

Early Learning Center

at



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

2019-2020 School Year

Parent Handbook

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the YMCA Early Learning Center (ELC). We are very excited about having your child attend our center. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

It is our goal to provide your child with the best learning environment as well as maintain a safe and comfortable environment where your child will grow and flourish.

Our center is designed around the needs of the children. Each classroom has several carpeted play areas, a circle time rug, child size tables and chairs, a housekeeping area, art area, a sensory table, a writing center, construction area and lots of toys and learning materials. Our hallway windows have one-way glass which allows the parents to look in without the children seeing them.

Our outdoor area is fenced in with several different play areas. We have grassy areas as well as paved areas for riding bikes and writing with chalk. There are sand boxes, bubbles, balls, and several other pieces of equipment to keep the children occupied. We also use the large field for structured physical education activities.

Please take a moment to read this handbook to become familiarized with some of our policies and procedures.

We look forward to working with you and your child in a partnership of learning and fun.

We hope that your experience at our center is a good one. Please communicate with us regarding any questions or concerns that you may have.

Sincerely,

Krista Kaplan
Director of Preschool Childcare

Philosophy

Work Without Worry . . .

For the times parents can't be there themselves, the YMCA supports their efforts to nurture their child's healthy development. Well-trained staff provides safe, affordable, high-quality care so that parents can have peace of mind while they work to help their family succeed.

Age Appropriate Experiences . . .

YMCA childcare provides children the chance to creatively and constructively develop their talents through exploration of music, movement, art, character counts, and play, taking full advantage of all the YMCA has to offer. Our program is based on research and what is developmentally appropriate for each child.

Kids experience what success is all about in an approach that says "everybody plays, everybody wins." Caring, well-trained staff knows how to challenge children, and more importantly, how to listen to them.

Focus on the Family . . .

No matter how many hours children spend in childcare, family is the most important structure in their lives. At the YMCA, good childcare is good family care. Like all YMCA programs, our childcare includes families with different shapes, sizes, social and cultural backgrounds. We provide more than just a place to play; we provide experiences to help the entire family unit cope, grow, communicate, and care for each other. Family is where values are formed, love is learned, self-image is developed, and lifelong relationships are established. YMCA childcare maintains and strengthens what starts at home, giving all kinds of families the support they need to succeed.

Mission . . .

The YMCA of Frederick County childcare program is dedicated to providing a safe nurturing environment where children will grow and learn through play. We believe in a program and atmosphere that applauds each child's uniqueness while promoting experiences that encourage the development of the whole child. We provide and promote developmentally appropriate opportunities that promote *physical development, personal and social development, language and literacy development, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies and the arts*. The individual needs and strengths of every child are continually assessed to make adjustments to the curriculum. We support the partnerships between each child, their parents and teachers. We recognize these relationships as being the foundation for a positive, preschool experience while preparing each child for a successful transition to their formal education years ahead. The staff are provided with many opportunities for personal growth, development, and to stay informed on any new research or changes in the education field. Staff development training includes core of knowledge MSDE trainings, early childhood education classes at Frederick Community College, trainings on the Ounce Scale, SIDS awareness, CPR and first aid trainings, and trainings in conjunction with Child Care Choices and the Office of Child Care. The program is continuously evaluated by the Child Care staff, the YMCA administration, the Child Care parents and the MSDE Office of Child Care through formal and informal evaluations, surveys, and inspections.

Early Learning Center Program Goals

- Provide a safe, quality care environment where children feel secure and accepted.
- Plan school readiness activities that prepare the children for entrance into kindergarten.
- Enhance learning through hands –on activities.
- Provide field trips to enhance learning and experiences.
- Create an atmosphere of respect that promotes positive self-esteem.
- Recognize each child as a unique person with individual needs and interests.
- Give children opportunities to make choices among a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities in order to develop self-control, independence, and sense of purpose.
- Provide opportunities that stimulate social development and respect for the rights and individual differences of others, using the “Character Counts” pillars of character development: caring, respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, and citizenship.
- Work as a team with parents, maintaining open communication and mutual support.
- Involve families in the program and enhance parenting skills.
- Exceed the state-licensing requirement to ensure the highest quality of care by providing an MSDE Accredited Center.
- Provide qualified, caring staff with ongoing training for continued growth as caregivers.
- Monitor and evaluate programs on a continuing basis.
- Work in cooperation with the schools and other social agencies.
- Incorporate the programs and facilities of the YMCA to enhance the program.
- Provide year-round care through state-licensed childcare programs.
- Maintain Accreditation

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Accreditation

The YMCA Early Learning Center is a MSDE (Maryland Department of Education) Accredited facility. Program accreditation is a process by which early care and education programs can significantly improve the quality of the services they provide. In this process, a program voluntarily pursues self-study, program improvement, and an external program review in order to achieve and publicly confirm that it meets state quality standards. This is renewed every 3 years.

