



JESSAMINE CO. YMCA CHILDCARE PARENT HANDBOOK

YMCA Child Development Programs

Philosophy

The Jessamine Co YMCA Childcare Programs are designed to help children of working parents grow physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually through active participation in a variety of enrichment activities.

Objectives

The Jessamine Co YMCA Childcare Programs have the following objectives:

- ❖ To provide safe, high quality child care for children by exceeding state guidelines.
- ❖ To employ well trained, professional staff that have a genuine love and respect for children and their families.
- ❖ To offer a variety of stimulating activities in a choice based curriculum.
- ❖ To teach Character Development through modeling and encouraging the values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.

Character Development

The mission of the YMCA is to put Christian Principles into practice through programs that help kids succeed in life, help adults improve themselves and bring families closer together. We demonstrate those Christian Principles through active participation in a variety of enrichment activities.

Our Position on Child Abuse

The Y advocates a positive guidance policy with an emphasis on reinforcement, redirection, prevention and the development of self-discipline. We take an active effort to prevent child abuse and are committed to making our camp programs a safe, nurturing environment for every child.

We do not condone and will not permit:

- ❖ Corporal punishment
- ❖ Ridiculing, threatening, using an inappropriate loud voice
- ❖ Leaving children unsupervised
- ❖ Use of profanity

We take the following steps to ensure the safety of children and staff involved in our programs:

- ❖ All staff and volunteers must submit to a thorough background check including references, criminal history checks, and child abuse and neglect checks.
- ❖ Allegations or suspicions of child abuse are taken seriously and will be reported to the State for investigation.
- ❖ Programs are structured so that no staff member is left alone with one child.
- ❖ Staff and volunteers are prohibited from fraternizing with children outside the programs, including babysitting, transporting children in their personal vehicle, giving gifts and inviting children home.
- ❖ Mandatory pre-employment and random drug testing for all staff.

Our staff are not permitted to baby-sit or transport in their personal vehicles children who are enrolled in Y camps. Immediate disciplinary action will be taken by the Y toward staff if a violation is discovered. Please do not put staff in a difficult situation jeopardy by asking for these services.

YMCA Child Development Programs have a clear responsibility to protect and promote the YMCA's goal, which include teaching children to resolve conflicts in non-violent and non-aggressive ways. This policy identifies unacceptable behaviors by parents, staff and visitors while at the YMCA Child Development Programs. We expect that staff, parents and visitors will treat each other kindly and with respect, keeping in mind that we are role models for our children.

The unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to the following:

- ❖ Profanity
- ❖ Mental or bodily harm
- ❖ Destruction of property
- ❖ Dishonesty or misrepresentation
- ❖ Threats, intimidation, or harassment
- ❖ Disruption or obstruction
- ❖ Violation of Criminal Law

Our Behavior Management

The Y is, and always will be, dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected and secure children, adults, families and communities. We nurture the potential of every youth and teen by helping them to learn the skills needed to live comfortably with themselves and others. We believe that all individuals need to be responsible for his/her actions, and we encourage kids to make choices that are respectful to others as well as to themselves. We help children in recognizing alternatives and consequences, which will help guide them to a more mature and appropriate behavior.

Our first efforts will be toward setting kids up for success:

- ❖ Planning the program to meet the needs of the children.
- ❖ Keeping staff to child ratios at, or below, state recommended guidelines.
- ❖ Being consistent.
- ❖ Offering problem-solving assistance.
- ❖ Stating directions and rules in a positive way.
- ❖ Encouraging feelings of self-confidence.
- ❖ Redirecting children.

Immediate action will be taken when a child's choices become inappropriate:

- ❖ Discussing the behavior with the child.
- ❖ Removing the child from the group.
- ❖ Keeping parents updated.
- ❖ Writing a behavior report.
- ❖ Working with parents to solve conflicts.

We expect that all children in our programs will have respect for others and their property. Y programs should be a safe and fun experience for all kids, so behaviors that become a constant disruption or a danger to campers or staff will not be allowed. **Behavior reports are issued for unacceptable behaviors, and suspension may occur for repeated behaviors. Immediate suspension or expulsion may occur in the case of severe behavior problems.** Children who have been suspended may not attend any Y camps for the specified number of days. Children who have been expelled may not return to any Y camp or childcare program on a permanent basis.

Please go over the following behavior guidelines with your child(ren):

Character Development is important to our camp programs. The Y is a place where people should be caring, honest, respectful, and responsible everyday. Our staff remind children of the rules everyday, and these rules help to keep everyone safe and having fun. We should always think before we act, and understand that our choices have consequences.

