



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

# **PRESCHOOL 2021-2022**

## **STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK**

**Shady Grove Family YMCA**

Revised January 30, 2021

## **Welcome to the Shady Grove Family YMCA Preschool!**

We build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

We provide a loving environment where children can develop new skills while having fun and learning to socially interact with their teachers and other children.

### **Mission Statement**

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

### **Educational Philosophy**

“Children do not need to be forced to learn;  
they are motivated by their own desire to make sense of their world.”  
(National Association for the Education of Young Children)

Our job in teaching children is to facilitate or guide each child according to the child’s individual learning style and development.

**SHADY GROVE FAMILY YMCA PRESCHOOL  
STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK  
2021-2022**

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the entire Preschool staff, I would like to express how excited we are that you have chosen the Shady Grove Family YMCA Preschool for your child. We look forward to getting to know each of you and your children. We attribute our success at Preschool to a close relationship between parents and teachers. We welcome your ideas, opinions and concerns. This year will be a wonderful experience for your child. We delight in seeing them grow and learn and become more independent. We realize that separating from parents for the first time can be difficult (especially for the parents). We are here to make the transition as smooth as possible. Please let me know if I can help in any way to make your Preschool experience a positive one.

Thanks for sharing your children with us.

Margina Grow  
Sr. Program Director  
804-729-4787  
[growm@ymcarichmond.org](mailto:growm@ymcarichmond.org)

**Your hand in your child's learning is the imprint that really lasts!**

# SHADY GROVE FAMILY YMCA PRESCHOOL

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## CALENDAR

In general, schedule follows Henrico County School Calendar for student holidays.

2021 Schedule	2022 Schedule
**September 9th-Parent Orientation 9:30-11:30am for T/TH, T/TH/F, M-TH classes (Parents Only)	January 4th -Preschool reopens
**September 10th - Parent Orientation 9:30am-11:30am for MWF and M-F classes (Parents Only)	January 18th- Martin Luther King Holiday- <b>Preschool closed</b>
*September 13th - Open House MWF 9:30am-11:30am	January 29th- <b>Preschool Half Day 9am-10:30am</b>
*September 14th- - Open House M-TH, M-F, T/TH, T/TH/F 9:30am-11:30am	February 5th - Teacher Workshop - <b>Preschool Closed</b>
September 15th - First day of school for M-F, MWF, M-TH - <b><u>Curbside Service Begins at 9 am, Early Drop Off Begins at 8am in Child Watch (Busy Bees)</u></b>	**February 11th 11:15am-12:00pm Valentine's Day Family Celebration (T/TH, M-TH)
September 16th- <b>Preschool Closed/Yom Kippur</b>	**February 12th - 11:15am-12:00pm Valentine's Day Family Celebration (MWF, M-F PreK, M-F 3's, T/TH/F)
September 17th- First day of school for T/TH/F	February 15th - <b>Henrico County Half Day 9am-10:30am</b>
September 21st-First day of school for T/TH	March 12th - <b>Henrico County Half Day 9am-10:30am</b>
**September 30th-Parents Coffee 9:30am-10:30am	**March 31st - Spring Parties (MWF)
**October 28th-Fall Parties 11am-12pm T/TH, M-TH	**April 1st-Spring Parties (T/TH, T/TH/F, M-TH, M-F 3's, M-F PreK)
**October 29th-Fall Parties 11am-12pm T/TH/F, M-F, MWF	April 2nd- <b>Henrico County Half Day 9am-10:30am</b>
November 3rd - <b>Preschool Closed-Election Day</b>	April 5th-9th Spring Break ( <b>Preschool Closed</b> )
November 13th- <b>Preschool Closed-Student Holiday</b>	April 15th-Parent Teacher Conferences (T/TH, M-TH classes only) <b>Preschool Closed for these classes only</b>
November 11th-Parent/Teacher Conferences (T/TH, M-TH) <b>Preschool Closed for these classes only</b>	April 16th -Parent Teacher Conferences (M-F, MWF, T/TH/F classes only) <b>Preschool Closed for these classes only</b>
November 12th - Parent/Teacher Conferences (MWF, M-F, T/TH/F) <b>Preschool Closed for these classes only</b>	April 26th-April 30th Teacher Appreciation
**November 22nd- Thanksgiving Program (M-F PreK, MWF PreK, MWF 2's, MWF 3's)	May 13th- <b>Preschool Closed</b>
**November 23rd- Thanksgiving Program (M-TH, T/TH, T/TH/F, M-F 3's)	May 26th-Last Day of Preschool for the MWF classes
November 24th-28th Preschool <b>Closed-Thanksgiving</b>	**May 26th-Celebration for the MWF 2's and 3's 11:00am
**December 17th- Winter parties M-TH, T/TH	May 27th - Last Day of Preschool for M-F, T/TH, T/TH/F, M-TH
**December 18th- Winter parties MWF, M-F, T/TH/F	**May 27th-Celebration for M-F 3's, T/TH, T/TH/F
December 21st - January 1st - Winter Break - <b>Preschool Closed</b>	**May 28th - Pre-K Graduation starts at 10:00am - M-TH 4s, M-F 4s, M/W/F 4s
	**May 28th - Family Picnic starts at 11:00 - all classes

\*Adult must accompany child. Other restrictions may be implemented to ensure social distancing.