Account Statements

We will send out yearly childcare account statements in **January** through email. If you would like a statement at another time during the year, please contact child care billing.

Admission and Registration/Activity Fee

Children are accepted on the basis of available space in the program.

Withdrawal of your child for any period of time designates a slot available for children on the waiting list. To register your child, you must fill out an enrollment application, pay an annual non-refundable registration fee of \$40 per child (ages Infant), an annual non-refundable registration fee of \$100 (Toddler and up), and a pizza fee \$55 if you would like your child to have pizza on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. The activity fee pays for children to go on field trips to places such as the pumpkin patch and the petting farm or to have special events come to the Y throughout the year.

Infants and toddlers must pay the first weeks tuition in advance to hold their spot.

The following forms must be completed before your child can attend the center.

Parents will be given an enrollment packet, which includes:

- Registration application form
- Child Care Tuition Parent Agreement
- Health inventory I and II
- Immunization form
- Emergency card
- Discipline policy
- Parent handbook receipt/ Permission slip (swimming and walking field trips)/Guide to Regulated Child Care

The following items will be given to you after you enroll:

- Inclement weather policy (after Oct. 1)
- Medication Authorization Form for diaper cream, epi-pen, sunscreen etc.

The Parent Handbook is available online at www.frederickymca.org.

Allergies

If your child has allergies, please make note of it on the appropriate forms and make sure to personally inform the teachers and the director. In extreme cases or if you feel it is needed, we may need to set up a meeting with his/her teacher to discuss how we can meet the needs of your child. We may also request a Health Plan from the doctor. Your child's picture will be posted in all classrooms on the refrigerator. Along with the picture will be a list of his/her allergies so that any teacher that works in the room will know about all their allergies.

If your child has an allergy to **milk**, we will need a doctor's note that reflects this. You will also need to provide a **substitute**. If your child requires a special diet or has many **allergies to many of the foods we serve**, you will need to provide their breakfast and snack. We can give you a list of the snacks we serve and you may tell us which ones are alright for your child to have. The staff can give you our weekly menu to look over and cross out food items that your child may not have.

Arrival

Each day you must **sign your child in**. Please place their things in their cubby. Label items that need to be refrigerated and place them in the refrigerator. Make sure you use a sharpie and masking tape (if needed) to write their name on it. Bottles also need to be labeled with name and the date. Infants and toddlers will need to fill out the parent portion at the top of the daily report.

After arriving, have your child wash his/her hands. Make sure to leave your child in a **clean diaper (if applicable)**. If you need to change them please feel free to use our diaper changing table.

If your child arrives early and needs to eat **before 8:30**, please provide him/her with something to eat such as a baggy of dry cereal, granola bar, etc. We will provide milk and all the utensils needed.

In the morning for the first hour (2 yrs and up), all the children will be together in the "opening" classroom (the International Room-The Spiders). Your child's teacher may not be there at arrival. Try to get your child interested in an activity and the teachers will assist you in doing so. Please leave your child directly in the care of a staff person. Never simply "drop off" your child.

If you have anything you want to tell the teacher (like someone else is picking up or your child is leaving early) please fill out a **"Note for the Teacher"** form and leave it in the basket. You can find these forms by the sign in sheets.

When you are leaving please give them one kiss and one hug, tell them goodbye and that you will be back and then leave. Lingering around or sneaking out does not help the child. Your child may cry when you leave but will probably stop within a few minutes. Please feel free to call later and see if he/she has adjusted.

Please do not allow your child to enter or exit the center or classroom without an adult.

Babysitting

It is against the YMCA policy for the center's staff to babysit for children they have met through the program.

Behavior Management

Children are expected to respect the YMCA property, toys, staff members and other children

Discipline is the process of teaching our children the appropriate way to behave.

Punishment is an unpleasant consequence for a particular behavior.

Discipline and punishment are not the same. At the center we teach discipline. The best way to do this is through positive discipline. To encourage these behaviors we use words, hugs, smiles, and sometimes rewards. When a child misbehaves, our goal is to explain why the behavior was wrong and help them problem solve to come to a better solution.

We expect the staff to use positive guidance techniques which include: clarification of expectations, positive phrasing of instructions, giving realistic choices, praising for positive behaviors, helping children identify and talk about feelings, redirect to an appropriate activity, and modeling appropriate behaviors.

Sometimes a child has an especially difficult time with his/her behavior. When this happens, the center staff and the child's parents need to work together. Staff members will follow these steps when dealing with habitual behavior problems:

Phase one--Staff member will speak with parent about the behavior at pickup time or by phone and will document the behavior on a behavior report or an incident/behavior report depending on the incident.

Phase two—If the behavior continues, the child will be suspended for one to two days (if necessary). A parent/staff conference will be held, a plan of action developed, and possibly Perks called in to help.

Phase three--If the child fails to improve his/her behavior within the allotted time the parents will be asked to find a program that better suits their child's needs.

