ensuring they are not just learning but flourishing. Together, we foster resilience, empathy, and joy, helping children navigate their emotions and build strong connections.

Discipline is a shared responsibility between caregivers, Y staff, and the children themselves. Support and cooperation among all parties are essential for a child's growth and the reinforcement of positive behavior. We recognize that children may sometimes exhibit disruptive behaviors (e.g., biting, hitting, throwing objects, or using inappropriate language). We take a positive guidance approach, understanding that behavior is a form of communication. Rather than simply correcting the behavior, we seek to understand its underlying message and support the child in developing appropriate ways to

express themselves. Teachers interact with children in a firm, friendly, and fair manner that fosters self-esteem and emotional growth. We use the following positive guidance techniques:

- Setting clear limits and expectations
- Modeling and encouraging appropriate behavior
- Redirecting children to more suitable activities
- Teaching coping strategies and problem-solving skills for future situations

Children are clearly informed of expectations for each activity. If a child is struggling to meet expectations, they are:

1. Reminded of the expected behavior
2. Redirected to an appropriate activity
3. Guided through problem-solving strategies to address the situation

When disruptive behavior occurs, we follow a three-tiered system of support:

- **Minor Behavior Incident:** The child is redirected in alignment with our guidance policy. An incident report is completed, and the caregiver is notified at pick-up or drop-off.
- **Major Behavior Incident:** The child is redirected, and separation from the group may be necessary. An incident report is completed, and the caregiver is notified as soon as possible. Depending on the behavior, caregivers may be required to pick up their child.
- **Ongoing Behavioral Incidents:** A caregiver conference is scheduled to discuss strategies for supporting the child in the program. This includes considering any disabilities that may impact behavior. An individualized support plan is developed and implemented in the classroom.

Caregivers are encouraged to discuss behavior concerns with staff and seek guidance on effective strategies for their child. Staff can also help connect families with KRESA and KC Ready 4s for additional support and resources.

We are committed to supporting each child's needs within our program. However, if a child's behavior consistently poses a risk to the well-being of other children or staff, and reasonable accommodations or interventions do not lead to improvement, the child may be disenrolled with a two-week notice to allow caregivers time to find alternative care. If a child's behavior creates an immediate and ongoing threat to safety, disenrollment may occur without notice.

Caregiver Expectations

To maintain a positive and respectful environment, we expect all caregivers to conduct themselves with decency, courtesy, and respect at all times. While in the program, caregivers should not:

- Use physical punishment on their child while on-site
- Address, correct, or discipline a child who is not their own
- Physically engage with a child who is not their own for disciplinary purposes
- Approach another caregiver to discuss their child's behavior
- Share confidential information or pressure staff or other caregivers for information

Behavior concerns should be brought to staff or the Provider, who will address the issue as needed. While disagreements may arise, all discussions must be handled calmly and respectfully. If a caregiver feels a situation is not being handled appropriately, they should contact the Child Care Director.

Private Duty by Employees

Employees of the program are discouraged from accepting offers for private duty (e.g. "babysitting", serving as a "nanny", etc.) for any of the children enrolled in the program. If caregivers choose to request a YMCA child care staff to participate in private duty then the caregiver and employee must complete a release form that is available from the Child Care Department.

Volunteer Policy

For the safety of all involved, if a caregiver wishes to volunteer, they will be asked to follow YMCA volunteer processes and policies. This includes but is not limited to background checks, being supervised by a YMCA employee and not being left alone with a child enrolled in the program.

Supervision and Safety of Youth in YMCA Facilities

The YMCA is committed to ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for all children. Staff are responsible for both direct and indirect supervision of minors in our programs as well as in our facility. Staff members must be easily identifiable, maintain active engagement, and conduct regular monitoring of high-risk areas. Supervision should be continuous in both structured and unstructured settings to promote safety and well-being.

Playground and Recreation Area Supervision

To maintain a secure and enjoyable environment during outdoor and recreational activities, staff must adhere to appropriate staff-to-youth ratios and be strategically positioned to monitor assigned zones with clearly defined boundaries. Staff are expected to remain fully engaged, avoid distractions, conduct regular roll calls, and implement emergency response plans. Periodic assessments will be conducted to ensure ongoing safety and effectiveness.

Supervising Off-Site Activities

Off-site activities pose higher risks due to larger, more dynamic groups and less controlled environments. To ensure safety, all off-site activities require prior approval, parental consent, and adherence to appropriate supervision ratios. Staff must have clearly defined roles and be trained in active supervision, conducting frequent roll checks, and following protocols for transportation, bathroom use, and emergencies. Staff must remain fully attentive, avoiding distractions such as personal cell phones, to maintain continuous supervision and a safe environment for all participants.

Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting

The YMCA is dedicated to fostering a safe and healthy atmosphere for children's growth and development. All staff receive training in child abuse awareness and response as part of New Staff Orientation and participate in ongoing annual training.

As a licensed childcare provider, the YMCA and its employees are mandated reporters, legally required to report any suspected instances of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The YMCA takes this responsibility seriously, ensuring that all reports are handled in strict accordance with applicable laws and policies.

Response to and Reporting of Inappropriate Behavior, Red Flags, and Policy Violations

The YMCA has a structured process for addressing reports of inappropriate behavior, policy violations, or concerning conduct. When such reports are received, supervisors must promptly assess the situation, speak with all relevant parties, and review any prior incidents. Responses may include increased supervision, disciplinary action, or reporting to external authorities if abuse is suspected. A designated internal review team will investigate concerns, identify root causes, and recommend corrective actions to prevent future incidents. If sexual abuse is suspected, the internal review is immediately halted, and external authorities are notified. Based on findings, the YMCA may implement additional training, updated policies, or system-wide changes to reinforce child safety and protection.

Typical Daily Schedule

7:00am	Drop off and center free play
8:30am	Morning meeting
9:00am	Snack
9:30am	Large group time
9:45am	Small group time
10:00am	Planning time
10:15am	Choice time
11:15am	Recall time
11:30am	Read a-loud
12:00pm	Lunch
12:30pm	Gross motor time outdoor weather permitting
1:30pm	Rest time
3:30pm	Afternoon meeting
3:45pm	Snack
4:00pm	Gross motor time outdoor weather permitting
4:30pm	Free play and pick up

A more detailed schedule is posted on the caregiver board and a child-friendly schedule is located in the meeting area.

Classroom Ratios

We will maintain high quality ratios in all our classrooms. Each class will have at least two staff present. The max group size for our preschool (3 year old) group will be 16. The max group size for our prekindergarten (4 year old) group will be 16 with two staff or up to 20 with three staff.

Emergency Policy

The provider has developed a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, which is posted on the caregiver board for easy reference. This plan outlines procedures to be followed in the event of a natural or man-made emergency.

In the event of an emergency, the provider will follow the instructions of local authorities to ensure the safety of all children and staff. We recognize that families will be concerned, and we will communicate updates and instructions as soon as possible via phone, email, and our caregiver communication app.

- Shelter-in-Place: If we must remain inside the facility, we ask that caregivers wait until local authorities issue an all-clear before coming to pick up their children.
- Evacuation: If an evacuation is necessary, children will be transported to a designated safe location. They will only be released to caregivers or authorized persons upon arrival.

For full details on emergency procedures, please review the Emergency Management Plan on the caregiver board.

Meal and Snack Policy

Our program provides breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Meals and snacks feature healthy choices, including fresh fruits and vegetables as often as possible.

We encourage children to eat their healthy foods first before enjoying any treats to help develop lifelong healthy eating habits. However, staff will never force children to eat more than they can handle. To support our focus on nutrition, we ask that families avoid sending overly sugared beverages, including pop.

For children with food allergies, please speak with staff about reasonable accommodations. In cases of severe allergies, families may need to provide daily food for their child.

If you would like to provide a classroom treat for a special occasion, such as a birthday, please discuss it with staff beforehand.

Health Care Service Plan

The center follows a comprehensive health care plan designed to keep children and staff safe. All YMCA child care staff receive training in:

- Bloodborne pathogens and exposure control
- Sanitizing procedures and proper food/milk storage and disposal
- Child immunization and health record maintenance
- Recognizing signs of illness in children
- Emergency response for minor and major injuries
- Medication distribution procedures
- Child abuse and neglect prevention, including mandatory reporting

A copy of the full Health Care Plan is available upon request.

When a Child Becomes Sick at the Program

Staff will notify caregivers of any suspected illness or health concerns. If a child becomes ill during the program, they will be comfortably isolated under supervision, and the caregiver will be required to pick them up within one hour of notification. At the end of each day, staff will disinfect all classroom areas to prevent the spread of illness.

When to Keep a Child Home

To promote a healthy environment, children should stay home when ill. Keeping an unwell child at home not only supports their recovery but also helps prevent the spread of illness. Please keep your child home if they exhibit any of the following:

- Fever of 100°F or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Continuous green mucus
- Lice (child must be completely nit-free before returning)
- Pink eye

With the exception of lice, children must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning.

Caregivers should inform the program if their child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness.

Families will be notified if an illness is circulating within the program.

Staff and volunteers are also required to stay home if they exhibit any of the above symptoms.