\*\* These activities are contingent on the Governor's requirements.

### Additional activities occur throughout the year include:

Library visits once a month

October: Fire Safety Presentation (PreK only)

February: Dentist Visit

March: Spring Pictures

April: Graduation Pictures

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**ALL ACTIVITIES AND POLICIES ARE CONTINGIENT ON THE GOVERNOR'S, CDC, AND STATE LICENSING GUIDELINES AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME.**

## **PAYMENT**

Tuition can be paid in full or on a monthly basis. Tuition payments must be paid through our automatic draft program. **Tuition will not be refunded or prorated for family vacations, snow days or any other absences.** Tuition payments are drafted on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Please direct any questions about your account to the Preschool Director.

### **Prices for the 2020-2021 Preschool year**

Program	Days of the Week	Facility Member Price (per month)	Non-Member Price (per month)
Two year olds	Tuesday/Thursday	\$200	\$255
Two year olds	Monday/Wednesday/Friday	\$250	\$320
Three year olds	Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday	\$250	\$320
Three year olds	Monday-Friday	\$400	\$520
Four year olds-Pre-K	Monday-Thursday	\$305	\$395
Four year olds-Pre-K	Monday-Friday*	\$420	\$540

\* Includes weekly swim lessons

## **ADMISSION**

The Shady Grove Family YMCA has open enrollment throughout the year. A child must meet the age requirement for the specific program by **September 30<sup>th</sup>** of that school year to qualify for the program. Registration is available online; however, licensing packets must be completed and submitted before preschool begins. The licensing packet includes a registration form and physical/ immunization form and is available on our website [www.ymcarichmond.org](http://www.ymcarichmond.org).

The registration form requires two emergency contacts that are within 30 minutes of the YMCA. Complete addresses are required. The physical/immunization form must be signed by a physician and have been completed within one year before the start of preschool. The physical/immunization form is required prior to attending Preschool. We also require a copy of your child's birth certificate or passport.

## **HOURS**

Our first full day of school is Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. Our program begins at 9AM and ends at 12 noon. **We ask that you do not drop your children off before 9:00am.** All children should be picked up by 12 noon unless registered for enrichment classes. **A late fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child, will be charged for any child not picked up by the scheduled end of day. It must be paid, by draft of account or by check, the Monday following the late occurrence.**

Please call the Preschool office before 8:30AM if your child is not attending that day. You may call Margina Grow at 729-4787.

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#### **CLOSURES**

Preschool follows the Henrico County School calendar. Preschool is closed if Henrico County Schools are closed; this includes holidays. If Henrico County Schools have a scheduled half-day, then our Preschool will operate from 9am-10:30am. If enrolled in early drop off, your child can still be dropped off at 8am. If Henrico County Schools are **closed** due to inclement weather, then our Preschool is also **closed**. If Henrico County Schools have a **delayed** opening due to inclement weather, then our Preschool will be open from 10:30am-12:30pm. **Early drop off will not be available.** If Henrico County Schools dismiss before 12:00pm due to inclement weather, then our Preschool will close at the same time. Our Preschool will close for two days in November and for two days in April for Parent Teacher Conferences. We will also be closed one day in February for a teacher day of professional development.

If an unseen situation arises that jeopardizes the health and safety of our families and staff, the YMCA will not refund a partial month payment. However, our families have the option of stopping their payments going forward, if a YMCA closure exceeds thirty days or if the required two-week notice is given to administration.

#### **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP SERVICES**

Beginning September 15<sup>th</sup>, we will be offering a curbside drop- off/pick-up service. The following rules will apply for this service:

##### **Drop-Off**

A Preschool teacher will meet all children. **Please do not leave your car at the curb to escort your child into the building. Please do not let your child enter the building alone. Please follow the curbside service guidelines when using this service.** Curbside Service guidelines will be sent via email prior to school beginning in September.

Children must have either a booster seat or car seat to use the service. Director can revoke curbside service privilege if policies are consistently broken or misused.

Participants must enter from Twin Hickory Rd and turn right into the large YMCA parking lot next to the school-age playground, as detailed in the curbside service map. Entering the curbside line without using the large parking lot could result in termination of the service. Please do not make a U-turn after you have dropped off your child. Proceed to the exit closest to the soccer fields.

All children will have their temperature taken from curbside service. Parents and guardians will be required to submit to a health screening for their child each time they drop off their children for preschool.