The center makes every effort to accommodate the needs of all children. However, if a child's behavior endangers the well being of the staff or other children in the program, he/she may be **dismissed immediately**.

Belongings

Please have your child keep their toys, etc. at home unless it is an approved show and tell day. The children tend to not want to share these items and they may get lost or broken. Make sure other items that your children bring are labeled with their name. (lunch box, extra clothing, pillow, pillow case blanket etc.)

Birthdays

We encourage you to send in a special snack (**small** cupcakes, brownies, cookies or something healthy) for your child and his peers in order to help us celebrate his/her birthday. We are requiring that any baked item be **store bought** with a list of ingredients labeled due to allergies. Please check with the classroom to see if there are any allergies.

Breakfast

The Child Development Center is a member of the MSDE Child and Adult Food Program which requires us to serve foods that meet the USDA standards. A nutritious breakfast is served at 8:30 a.m. which consists of a grain, a fruit and milk for ages 12 months and up. Please make sure your child is in attendance by this time to make sure they will be provided breakfast. We will stop serving breakfast at 8:45 a.m. Parents of **toddlers** (12 months and older) must sign a food waiver before we can start providing food. **Infants** (6 weeks-12 months) will be fed according to parent provided schedule with food brought from home. Infants will be held for bottle feeding until they are sitting up and can hold it for themselves in a highchair. There will be no bottles in cribs.

Centers (Child Directed Play)

The children will participate in center time for approximately 2-3 hours throughout each day and be able to select several centers to play in that day. These include, but are not limited to, the sand and water table, easel, dramatic play, blocks, writing, science, math, listening and art. Staff will be busy interacting with the children, asking them questions, teaching them through play, and showing them **how to** use the materials. Children learn a great amount through play. The staff will also be working on the curriculum with small groups of children during this time.

Child Abuse and Neglect

As licensed childcare providers, the center's staff is mandated by state law to report any cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the local Child Protective Services agency.

Classes

Parents may sign their child (Spiders, Fireflies, and Caterpillars only) up for YMCA classes throughout the **morning** hours only. We have a designated day for Gymnastics classes for ELC children that are signed up and pay the class fee to be Friday mornings only. A Class Attendance Permission Slip will need to be filled out prior to the child attending class. This form includes the date the class will begin and end and also start and end times etc., in addition to a registration receipt. We will change them, drop them off and pick them up at their activity (swimming, dance, gymnastics) unless you inform us otherwise. Remember that we have many other children

in our class and it would be helpful if your child has a **morning class** to have your child in their swim suit etc. under their clothing.

Classroom monitoring

All the classrooms are monitored by video and recorded. The director will check the recordings as needed. We will use the recordings as a teaching tool as well as monitoring of any problems.

Cleanliness

To prevent the spread of illness, all toys and equipment are washed and sanitized weekly. (daily in the infant/ toddler rooms). We want to keep the room as clean as possible.

When entering the infant room please take your shoes off to enter with socks or use the shoe covers. Please do not let siblings enter the room unless their shoes are covered as well. The children in these rooms are on the floor crawling around and we don't want to drag in the dirt.

Clothing

Your child will be more apt to explore his/her environment if he/she is not worried about getting his/her clothes dirty. For this reason clothes should be casual and easily washable. Shoes should have rubber soles. For your child's protection, sandals and flip flops are strongly discouraged. If your child likes to wear "dress" shoes to school, please keep a pair of old sneakers in his/her cubby.

Each child should have a complete set of **spare clothes** (appropriate for the weather) in his/her cubby. This includes pants, shirt, socks and **underwear**. Please **mark** each piece of clothing with your **child's name**. These clothes will be used if his/her clothing becomes wet or soiled. Please bring in a replacement set of clothes the following day. If your child needs spare clothing and a set is not available, we will call you to bring suitable clothing. It is your responsibility to bring in replacement clothing to keep on hand.

Communication

- Parents are invited to speak with the teachers about their child's progress any time that is mutually convenient, preferably not when the teachers need to be supervising the children. Open lines of communication between home and school will make your child's experience meaningful. Parents are encouraged to share information about family happenings with their child's teacher. Special events at home (positive or negative) can influence your child's behavior and mood at school.
- Since we are open 12 hours a day, the teachers work schedules are staggered. All teachers arrive by 10:30 and some may leave as early as 2:30. "A Note for the Teacher" forms are available by the sign in sheets to leave a note for the teachers. Since the teachers are busy working with the children at pick up and drop off times, if you need extended time to talk to a teacher please call between 1:00 and 3:00 (naptime) to discuss issues that may need an extended time.
- **Communication books/daily reports**- Inchworms through Ladybugs use a daily report packet. Bumblebees through Spiders use communication books. The teachers will make comments in your child's book on a daily basis to let you know how their day was and things they enjoyed, etc. Please read and **initial daily** and feel free to respond, if needed.
- The **parent board or monthly newsletter** will also help you remember certain dates or events going on. Please check it on a regular basis.
- Your child will be assigned a "**mailbox**". Please check your box daily for information from the director and/or teachers, papers and arts and crafts done by the child etc.
- The classrooms can be reached at the following extensions or emails:
Inchworms— ext. 1265 inchworms@frederickymca.org
Butterflies- ext. 1265 butterflies@frederickymca.org
Dragonflies --ext. 1264 dragonflies@frederickymca.org