Basic Child Development Program rules:

Be Caring—Use nice words. Keep hands and feet to yourself. Help others when you can.

Be Honest—Always tell the truth. Be accountable for your actions. Use equipment properly.

Be Respectful— Use inside voices and walking feet. Listen and follow directions. Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Treat Y supplies and equipment with proper care.

Be Responsible—Remember to bring all items needed from home each day. Clean up after yourself. Stay within sight of Y staff at all times. Remember to take home all your belongings each day.

Acceptable behaviors

- ❖ Asking the Y staff if you can have a minute to “cool off”
- ❖ Asking the Y staff to help you resolve a conflict with another child

- ❖ Asking the Y staff to sit down with you and talk about your problems
- ❖ Choosing another activity that is offered
- ❖ Using appropriate words, not physical force, to solve problems with other children

Unacceptable behaviors

- ❖ Bullying in any form (physical, verbal, sexual, emotional, mental)
- ❖ Use of profanity, biting, spitting, hitting or sexual misconduct
- ❖ Failure to cooperate with staff's directions or leaving the group without permission for any reason
- ❖ Physical violence or the threat of, towards others. Possession of a weapon of any kind.
- ❖ Unsafe behavior while at the program site, on the playground, on the bus, or on field trips
- ❖ Destruction of property belonging to school or camp site, the Y, staff or other children

School Year Camps and All Day Programs

The YMCA provides all day camp programming on select days when Jessamine County Public schools are out of session (In-service, Records/Conference, Professional Development, Winter Break, Spring Break, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day). **All children wishing to attend all-day school year camp programs must sign-up in advance at their after-school program or by calling 885-5013. All children wishing to attend all day school year camp programs must sign up in advance at their afterschool site or by calling 885-5013. A non-refundable, non transferable deposit equal to one full day's fee is required to hold a spot. This enables us to know the number of children in advance, and lets us prepare our staffing and supply needs.** All of our camp programs have a minimum and maximum enrollment, and spots are reserved on a first come-first served basis.

Children who are registered participants, but who did not sign up for the all day camp may not be able to attend if we are at our maximum capacity. Sign up sheets for upcoming programs will always be available 1 week before the all-day camp.

Drop-off and Pick-up Policies Camps and After-School Programs

Signing In

State Licensing regulations require that children attending All day or camp programs must be walked inside and signed in by a parent. This is for the safety of your child and is consistent with our policy that no child is out of sight of an adult at any time. Parents who do not walk their child in each day will be asked to find other childcare arrangements. Your cooperation with our safety policies is greatly appreciated. This also enables the Site Director to give you any important information regarding payment, upcoming camp

programs, or behavior issues. Children cannot be signed in prior to our scheduled opening time.

Children attending after-school programs are responsible for arriving at the program immediately after school dismissal so they can be checked in by a staff member. In agreement with school policy, we cannot let children go back to their classroom to retrieve belongings after they have arrived at the YMCA program.

Signing Out

Parents are required to sign out their child at the end of the day by filling in the time and their full signature. Children will be released only if proper identification can be shown and checked with the authorized pick-up persons on your child's registration form. Children can be released only to those persons 16 years of age or older who have valid picture identification. Please notify the Site Director if there is a change in your authorized pick-ups. If you are requesting that a non-custodial parent not be allowed to pick up your child, we must have a notarized document from the court stating which parent has custody. **Please bring your ID every day, as there might be days when different staff will be at the Parent Table.** Children in the gym/playground/library must be signed out with the Site Director first, then parents may be sent to pick them up. This enables us to make sure all adults entering our program are authorized pick-ups and that the children are supervised at all times. Please help us to make sure that all children are supervised by not letting your child wander through the school or walk out to the parking lot alone after you have signed him/her out.

Summer Camps

Summer Camps require a new registration form and must be turned in to the Jessamine County YMCA office. Registrations fees are required at time of registration. All summer camps require weekly non-refundable, non-transferable deposits and children must be pre-registered to attend. All camps have a minimum and maximum enrollment. Scholarship recipients must reapply for summer financial assistance.

Allergies

Please make our staff aware of all allergies your child may have by writing them on the registration form. If your child has severe allergies, please make sure the staff has written instructions on what to do if your child has an allergic reaction. Precautions will be taken to provide a "peanut free" zone if a child in our care has a severe peanut allergy. Please check the daily snack menu (if applicable) and inform the Director if your child needs an alternate snack.