##### **Pick-Up**

Pick-up will begin at 12 noon. Each child will be given a car tag in a color coordinating with their class. Please keep it in your car and hang it on your rear view mirror for easy reference. Please send a written note with your child if anyone else is picking up your child from Preschool or if your child is going home with another child. If someone without a nameplate is picking up your child, we ask that they come inside so that we can verify that they are authorized to pick up your child. We require a picture ID at the time of pickup. You may also receive your child inside the Preschool. We ask that you enter the building through the main entrance and wait at the crossroads for your child's teacher to bring you your child. **YOU MUST HAVE YOUR CAR TAG TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD INSIDE.**

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All children should be picked up by 12 noon. **A late fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child, will be charged for any child not picked up by the scheduled end of day. It must be paid, by draft of account or by check, the Monday following the late occurrence.** The Shady Grove Family YMCA highly encourages pick up and drop off from the curbside service due to COVID-19.

**Pick-Up during celebrations:** We encourage parents to attend our classroom parties, Thanksgiving Feast, and end of the year celebration (PreK Graduation). At the end of the celebration, at 11:55am, all the children will be dismissed from the circle time rug in their classroom. If you leave before 11:55am, please communicate with your child's teacher that you are leaving with your child. If you are unable to attend the celebration, please communicate this information with your child's teacher. (All parties are contingent on guidelines and updates from the Governor of Virginia.)

### Authorized Pickup

Each teacher will have a list of individuals that are allowed to pick up your child. If your child is leaving with anyone that is not on the list, a written note needs to be given to your child's teacher. Your child's safety is our number one priority. Please be sure and use your car tag when using the curbside service or picking up your child inside the YMCA. When someone else is picking up your child that we do not know, we will ask for a picture ID. It is your responsibility to relay this information to the person transporting your child.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Clothing

We highly encourage sending children in comfortable clothing that is easy for them to maneuver when going to the bathroom. Also, please keep in mind when dressing your child that we frequently paint at Preschool. It is very important to send a seasonally appropriate change of clothes in your child's backpack each day. Please also send a change of shoes and socks. Bathroom accidents sometimes occur and we want to avoid calling parents to bring a change of shoes.

We go outside every day the weather permits. Please send coats, mittens and hats with your child when the weather is cold. **Sneakers** must be worn on "Creative Movement" days. If a child is not wearing sneakers they may not be allowed to participate. Your child should wear closed-toed shoes each day for the playground. The mulch can be hard on little toes when the children are wearing sandals.

### Behavior Related Issues

Our philosophy is to guide the behavior of children by encouraging positive choices and re-directing from undesirable behavior. When unacceptable behavior is developing, we will use verbal reminders, redirection and positive reinforcement to guide behavior. Your child's teacher will provide written communication if your child demonstrates a pattern of disruptive behavior or injures himself or someone else in the classroom.

Inappropriate behavior will be documented in writing. This is to include behaviors that impact other children, staff members, or the group as a whole. If the child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a recurring basis, parents will be asked to meet with the child's teacher and Preschool Director. If the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary for the child to be sent home, or

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removed from the Preschool program altogether. Removal from the program will be at the discretion of the Preschool Director and Shady Grove Family YMCA Executive Director.

#### Withdrawal/Dismissal

A two-week written notice is required to withdraw from the Preschool program. Registration fees and tuition payments made prior to withdrawal are non-refundable. If a child is dismissed from the program for behavioral issues, the registration fee/tuition payment will not be refunded.

#### Birthdays

Your child's birthday is very special to us. We are very happy to acknowledge this occasion at school. We cannot accept special snacks, but your child will receive a gift from their teacher and a crown to wear for the day. We will celebrate summer birthdays in the last week of the Preschool.

#### Parent Volunteers

Parents are always welcome to volunteer in the classroom. There are many ways that parents can assist in our classrooms: volunteering to read to the class, assisting the teachers, assisting with class parties, preparing art materials, assisting on picture day, and many others. Please let your child's teacher or the Preschool Director know if you are interested in volunteering in preschool or in any other department at the Shady Grove Family YMCA. **Our volunteer program is contingent on guidelines with the recommendations of the Governor of Virginia and the ability to social distance within the classroom.**

#### Lost and Found

Please make every effort to label your child's belongings when possible. Lost and found items will be kept in the hallway next to the Child Care doors. Please let your child's teacher know if your child is missing something.

#### School Pictures

A professional photography company will be taking school pictures in the fall and in the spring. The PreK classes will also have pictures in cap and gown in the spring for graduation. This service is completely optional and is for the parents' benefit only. Please let your child's teacher know if you do not want your child to participate. Proofs will be sent home to the parents.

#### Health and Safety

At the Y, we take the safety and well-being of our program participants seriously. Here are the health precautions that we are taking under COVID-19:

Equipment and touch points will be wiped down on a regular basis throughout the day. This includes bathroom areas, tables and doors, playgrounds, and additional hard surfaces.

All children and staff will be required to have their temperature taken on arrival. Parents must complete a screening form for their child upon arrival. Any child or staff with a temperature of 100° will not be permitted to attend Preschool that day and must be fever free for **72 hours** before returning to the preschool program. **Any child or staff member that is COVID positive or lives with someone who is COVID positive must quarantine for 14 days.** We ask that parents or guardians notify the Preschool Director within 24 hours if anyone in their household has a confirmed case of COVID-19. Staff will be required to wear masks upon entering the workplace and while they are in the building. Parents or guardians must wear masks when picking up their child from the



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indoor pick-up area and must maintain 6 feet social distancing. Children 5 years (and older) are required to wear a mask in the program; children under 5 years are recommended to wear a mask.