Ladybugs— ext. 1254 ladybugs@frederickymca.org
Bumblebees-- ext. 1252 bumblebees@frederickymca.org
Spiders –ext. 1253 spiders@frederickymca.org
Fireflies-- ext. 1255 fireflies@frederickymca.org
Caterpillars—ext. 1256 caterpillars@frederickymca.org

Emails are checked regularly.

- The Director and Child Care Billing can be easily reached at the numbers and email addresses below.

Director: Krista Kaplan 301.663.5131 ext 1278 kkaplan@frederickymca.org
Child Care Billing: Wendy Cline 301-663-5131 ext 1276 wcline@frederickymca.org
Wendy McLean 301-663-5131 ext 1263 wmclean@frederickymca.org

Newsletters will be distributed on a monthly basis by email. Please make sure we have your correct email address. One will also be posted on the parent board. If you would like a hard copy, please make the teachers aware. Please take a few minutes to read the newsletter to keep up to date on what is going on in the classroom.

- **Parent Conferences** (Bumblebees through Caterpillars) will take place in October/November. We will discuss the progress of your child individually at this time. Conferences may also be requested by the parent at any time. If a child is having a difficult time adjusting to our program, the Director or Teacher may also request a conference.

Complaint /Problem/Concerns Procedures

When a parent has any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the program, we encourage them to follow the procedures listed:

1. Consult with the classroom teachers regarding their child or the program issue.
2. If unable to resolve an issue after initial consult with child's teacher, a parent should contact the Child Care Director by phone or e-mail. A meeting can be arranged, if needed.

Complaints will be addressed promptly and a response will be given to parents either at the meeting, by phone or by e-mail.

A Parent's Guide to regulated child care can be found at the following website.

http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/licensing_branch/parent_guide

Curriculum

Weekly lesson plans will be posted on the parent board.

For the infant through the 2 year old classes, the teachers use the "The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos" as well as Healthy Beginnings: Supporting Development and Learning (Birth-3).

Inchworms/Butterflies- your child will spend time on their tummy, given opportunities to sit, crawl, walk, enjoy the swing, the saucer, the bouncy seat, etc. We will use these as little as needed for only a 20 minute period of time. The Ounce Scale is used to monitor each child's development.

Dragonflies- the teachers will concentrate on a few words, books, finger plays, songs and activities each week. The children will work on animal names and sounds. Language development is encouraged with planned activities as well as spontaneous opportunities. Each week your child will also be exposed to Baby Sign Language. We will inform you of the signs we are working on. Please practice these signs at home with your child.

Ladybugs and Bumblebees- the teachers provide the children with a well balanced day including singing songs, reading books, art, math, music, sensory experiences and outdoor activities. The Ounce Scale is used to monitor each child's development.

Spiders, Fireflies, and Caterpillars - are taught using the Creative Curriculum which is a hands-on curriculum approved by Maryland State Department of Education. This curriculum incorporates math, science, language and literacy, personal and social development, social studies, physical education, health education and the arts.

Custody Information

Be aware that any and all custody information regarding your child(ren) must be provided by you to the YMCA for the safety of your child. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to keep this information up to date. If no custody information is provided, the YMCA will follow its procedures regarding the release of your child and release of information related to the care of your child.

Daily Reports

Inchworms, Butterflies, and Dragonflies-On the top of your child's daily report there is an area for you to fill out in the morning before you leave. We would like to know how the night before went, when your child woke up and when they last ate. This information is very helpful. The teachers will fill out a daily report which consists of:

- the amount your child drank and ate
- the time and how long he/she slept
- the time he/she was changed and the result
- potty visits(if applicable)
-

Ladybugs- We use a daily report packet that lets you know about your child's day

Bumblebees, and Spiders have a *communication book* that the teachers make comments in on a daily basis to let your know how their day was and things they enjoyed etc. Please read and **initial daily** and feel free to respond, if needed.

Fireflies and Caterpillars has a daily information page about what they did for the day

Departure-

At the end of the day your child may not be in his/her classroom. We do combine classrooms from approximately 5:15-6:30 depending on the numbers of children and staff.

When picking up your child at the end of the day please read their *communication book/daily report* and **initial** that you have read it. Also, feel free to make any comments. Make sure to sign your child out and gather all their belongings. Please make sure your child hasn't accidentally put some of the YMCA toys into their pockets or bags by accident.

While you are here at the YMCA with your child, we do expect them to abide by **the rules** that we have in the center such as "Use your walking feet". Please do not allow your child to run up and down the halls and disrupt other classrooms.