Medication

State regulations require that medication be administered only with written orders from a physician, and daily written instructions from a parent. The medication must be in its original container and the label must contain the child's name, expiration date, and dosage instructions. Over-the-counter medications must also be in the original container with the appropriate dosage instructions. **A medication authorization form must be completed and written**

permission to administer must be given daily. Please sign the medication permission slip for your child for the NEXT day when signing him/her out—you cannot sign ahead of time for upcoming days. Please make sure to include any additional instructions concerning possible side effects or interactions. The YMCA keeps all medication in a lock box for the safety of your children. Please help to keep our programs safe by giving all medications directly to the Site Director and not allowing your child to carry it with his/her belongings. Medication guidelines apply to prescription and non-prescription medicines, including sunscreen. Medication authorization forms are available from your child's Site Director. Medication that is left over and not picked up after camps or school-year programs have ended will be disposed of properly.

Illness

The YMCA wants to make our programs safe for all participants. Children who are ill can jeopardize the health of other children and childcare staff. If your child exhibits any of the following signs or symptoms of illness, you will be called to pick up your child immediately:

- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- ◆ Conjunctivitis ("pink-eye")
- ◆ Evidence of lice, scabies, ringworm or other parasitic infestation
- ◆ Diarrhea

Children with lice must use a doctor approved treatment and be free of nits (unhatched eggs) for 24 hours before returning to the program. When a child has had a communicable disease the YMCA must be notified immediately. Children may return to the program after providing written permission from their doctor. The YMCA appreciates your efforts to arrive at the program promptly to pick up your child in the event of illness.

Emergency Procedures

A staff person is always on duty that is trained in CPR and First Aid. A first aid kit is kept at each program. In the event of an emergency, parents will be contacted immediately. If we feel it is necessary, we will contact the Emergency Medical Service to assist us in first aid procedures, or to transport the child to the hospital. Should a child be transported to the hospital, a YMCA staff person will accompany him/her. It is very important to keep your child's registration form updated, as this is where we will obtain our information in an emergency. The YMCA carries liability insurance only, and will not be responsible for injuries and accidents while participating in YMCA programs; families must carry their own accident insurance.

Toys From Home

The YMCA offers many enrichment activities for the children in the program. In accordance with school policies and to avoid potential problems, children are not permitted to bring toys or other items from home. This includes but is not limited to Walkmans, Gameboys, trading cards, action figures, cars, candy, and money.

Payment Policies

Payments are scheduled on an automatic draft that will occur on Monday of each week schedule on automatic draft. Automatic draft payments that will occur on Payments can be made at The Jessamine Co Y branch.

Children with outstanding balances for any Y program cannot attend until balance is paid in full.

Payment Guidelines

- Payment must be in the form of a check or money order only, payable to the YMCA of Central Kentucky. Please write your child's name and camp in the memo portion of your check. If outside agencies are paying your childcare fees, the Y must have written documentation or you will be responsible for payment in full on the due date.
- In the event of a returned check or draft, parents must pay the amount of check plus a \$15.00 returned check fee. Failure to do so in the allotted time will result in suspension of childcare. After three returned checks or drafts, only money orders will be accepted.

Open Doors

Through the generous contributions of our donors, the YMCA of Central Kentucky provides financial assistance that enables all members of our community to enjoy Y programs, regardless of income. Sharing the financial responsibility for a Y membership or program will give you peace of mind as well as a sense of ownership and pride. Those who qualify will be asked to pay only a portion of the established rate. Applications may be picked up at any Y Member Services or online at www.ymcaofcentralky.org. Applications take 5-10 business days to approve and usually valid for one year before a renewal is required.

Our sites located in Jessamine County Public Schools accept Child Care Assistance Program funding (CCAP)—we must have a valid contract stating the YMCA as the provider and parent is responsible for any costs not covered by CCAP.

Parent Involvement

The Jessamine Co YMCA Childcare Programs offer many ways for parents to become involved in our school year and camp programs. Some volunteer opportunities are sharing a talent or skill, storytelling, leading a craft project, playing games with the children, or being a guest speaker. Can't give the gift of time? The YMCA is always looking for donations of scrap paper, dramatic play props, craft supplies, and more. Ask your Site Director if he/she can turn your "trash" into "treasure" at the program. A parent newsletter is available each month to inform you of upcoming events.

Annual Giving Campaign

The YMCA is committed to providing high quality childcare that is affordable for everyone. It is our mission that no family be turned away for an inability to pay. **Annual Giving Campaign** is our annual fundraising drive where all money collected goes to providing need based scholarships for childcare programs and camps. We hope that all parents who utilize and support our programs can help to support this campaign and make the Jessamine Co YMCA Childcare Programs available to all children in need. If you would like to help the Director of your school year program or camp raise funds for this worthy cause, please let them know. Volunteers are always needed and appreciated! Call 885-5013 for more information.