If your child needs to keep medication at Preschool such as the EpiPen or Benadryl we must have written permission from your doctor in order for our staff to administer medicine. Parents must provide written information about any allergy your child has and a description of symptoms to watch for in the event of exposure. Reaction protocol in writing from the attending physician is required. Necessary medication will be kept in a locked cabinet in the Director's office.

The Preschool staff are all trained and certified in First Aid and CPR. They have also received Daily Health Observation training. Any staff which administers medications has received Medication Administration Training (MAT). We observe health screening for sick children. Hand washing is required by children and staff before snack and after bathroom breaks.

Please do not send a sick child to Preschool if any of the following apply:

- ❖ Contagious illness evidenced by sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, constant cough, heavy nasal discharge, headache, etc. (Child can return to the program when symptom free for 72 hours.)
- ❖ Child's temperature  $\geq 100^{\circ}$  (Child can return to the program when symptom free for 72 hours.)
- ❖ Head lice (Child can return once it has been treated. Must be checked by a staff member prior to the student returning.)
- ❖ Ring Worm (Must be treated and area must be covered; if it cannot be covered, we will need a doctor's note for the student to return.)
- ❖ COVID-19 (positive, suspected to be positive, or exposed to a person that is positive with COVID-19).

### Child Abuse Prevention

Throughout its history, the Y has been a strong advocate for the child and children's rights; as a result, mistreatment or neglect of children and the resulting severe effects are of primary concern to the YMCA.

To prevent the abuse of children in our care, the YMCA requires the following conduct and prohibitions:

- ❖ Staff and volunteers shall not abuse or neglect children. The following may be examples of abuse and neglect:
  - Physical abuse: strike, spank, shake, slap.
  - Verbal abuse: humiliate, degrade, threaten, yell.
  - Sexual abuse: inappropriate touch or verbal exchange.
  - Mental abuse: shaming, withholding love, cruelty.
  - Neglect: withholding food, water, basic care, etc.
- ❖ Staff and volunteers are prohibited to have contact with children with whom their only relationship is through YMCA programs at any time outside of the YMCA facilities or program(s). This includes babysitting.
- ❖ Staff and volunteers are prohibited from transporting children in their personal vehicles.
- ❖ Staff and volunteers shall never leave a child unsupervised.
- ❖ At no time during a YMCA program may staff or volunteers be alone with a single child where others cannot observe him/her. As staff and volunteers supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff can see them.

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- Staff and volunteers should conduct or supervise the following private activities in pairs, if at all possible: putting on bathing suits, changing clothes, taking showers, etc.
- When this is not feasible, staff and volunteers should be positioned so they are visible to others.
- ❖ Staff and volunteers will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and their right to say "no". Affectionate touch and the warm feelings it brings is an important factor in helping a child grow into a loving and peaceful adult.
- The rule of thumb for staff is to not touch any areas that a bathing suit would cover, including swim trunks.
- Appropriate touch includes side hugs, pats on the back and high fives.
- ❖ Staff and volunteers will make sure that suspicious or unknown individuals are not occupying the restroom before allowing children to use the facilities.
- ❖ Children in YMCA programs must treat each other with Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility. Child-to-child prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:
  - Bullying and
  - Sexual behaviors to include inappropriate touching, exposing body parts, using sexualized language, making threats of sexual activity, engaging in sexual activity, and similar types of interactions.
- ❖ Staff and volunteers report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities for investigation. The YMCA is mandated by state law to report suspicions of abuse.

If you observe violations of these procedures or any other red flags, the YMCA asks that you bring your concern to the Site Supervisor/Director. If you feel your concerns are not addressed appropriately, some additional reporting options are as follows:

- ❖ Contact the YES Center at 804-649-9622 or [ygradmin@ymcarichmond.org](mailto:ygradmin@ymcarichmond.org).
- ❖ Call the YMCA Safety Line at 804.474.4345. (This is a voicemail; please leave a message and the Y will get back to you.)
- ❖ Email [ethics@ymcarichmond.org](mailto:ethics@ymcarichmond.org)

To prevent abuse of children in our communities, it is our job as a community organization to educate ourselves, our children and their parents and guardians about potential dangers in our community and to protect them from these dangers. At the Y, we ask our parents and guardians to be our partners in child abuse prevention. The Parent Education Guide seeks to equip you to be informed about child abuse and to protect your child from abuse. See attached Parent Education Guide.

### Swimming Rules

Since your child may participate in Swim Lessons and/or free swim, it is of the utmost importance that you know and understand our Swimming Rules.

- ❖ All children must pass the swim test in order to participate in free swim.
- ❖ No running, pushing or dunking.
- ❖ No abusive language or rough play will be allowed.
- ❖ The lifeguard has the right to dismiss anyone who is careless or dangerous to others.
- ❖ No diving in shallow water.
- ❖ No food or drinks in pool area.
- ❖ No unauthorized flotation devices.