The center will not allow a child to leave the building with anyone not authorized by the parent(s). If someone other than a parent or regularly assigned person will pick up your child, please notify the teacher in writing. This person will be required to show a **photo I.D.** and must be 16 years old or older.

Exceptions will only be made in emergencies, when you have phoned and made special arrangements in advance.

If the authorized pickup person appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when he/she arrives at the center, the proper authorities will be notified.

These precautions are for the safety of your child and must be followed.

Developmental Screening

For the Infants through 2 yr olds, our teachers do ongoing developmental screenings using “The Ounce Scale”. The Ounce Scale offers a meaningful way to evaluate and document children’s growth, accomplishments, areas of difficulty, and temperament. For the older children we use Ages and Stages if requested.

We will use these checklists help us to identify possible delays. We aren’t specialists in this area, but these screenings will help us determine if further assistance is needed. We can provide you with specialists for further evaluations, if they are needed.

The YMCA will collaborate with other agencies to allow them to come during child care hours to work with your child.

Diapering (if applicable)

Children will be diapered on an as needed basis throughout the day. The children will be checked on a regular basis to make sure each child is clean and comfortable. For sanitary purposes, the center requires the use of disposable diapers. Please bring a package of diapers and wipes to leave at the center. The teacher will let you know when your child is getting low on supplies.

Emergency Closings

In the case of inclement weather see *the Inclement Weather Policy* (will be updated by Oct. 1st).

Evaluations

We will distribute parent online surveys during the year so you can let us know how we are performing as a staff and as a center. Feel free at anytime to give us compliments or suggestions on the Open Line Online Survey. The program will also be evaluated by the MSDE Office of Childcare on a bi-annual basis. The staff will also be evaluated by the Director on an ongoing basis and will have formal evaluations twice a year. The center will renew the MSDE accreditation every three years.

Family and Emergency Information

It is the responsibility of the parent to keep the **emergency card updated** with your current address, home phone number, **cell phone number** and business telephone. Your emergency card must also list one local emergency contact person that can arrive within 15 mins. Please obtain permission from anyone you identify as an emergency contact.

Field trips

Field trips are considered part of the Child Development Center curriculum. They add a dimension of discovery! We use field trips to enrich and reinforce our classroom experiences, themes and seasonal activities. Field trips usually follow the theme related topics. Typically, we try to schedule a fall trip to the pumpkin patch and spring trip to the Petting Farm.

1. We will send home permission slips for all field trips. These must be signed and returned by the set date.
2. We believe that field trips are special events for your preschooler. They love having Mom or Dad along for the adventure! Payments for chaperones should be made at the entry gate for the field trip. Some destinations charge for chaperones and some do not.
3. Three to four classroom teachers will accompany the children on the trip.
4. On the day of the trip we will have the children wear a special “Y” arm band.
5. All children must be safely buckled in a bus/car seat.

Fire drills

We will have a practice fire drill once a month. The children will line up at the classroom door. Then they will follow the staff out onto the playground and sit along the blue border as the teacher takes attendance. The director will then come out and say that the building is safe and we can go back in. We will also practice a “Shelter in place” drill. During this drill the children practice staying in the building away from the windows for a severe weather drill.

Flexible Spending Account

If you need your flexible spending account information filled out please contact the child care billing office or bring the forms to the child care office and we will get it to the correct person. It may take a few days for us to return it to you.

Holidays

The center will be closed for the following holidays.

* No reduction in tuition will be given.

Labor Day*
Thanksgiving Day*
Friday following Thanksgiving*
Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve- we will be closing at 4 pm
Christmas Day*
New Years Day*
Memorial Day*
Fourth of July*

Hours of Operation

The center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Illness

You will need to keep your child home if they aren't feeling well or if they have any of the symptoms listed below. When children come to the Y they need to be able to participate in daily activities. If they are not feeling well enough to participate in daily activities they should remain home until they are ready to join in all activities. Please let the teachers know that your child will not be attending. You may call and leave a message in the childcare office if necessary. If your child isn't feeling well he/she may be contagious and we don't want the other children exposed. Do not bring your child to the center if he/she is showing signs of illness including but not limited to:

- fever- has an armpit temperature of 99 F (37.2 C) or higher (this is the method that the YMCA uses to check for temperatures)
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- yellow/green nasal or eye discharge
- pink eye
- severe cough
- nits, lice
- sore throat
- unexplained rash

Your child will need to be symptom free for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine.

- If your child becomes sick during the day, we will contact you at home/work. If you cannot be reached within the hour, we will call your emergency contacts listed on your emergency card. You will have up to 2 hours to pick your child up.
- If your child contracts or is exposed to any contagious disease, please notify the Director.
- If your child has or develops any **allergies**, it is your responsibility to notify the Director as well as the teachers.
- Children that develop signs of lice (nits) will not be allowed to attend the program until they have been treated and no nits remain. You will be required to present proof of treatment.
- A child may not be readmitted to care after an absence of 3 days or more due to illness without a written statement from the physician that the child may return to a regular schedule.