Medication Policy

The provider will administer necessary medications following child care licensing guidelines:

- Caregivers must sign a medication permission form for the duration of the medication's use.
- Prescription medications must be in the original container with a pharmacy label that includes the physician's name, dosage, instructions, and medication name/strength. Staff will administer the medication according to these instructions.
- Over-the-counter medications must be in the original container and will only be administered as directed.
- The provider will maintain a record of medication administration, including time and dosage.
- Medications will be stored securely, out of children's reach, and returned to the caregiver when no longer needed. Any unclaimed medication will be properly disposed of.

Accidents and Incidents

We take all possible precautions to prevent accidents and incidents. However, in the event that they do occur, the following procedures will be followed:

Minor Accident (Not Involving the Head): First aid will be administered as needed, an accident report will be completed, and the caregiver will be notified at the next pickup or drop-off.

Accident Involving a Head Injury: First aid will be administered as needed, an accident report will be completed, and the caregiver will be notified as soon as possible.

Major Accident (With or Without a Head Injury): First aid will be administered as needed, the caregiver will be notified as soon as possible, and medical personnel will be contacted if necessary. An accident report will be completed. If the accident results in a visit to a medical professional, the provider will report it to licensing.

Lost Child: All staff will be immediately notified. Staff members not responsible for supervising other children will conduct a search of the facility. If necessary, 911 will be called to report the missing child, and the caregiver will be notified as soon as possible.

Inappropriate Contact: If inappropriate contact occurs, immediate action will be taken to separate the individuals involved. Depending on the severity of the situation, caregivers and appropriate authorities will be contacted as necessary.

Outdoor Play & Preparedness

The program strives to take children outdoors for play on a daily basis, weather permitting. To ensure their safety and comfort:

Sunscreen & Bug Spray: The YMCA provides sunscreen and bug spray, but families are welcome to supply their own if preferred. Annual permission to administer sunscreen and bug spray is included in the registration paperwork.

Clothing & Seasonal Gear: Due to the nature of outdoor activities, children's clothing may occasionally become soiled or damaged. The provider assumes no responsibility for damage to clothing. Families are responsible for ensuring children are dressed appropriately for the weather.

- Winter: Children must arrive with proper winter gear, including a warm coat, snow pants, boots, gloves or mittens, and a hat. Scarves and extra socks are also recommended.
- Spring & Fall: Waterproof boots and rain jackets are encouraged for wet or muddy conditions.
- Summer: Lightweight, breathable clothing, sun hats, and closed-toe shoes are recommended.

Please ensure your child has the necessary items for outdoor play each day. The provider will keep a limited supply of spare items on-site, but availability is not guaranteed.

Pesticide Use Information

The Y Early Learning program uses Griffin Pest Control Company to take care of any pesticide needs inside and outside of the building and classroom. Centers are required by The Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs to give notice of annual pesticide application; this handbook serves as the annual notification. If there is going to be any type of spraying going on in or out of the building while your children are in our care, provider will inform caregivers at least 48 hours in advance in two to different forms. One form will be a notice on the door of the center. Possible other ways of communication include but are not limited to: in a caregiver newsletter, a mass email, a telephone call, or a posting in our caregiver communication app or on our website.

Personal Items from Home

We understand that children may be excited to bring items from home and that they may bring a level of comfort to the child. If Caregiver permits a child to bring an item from home, the provider is not responsible for loss or damage to that item.

Swimming at the YMCA

As part of the Early Learning program children will receive a weekly 30-minute swim lesson (subject to enrollment status). Lessons are conducted by certified swim instructors with support of classroom staff. All licensing regulations related to swimming and ratios will be followed.

Transportation & Field Trips

For programs not located at our main YMCA facilities, we will arrange transportation to and from the off-site location to the YMCA facility for activities such as swimming and tennis lessons. However, the YMCA does not provide transportation to or from a child's home. Families are responsible for arranging their child's transportation to and from the program each day.

The program may also offer field trips as part of our enrichment activities. Parent/guardian permission is required for all field trips, and a signed permission slip must be completed in advance. Families will be notified of field trips in advance, including details about the destination, time, and any necessary items children may need to bring.

Photo Release

Provider may take photos of the children participating in program activities or field trips. The photos may be posted for caregivers and visitors to enjoy. We may occasionally be filmed for the local news, YMCA video use, for YMCA brochures, and/or the YMCA Facebook page. If a caregiver wishes that photos not be taken of their child, a written notice must be delivered to the Child Care Department.

Transitions

Our program is dedicated to making transitions smooth, supportive, and exciting for every child in our care. Whether moving from preschool to pre-K or from pre-K to our Primetime program, we strive to foster confidence and enthusiasm at every stage.

Kindergarten readiness is a key focus, and we take an intentional approach to ensure children feel prepared for this important milestone. As part of our efforts, we implement the Creative Curriculum's "Preparing for Kindergarten" study twice per year—once in the spring and again at the end of summer. This study helps children develop the skills, routines, and confidence needed for a successful transition to kindergarten.