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#### Snacks

Please provide a snack for your child each day. We encourage healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, yogurt, or crackers. We also encourage water for the drink. Water will be readily available each day for your child.

We have several children with life threatening allergies. **Please do not send any snacks with peanuts/peanut butter or tree nuts. This policy includes lunch during enrichment classes.**

#### Communication

Communication between the preschool and our families is very important to us. We feel it is crucial to your child having a positive experience at preschool.

Each class will have a secure independent website through Shutterfly. You will be able to stay up to date with classroom news and pictures. The website will have the monthly calendar, opportunities for volunteers, and class updates. Each teacher also has an email address listed on their website.

Each child will also be given a folder that will go back and forth with the child each day. This a great way to communicate with the teacher.

#### Concerns

We are always interested in your thoughts and concerns. Please keep us informed of any concerns or issues that arise during the year. You may contact Margina Grow at [growm@ymcarichmond.org](mailto:growm@ymcarichmond.org) or 729-4787.

#### CURRICULUM

Our Preschool is licensed and operates by the standards of the Virginia Department of Social Services. Our curriculum consists of age appropriate lesson plans that have been created through careful research into how children learn. We use storyboards, learning centers, art, finger plays, and circle time to support our themes. In addition to our classroom curriculum, we provide creative movement, library, and outside play.

#### Creative Curriculum

Creative Curriculum is a comprehensive evidence based early childhood educational system that emphasizes a practical, easy to understand approach to working with children. It promotes the use of interest areas as a way of providing experiences that promote cognitive, social, physical and language development.

#### Creative Movement

Creative Movement concentrates on developing gross motor skills, enhances problem solving and promotes teamwork.

#### Library

This is an opportunity for the children to take books home to encourage reading at home. We will also have guest readers stop by and visit. This program may be postponed due to COVID-19.

#### Music

The children will learn a variety of songs during the year and perform as a group for Thanksgiving, Donuts for Dad, and Mother's Day. Music is also played in each classroom for a substantial portion of the day.

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#### PALS PreK

Research has identified emergent literacy skills that are predictive of future reading success in school. PALS PreK is an assessment that measures preschoolers' developing knowledge of important literacy fundamentals.

#### ECERS

The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition (ECERS-R) provides an overall picture of the surroundings that have been created for the children and adults who share an early childhood setting. The ECERS consists of 43 items that assess the quality of the early childhood environment including use of space, materials and experiences to enhance children's development, daily schedule, and supervision. This 43 item scale covers seven categories: *Personal Care Routines, Space and Furnishings, Language-Reasoning, Activities, Interactions, Program Structure, and Parents and Staff*. The Shady Grove YMCA Preschool complies with the standards provided by ECERS. Our classrooms, schedules, and staff are all formatted according to this assessment tool.

#### CLASS

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observation tool that focuses on the effectiveness of classroom interactions among teachers and children, because it is these daily interactions that promote children's social and cognitive development. Children thrive when teachers create nurturing, well-managed settings and provide frequent and engaging opportunities to learn. The Shady Grove YMCA Preschool complies with the standards of the CLASS assessment tool. We strive to meet the high level of this assessment tool in order to provide the most successful and nurturing environment possible for our children.

#### Virginia Quality

The Shady Grove Family YMCA Preschool participates in Virginia Quality sponsored by Child Savers. The rating will reflect the effectiveness of the implementation of ECERS and CLASS in our program. We are currently a four star program. Our commitment to quality focuses on the following categories:

- ❖ Basic Health and Safety-Our program is in compliance with the requirements of state and local regulatory agencies.
- ❖ Education and Qualifications-We recognize the importance of having teachers who have or are working towards formal education in child development or early childhood education.
- ❖ Curriculum-Our program works to incorporate curriculum, child assessment, and intentional teaching that promotes children's development and incorporates state early learning guidelines.
- ❖ Environment-We strive to have children engaged in meaningful learning and play by offering them a variety of materials and activities throughout the day.
- ❖ Interactions- Daily, supportive interactions between our teachers and children form the foundation for social and cognitive learning, significantly impacting school readiness.

#### NEMOURS

NEMOURS is an early care and learning collaborative to promote healthy practices. We are incorporating in our program more physical exercise and nutrition into the curriculum. Water will also be readily available for ages three and up. Our goal is to educate our families about the importance of nutrition and physical exercise in the overall health of our families.

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#### **ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS**

Enrichment programs will be offered each regular school day throughout the year. Participants do not have to be attending Preschool to participate in the enrichment classes. Lunch with the teacher will take place in the Kid Zone (except for Kids Kitchen). Each enrichment class except Kids Kitchen should bring their lunch.

##### **Art**

We will be offering Art Enrichment on Mondays from 12-1:30pm in Kid Zone. Your child will enjoy eating their lunch with their friends then creating fun crafts relating to a literary theme. The cost is \$40 a month for Facility Members and \$60 for Non-Members.

##### **Swim Lessons**

We will be offering swim lessons on Tuesdays from 12:00-1:30pm in the pool. Your child must bring their lunch, swim suit and towel. Your child will receive thirty minutes of swim lessons each week. The cost is \$40 a month for facility members and \$60 a month for Non-Members.