- You will still be charged if your child is absent due to an illness. If there is a special circumstance of an extended absence please discuss this with the Director and provide a doctor's note.

Injuries/accidents

The welfare and safety of your child is of primary importance to us, and we make every effort to see that accidents do not occur. However, young children are active and occasionally accidents do happen.

If your child gets hurt or there is an incident that occurs while your child is in our care, we will fill out an injury report. You will need to read it and sign that you were made aware of it. Parents will receive a copy of this report if requested.

If the injury is located on the face or head, or your child is bitten and it has broken the skin, you will receive a call right away, otherwise you will be informed at pick up time.

If a child requires emergency care, the following steps will be taken:

- We will contact 911 and attempt to contact the parents. If a parent cannot be reached, the center will contact those persons listed on the emergency card.
- The child will be transported to the hospital via the ambulance if necessary. A staff member will ride with the child if available.
- All accidents causing injury to the child while at the center will be documented in a written report within 24 hours.

Late Payment of Tuition fees

A 10% late fee will be added to your account if your tuition is not paid on time. Weekly payments are due each **Friday before care**. Late fees will be assessed if payment is not made before Tuesday. If your check/ACH draft or Credit/Debit Card automatic withdrawal is returned unpaid, it will be collected electronically and you will be assessed a minimum fee of \$25 (or the maximum amount allowed by law). Check writer/card holder is also responsible for all other collection costs.

Late Pick up Fees

Parents must have an emergency contact within 15 minutes of the childcare site to satisfy licensing regulations. If you are running late please call the classroom to let the staff know you are on your way. Parents or emergency contacts will be contacted at 6:30 p.m. If the parents haven't contacted us within a reasonable amount of time, Child Protective Services will be called to pick up the child.

Late pickup fees will be assessed at the rate of **\$1.00 per minute** that the parent or pick-up person is delayed. If you are bank/credit card draft your draft will be adjusted to cover these fees. If you pay in person please submit your payment to Wendy Cline or Wendy McLean in the Child Care Billing Office. If fees are not paid, your child cannot be allowed back in the program until they are paid. If late pick up becomes a habit, immediate dis-enrollment may be enforced.

Please understand that the staff has other commitments after 6:30 p.m. Children also get upset when their parents are late. If you find you will not be able to arrive by 6:30p.m., please inform the center and find someone to come in your place (be certain that whoever picks up your child is listed on the emergency form).

Lunch

Each child is required to bring his/her own **lunch** from home.

Please be sure that your child's bag or box is clearly **labeled** with his/her name. We are a peanut free center due to allergies. Do not pack any item containing nuts.

We stress that the items in your child's lunch should consist of **nutritious, healthy foods** such as sandwiches, fruits, vegetables, yogurt and other dairy products, and bread products. You will not need to provide a drink. We are required by licensing to provide milk for all our meals. If you do send in a drink it will be sent home.

If your child has milk allergies we will need a note from a doctor and then you will need to be provide an appropriate substitute. Please **do not send juice boxes, flavored water, Gatorade, gum, candy or snacks with a lot of sugar or fat.** We don't allow the children to drink these in the center due to the high sugar content. They will be returned in your child's lunch container. The staff will assist your child in choosing the appropriate item to eat first. We also provide utensils and napkins. If there is something that needs refrigeration, make sure you **label it** with your child's name. Since we have a large group of children that we are assisting, please **fully prepare** your child's lunch at home. We will warm up small items for the children. Please do not pack **large heat ups** such as TV dinners, etc. which require longer than 1 minute to heat up. **All leftover contaminated** food (food exposed to saliva) will be disposed of after lunch. It will not be sent home. Unopened food will be sent back home.

Milk

We will provide whole milk to the infants, once they switch over from formula to milk, and toddlers and 1% to children 2 yrs and up.

Medications

Please try to give your child his/her medication **at home.** If your child needs to take **medication (prescription or non-prescription)** while at the center you must complete and sign a medication order form which can be obtained online on our website at www.frederickymca.org, childcare and then forms Medication Authorization Form or you can ask an ELC staff for a form. A doctor must also sign the form for all medications. No medication will be dispersed without this form. The form must match the information on the bottle of medication. In addition, the **first dose must be given at home** and the child must remain at home for the first 24 hours. The medicine must be in the original container with the pharmacy label giving specific instructions and dosage amounts.

If your child needs an Epi-pen, it will need to come to us in the original container with the prescription label on it. It will be hung on the wall/cabinet labeled with his/her name and picture. If your child has blisters, a diaper rash or open sores on their bottom, you will need to have a medication form filled out by the doctor for us to apply any kind of cream.

Naptime

Inchworm-as needed- Your infant will always be put to sleep on their back until they are able to roll over. This has proven to help to prevent SIDS. If your child needs to sleep on their tummy or side, we will need a written note from the doctor with the reason why and an ending date. No infant will be placed in a swing, car seat or bouncy seat to sleep. If a child does fall asleep in one of these they will be moved to their crib. Bedding is washed daily or more often if needed.

Butterflies/Dragonflies-As the children transition to the Butterfly room, and they are ready, we will try to wean them off of their morning nap. The children will be placed on a cot for naptime. Parents will need to sign a waiver allowing them to do so. They will rest from approximately: 12:30-3:00

Age's 2-5-The center is required by the MSDE Office of Childcare to provide a rest or nap time daily. Please bring a small travel size pillow, pillow case, blanket and pack n play size sheet on Mondays and take them home on Fridays to be washed. Every classroom will have a quiet nap time. Each child will have a cot marked with his/her name. The children aren't required to sleep but are required to stay on their cot quietly for a short period of time. Children who do not sleep during rest time can quietly rest, look at library books, or listen to soft music. The children will be given quiet activities to do if they haven't fallen asleep within 45 minutes. You may send something for your child to play quietly with at naptime.

Ladybugs and Bumblebees—12:30-3:00

Spiders—1:00-3:00

Fireflies--1:30-3:00

Caterpillars—1:30-3:00

Outdoor Play

An active outdoor program is present throughout the year. Except in inclement weather, the children will be taken outside based on our licensing guideline chart. Please furnish your child with sunscreen and a completed medication form. Please apply sunscreen in the morning, and the teachers will apply it in the afternoon. Please dress your child in appropriate outdoor clothing when he/she comes to the center. The children will play in a fenced in area where they may climb, play in the sand box, ride bikes, play with balls and other outdoor equipment. If a child is too sick to go outside, please do not send him/her to the center that day. Please send your child with shoes that allow them to run and climb safely. Avoid having them wear flip flops or any open toed shoe for safety reasons.

Parent/Grandparent Involvement

We do have an open door policy which allows Parents and Grandparents to visit the center at any time. We invite your input and encourage frequent communication between home and school. We encourage you to share your ideas and special talents with your child's class. There are many opportunities within the school year:

- to plan special celebrations for the class
- to spend part of your child's birthday in class
- to chaperone on field trips
- to participate in parent/teacher conferences
- to be a guest reader
- to share a special talent
- to attend our special events such as our family picnic and Fall Festival Dinner

Parent and staff behavior

The YMCA is committed to creating a safe, nurturing and caring environment. We speak to all children respectfully. We also believe in speaking to the parents in a calm and respectful way and expect the same in return. We believe, because you have chosen the YMCA, you are also committed to these same principles.

Parking

Do not park along the **yellow lines** next to the building in the drop off area. It hinders emergency and other vehicles from getting through. There is plenty of parking in the front and in the back of the building. Obey the laws. Maryland requires that all children be in a car seat. Please do not leave any children unattended in a car under any circumstances. Also, don't leave your keys or purse in an unlocked car. Please share this information with anyone who may be picking up your child.

Parties

We have several parties throughout the year which may include Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Cinco De Mayo, End of the Year Picnic, and a Fall Festival Dinner, to name a few. Please feel free to sign up to bring something on these days but don't feel obligated. All items must be store bought and list the ingredients due to allergies.

Personal Belongings

Toys and other belongings should be **left at home** except on "show and tell" days. On these days children may bring one item from home to share. This item should not be a gun, any other violent toy, or a character that depicts violence or aggression.

Parents should clearly mark their child's name on any item brought to the center. Make sure your back pack, lunch box, pillow, blanket and extra clothing are labeled. Please note that the center cannot assume responsibility for items brought from home.

Picture Day

Pictures will be taken in the fall. You may choose to purchase individual and/or group pictures. We will announce the date as soon as it is available to us.

Prayer

Ladybugs through Caterpillars classrooms

Before each snack or meal, a short prayer is said

If you do not want your child to participate, he/she may sit quietly and not recite the prayer.

*God is great
God is good
And we thank him for our food
By His hands we all are fed
Thank you for our daily bread.
AMEN*

Dragonflies

Sign language and recite if they are able to

Thank you Jesus for our food AMEN

Ratios

Staff to children ratios for each age group is as follows:

Infants and Toddlers 1:3

2 yr olds 1:6

3 and 4 yr olds 1:10

Registration-continuation

Registration happens annually in April/May for those currently enrolled and in May/June for new participants. If your child will need care during the next school year you will need to fill out a registration form and pay the registration and activity fees yearly.

Security Entrance

You will be issued two cards for our 2 secure child care entrances. There is a \$5 per card replacement fee. If your card doesn't work, please inform the teacher and/or the director.

Show and Tell

Check with your individual classroom teacher to find out which day show and tell is scheduled.

Snack

We serve a snack in the afternoon around 3:30 (ages 12 months and up). Snacks consist of a fruit, vegetable or grain along with milk.