##### **Kid's Kitchen**

Kid's Kitchen is open to kid's ages 3-6. On Wednesdays from 12:00PM-1:30PM, your child will enjoy learning about nutrition while making their own lunch. New and exciting food projects each week. Please note that this class may not be suitable for children with dietary restrictions and food allergies; this is not a peanut free class. This class would not be appropriate for vegans or vegetarians. Kid's Kitchen takes place in Classroom A. The cost is \$40 a month for Facility Members and \$60 a month for Non-Members.

##### **Stay and Play**

Children enrolled in this class may bring their lunch and stay after Preschool for a time of games and activities in the gym guaranteed to get your child moving and shaking. This fun-filled class will concentrate on developing gross motor skills, eye/hand coordination, and problem solving. The class meets for lunch in Kid Zone on Thursdays from 12:00pm - 1:30pm. Parents may pick up their children from the gym at 1:30pm. The class cost \$40 a month for Facility members and \$60 a month for non-members.

##### **Preschool Ballet**

We will be offering Ballet on Fridays from 12:00-1:30pm in Kid Zone. Your child may bring their lunch and their ballet slippers and stay for an enriching experience. Your child will have lunch with the teacher in Kid Zone and then enjoy the ballet class in the Kid Zone. Come early to pick up and you can watch from the large windows. The cost is \$40 a month for Facility Members and \$60 a month for Non-Members. \*Lunch can sometimes take 45 minutes or more depending on the size of the class. Your child will receive at least 30 minutes of ballet instruction.

# PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

## PARENT EDUCATION GUIDE



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

### YMCA of Greater Richmond

2 W. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23220

P: 804.644.9622

[ymcarichmond.org](http://ymcarichmond.org)

## THE Y'S COMMITMENT

The YMCA OF GREATER RICHMOND serves more than 60,000 youth each year in youth development, aquatics, health and fitness, and various community outreach programs in the Richmond and surrounding communities.

The Y offers an environment where children learn values and positive behaviors that build strong building blocks to becoming successful adults. Our core values caring, honesty, respect and responsibility—are part of everything we do. At the Y, children develop a community of friends and have fun in a safe, nurturing environment.

The Y understands that children today are faced with situations that may affect their safety and well-being. It is our job as a community organization to educate ourselves, our children and their parents and guardians about potential dangers in our community and to protect them from these dangers. At the Y, we ask our parents and guardians to be our partners in child abuse prevention. This Parent Education Guide seeks to equip you to be informed about child abuse and to protect your child from abuse.

## INFORMATION ABOUT CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse and neglect can endanger or impair a child's physical or emotional health or development. We have the power to stop it and understanding the issue is the first step.

### TYPES OF ABUSE (as defined by the Virginia Department of Social Services)

- **NEGLECT** Neglecting or refusing to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, emotional nurturing, health care, or adequate supervision in relation to a child's age and level of development; knowingly leaving a child alone with a caregiver that is not related by blood or marriage to the child, and who is a registered sex offender; or abandoning a child.
- **PHYSICAL** Causing or threatening to cause a non-accidental physical or mental injury or having a child present during the manufacture or attempted manufacture of a controlled substance or during the unlawful sale of such substance.
- **EMOTIONAL** A pattern of verbal assaults towards a child and/or a pattern of ignoring and indifferent behavior towards a child; or constant family conflict.
- **SEXUAL** Committing or allowing to be committed any illegal sexual act, including incest, rape, indecent exposure, prostitution, or allowing a child to be used in any sexually explicit visual material.
- **BULLYING** Unwanted, aggressive behavior of a peer towards another child that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.



### LOCATIONS

#### Chesterfield County

CAMP THUNDERBIRD OUTDOOR CENTER

CHESTER FAMILY YMCA

MANCHESTER FAMILY YMCA

MIDLOTHIAN FAMILY YMCA

SWIFT CREEK FAMILY YMCA

#### City of Petersburg

PETERSBURG FAMILY YMCA

#### City of Richmond

10th STREET YMCA

DOWNTOWN YMCA

NORTHSIDE FAMILY YMCA

#### Goochland County

GOOCHLAND FAMILY YMCA

#### Hanover County

ATLEE STATION FAMILY YMCA

PATRICK HENRY FAMILY YMCA

#### Henrico County

CHICKAHOMINY FAMILY YMCA

FRANK J. THORNTON YMCA  
AQUATIC CENTER

JOHN ROLFE FAMILY YMCA

SHADY GROVE FAMILY YMCA

TUCKAHOE FAMILY YMCA

#### Powhatan County

ELIZABETH RANDOLPH LEWIS  
POWHATAN YMCA

Parents have a fundamental right to raise their children, and the YMCA and the community presume that parents will act in their children's best interests. When parents do not protect their children from harm and put them at risk of abuse or neglect, the YMCA and the community have a right and a responsibility to intervene to protect the health and welfare of children.

## ABUSE WARNING SIGNS

Physical injuries and severe neglect are more readily detectable than the subtle, less visible injuries which result from emotional and sexual abuse and bullying. Most child abuse and neglect is not a one-time event, but more often occurs in a pattern over time. Abused children are often subject to more than one form of abuse.

### Signs common to all forms of abuse

- Fear of parents, other adults, or other peers; fear of going to a certain place
- Withdrawal, depression, anxiety, phobias, sleep disorders/problems
- Emotional and behavior extremes, including acting out or aggression toward peers, pets, other animals
- Immaturity or delays in development
- Poor peer relationships
- Poor self-image and self-care, lack of confidence
- Sudden absenteeism, decline in school performance
- Self-destructive behavior or attitudes, including suicidal thoughts, substance abuse, running away, recklessness
- Unexplainable/unidentifiable illnesses

### Signs of Neglect

- Hygiene problems and body odor as well as clothing that is the wrong size, in disrepair, dirty, or not right for the weather
- Often hungry, stockpiles food, seeks food, may even show signs of low body height and weight and even malnutrition
- Often tired, sleepy, listless
- Talks about caring for younger siblings, not having a caregiver at home.
- Untreated medical and dental problems, incomplete immunizations
- Truancy, frequently incomplete homework, frequent changes of school

### Signs of Physical Abuse

- Visible and severe injuries on different surfaces of the body, unexplained or explained in a way that doesn't make sense, after weekends, vacations, school absences, of a distinctive shape, occurring frequently, or are at different stages of healing.
- Wearing long sleeves out of season

## Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Difficulty sitting or walking; bowel problems or bleeding; bruises, pain, swelling, itching of genital area; frequent urinary tract infections or yeast infections; and/or any sexually transmitted disease or related symptoms
- Refuses to talk about a secret he/she has with an adult.
- Develops special relationship with older friend that may include unexplained money, gifts, or privileges.
- Inappropriate/adult-like knowledge, drawings, or play about sexual behavior

The YMCA strives to protect our children from all forms of abuse. The YMCA of Greater Richmond and the YMCA of the USA with its partner organization, Praesidium, have worked to increase awareness of ways to recognize and prevent child sexual abuse.

## How Sexual Offenders Behave

In addition to the warning signs our children may exhibit, sexual offenders have common characteristics. An offender may groom a child for abuse by pushing physical, emotional and behavioral boundaries. An offender may also groom persons in the community, working to build friendships and trust with a child and his/her parents. The warnings signs are:

- Excessive touching with physical contact games, backrubs, tickling or wrestling, even when a child resists;
- Inappropriate conversation, like talking about a child's developing body, discussion of specific sexual acts or explicit sexual language, or even spending excessive time e-mailing, texting or calling children;
- Showing favoritism to a certain child with gifts/money, performing special favors to the child and/or family or doing things for the child that the parents may not be able to do, or taking a child to activities or on special outings
- Sexualized behavior, including engaging in sexually harassing behavior online or in person
- Pattern of rule breaking/thinking the rules do not apply to them like exposing kids to inappropriate activities (e.g. drugs) and allowing children to break parent rules (e.g. smoking, staying up late)

It is challenging to think of children and adolescents we know as capable of sexually abusing others. Children, particularly young children, may engage in inappropriate interactions without understanding the hurtful impact it has on others.

## Offenders are:

- Family members: 30%
- Someone the child knows and trust: 60%
- Another juvenile: 40%





It is particularly important for parents and guardians to recognize the warning signs of any of the forms of abuse because children find it difficult or scary to tell an adult in words.

### Why Children Do Not Tell

- Are not aware it is abuse.
- Afraid no one will believe them.
- Afraid that this news will hurt parents.
- Are protecting the offender that they care about.
- Hopes if they are “good enough”, the abuse will stop.
- Afraid to tell because of the offender’s threat.
- Are confused by the offender’s suggestions that they enjoyed the abuse and wanted it to happen (for Sexual Abuse).

### Real prevalence of child abuse is not known because so many victims do not disclose or report their abuse:

- 73% of victims do not tell anyone for at least 1 year.
- 45% of victims do not tell anyone for 5 years.
- Some never tell.



## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AT THE Y

The Y does not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of children in its programs by an adult or the mistreatment or abuse of one child by another child, including any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying. Staff, volunteers, and the children in our programs are expected to act in a caring, honest, respectful, and responsible manner. Staff and volunteers abide by a Child Code of Conduct, parts of which are listed below. For the full Code, please contact the YMCA at 804.474.4345.

### Staff and Volunteer Expectations

- Never leave a child unsupervised.
- At no time during a Y program may a staff member or volunteer be alone with a single child where others cannot observe him/her.
- Conduct or supervise the following private activities in pairs: putting on bathing suits, changing clothes, taking showers, etc. When this is not feasible, be positioned so they are visible to others.
- Ensure that suspicious or unknown individuals are not occupying the restroom before allowing children to use the facilities and stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom.

- Respect children’s rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and their right to say “no.” Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
- Refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, volunteers and staff.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one’s personal life, and all forms of harassment are prohibited.
- Shall not abuse children physically, emotionally, sexually nor neglect children. Any type of abuse or neglect will not be tolerated and will be cause for immediate dismissal.
- Use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in situations where it is necessary to protect the child or other children from harm.
- Observe the health of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments are addressed with the parent or child in a non-threatening way.
- Treat all reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior with children or allegations of abuse very seriously. Y staff are mandated reporters and report any suspicions of abuse to Child Protective Services.
- Staff are prohibited from being alone with children outside of Y activities when their only relationship with the children or family is through the Y. This includes prohibitions against babysitting members of the Y who staff know through the Y.
- Not to transport children in their own personal vehicles except in cases of emergency and with the approval of administration.
- Communication between children and staff via social media, e-mail and phones must involve YMCA business and must not be personal (e.g. sharing emotional issues, seeking more than a client relationship, etc.) in nature. E-mail and social media communications must be on Y-supported, sponsored, or approved sites only. Y staff may not use their personal social media or e-mail accounts to contact children who they know through the Y.

### Additional Y Abuse Prevention Procedures

- Thorough staff and volunteer screening and selection procedures
- Staff and volunteer training and re-training on abuse prevention
- Abuse prevention curriculum for children in youth development programs



# PROTECTING YOUR CHILD

## Parents as Y Partners

At the Y, we ask parents to be partners in child abuse prevention by:

- Reading this flier so you are equipped to recognize and address abuse,
- Stopping by our programs to observe and talk with staff,
- Talking to your child about his or her experiences in the YMCA programs (as well as school, sports and other activities),
- Trusting your instincts. Don't wait to tell us if something seems "strange". Speak up.

## Open Communication

Open communication with your child on serious topics, like abuse, in an environment that encourages your child to share his or her views or concerns often means your child will be more likely to come to you for help and be equipped to respond appropriately to attempted abuse. Really listen. Here are talking points:

- **Boundaries** Review rules about boundaries, both in the privacy of your home and outside the home, and how to know when someone is violating them. Instruct your child that they do have the right to say "NO", even to a family member or friend; your child can choose who he or she wants to hug or kiss.
- **Intuition** Instruct your child to listen to their intuition. If it does not feel right, it probably isn't!
- **Secrets** Explain the difference between Safe Secrets (will the surprise at the end make someone happy, secrets that bring good to you and others) v. Unsafe Secrets (secrets that make you feel bad or they hurt you or someone else). Instruct your child that, if someone tells you to keep a secret from you, you want to know.
- **How to Stop Abuse Before It Happens** Teach your child various phrases to tell the offender to stop, like: I'm not supposed to do that; That's against my family rules; I can't; My parents would be mad at me. Teach them to walk away.
- **Trusted Adults** If abuse were to occur, instruct your child who a trusted person to tell is: family, a Y staff member, friends, teachers, coaches. Help your child to understand that you want them to come to you if someone makes them feel bad or sad, and that you will believe and help them and that they will not get in trouble.

## Internet Safety

Children and adolescents are naturally curious about sex. Adolescents questioning their sexuality are even more at risk, as they may go online with the intent of finding support and companionship. By acting as guides, predators can exploit this curiosity or vulnerability and gradually lure children into sexual activity. **1 in 5 kids who go online regularly will be sexually solicited.** To prevent abuse via the internet:

- Set limits before allowing your child to go online anywhere.
- Keep computers in a high traffic area of your home.
- View your child's browsing history by pushing CTRL+SHIFT+H to see history or look for the History tab to Show All History.
- Set parental and safe search controls on all electronics.
- Review cell phone records for unknown numbers and late night calls/ texts.
- Become knowledgeable of which social networks, apps, instant messaging, e-mail, gaming, blogging and webcams your child is using and who your child communicates with via these portals.

## Internet Safety Info for Parents:

- [netsmartz.org](http://netsmartz.org)
- [noslang.com/parents.ph](http://noslang.com/parents.ph)

## What to Do if You Suspect Abuse or A Child Makes a Disclosure

If your child discloses that someone hurt, scared, or made him or her feel uncomfortable, stay calm and listen. Your reaction has a powerful influence on your child! Do not react with anger and disbelief, as they may feel shame or guilt and shut down. Instead, believe your child and make sure your child knows you believe them, thank your child for telling you and praise their courage for speaking up.

All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior with children or allegations of abuse at the Y will be taken seriously. The Y will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse are made and investigated. The Y cooperates fully with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse. Any staff or volunteer is expected to cooperate to the fullest extent possible in any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by the Y or persons given investigative authority by the Y.

## • If you have any questions or concerns about Y staff or volunteers, or another program participant, you can:

- Report concerns to Y staff.
- Call the YMCA Safety Line 804.474.4345. (This is a voicemail. Please leave a message and the Y will get back to you.), or
- Email [ethics@ymcarichmond.org](mailto:ethics@ymcarichmond.org).

## • Community Resources:

- Virginia Child Protection Services (CPS) 1.800.522.7096
- For reports of immediate danger, call local law enforcement at 911.
- Sex Offender Registry: <http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/sor/>