Sprinkler

The children will have an opportunity to play in the sprinkler in the summer time. Please send sunscreen, a bathing suit and towel on these days. The children get upset when they can't participate because they have forgotten their water play items.

Staff qualifications

We take pride in our highly qualified staff members. All staff members are fingerprinted and have received FBI and State of Maryland background checks as part of their hiring process. All of the staff attends an annual Code of Conduct training and a blood born pathogens class. The YMCA teaching staff members have taken college level courses in Early Childhood Development. Their education varies from possessing the 90 hour course which includes Child Development and Activities for Young Children to having an Associates degree in Early Childhood Development.

Our teachers attend 18- 24 hrs of training yearly, well exceeding licensing standards (12 hrs per year). Our child care Aides take at least 6 hours of training annually.

They are also First Aid and CPR certified. All staff are credentialed through the Maryland State Department of Education.

Sunscreen

During the summer months your child may need sunscreen. You will need you to fill out a medication form listing the exact type (Coppertone with SPF 30) before we can apply sunscreen to your child. You must supply and label your sunscreen. Please apply your child's sunscreen in the morning. It takes the staff quite a bit of time to put sunscreen on 20 children. We will re-apply it in the afternoon, if needed, and before playing in the water

Swimming

The Caterpillars, Fireflies, and Spiders (3-4 year old classes) will have swim time during the year. Children should bring a swim suit and a towel in a bag for swimming. With the exception of ear infections, if your child is too sick to participate in these classes, he/she should not be at the center. Swimming is usually in the morning. Please have your child come to the center with their swim suit under their clothing and bring extra underwear.

Supervision

- **Bathroom**-Children use the bathrooms in the classrooms (Ladybugs, Fireflies, and Caterpillars). Teachers and aides are readily available for assistance when needed. The twos and three's classrooms do not have a bathroom. They will use the bathroom in the hallway on a regular basis-- supervised by a staff member.
- **Naptime**-1-2 staff members will supervise the children.
- **Pick up**- As soon as you enter the classroom to pick up your child you are responsible for your child. Please help them to **continue following the rules** and **stay** in the classroom. Please do not let them **run up and down** the hallways or leave the classroom/playground without you.

What to bring in for your child's first day

Supplies needed

Inchworms/Butterflies, you will need to provide:

- Child's schedule
- Pre-made bottles secured with a lid and labeled with name, and full date—first and last (Example- Sally Smith 8/4/2017)
- Baby food and cereal (new and unopened). Open unused food will be sent home daily
- Pacifier labeled with child's name-if needed
- Diapers(disposable only)-large pack
- Wipes-large pack
- Diaper rash cream (with medication form)-if needed
- Sunscreen(with medication form)-if needed
- 3 Changes of clothing with child's initials (include weather appropriate as well as socks and onesie /t-shirt).
- Family picture
- 5 fabric bibs **without** plastic backing(Inchworms); 5 pull over bibs (Butterflies)
- Fitted crib sheet and blanket
- Inside shoes or slippers, as well as outside shoes

Dragonflies

- Lunch (12 months old and older) -Food should be all "ready to go" (everything cut up and precooked) when you pack it. We will provide the milk and reheat items.
- 1 pack *Take and Toss* sippy cups-to leave at the center(toddlers)
- Diapers(disposable only)
- Wipes
- Diaper rash cream (with medication form) if needed
- Sunscreen (with YMCA) form
- 3 large bib the kind that go over the head(toddlers)
- 2 Changes of clothing with child's initials (include weather appropriate as well as socks and onesie /t-shirt).
- Family picture
- Small photo album(4X6)
- Fitted crib sheet and blanket

Ladybugs

- Blanket/sheet and pillow case/pillow-labeled with child's name
- 2 sets of extra changes of clothes with child's initials on tags and placed in a Ziplock bag with child's name
- Diapers, wipes or Pull-ups (if pottyng)
- (2) -pocket folders(no prongs)
- Family picture
- Lunch (everyday) Label all items and place in a labeled gallon Ziploc bag. No lunch boxes. We will provide milk.

Bumblebees/Spiders/Fireflies/Caterpillars

- Blanket/sheet and pillow case/pillow labeled with child's name
- Extra changes of clothes (shirts, pants, underwear and socks) with child's initials on tags and placed in labeled Ziploc bag
- Large pack of pull ups and wipes (if necessary)
- Composition book

- Family picture
- Lunch (every day). Please sure lunchbox is labeled. We provide milk.
- (4) hole punched plain non poly pocket folders (no prongs)
- Wet flushable wipes

Tax Information

We will provide year-end tax receipts. Our tax ID number is **52-060-7953**

Teacher Appreciation week

Early in May we appreciate our staff by providing them with breakfast one day and lunch a different day, etc. There will be a sign up sheet posted where you can volunteer to help out. Feel free to appreciate the staff at any time.

Screen time

It is the policy of YMCA that technology owned by the Center such as; TV/video and computers with learning games may be used to enhance the curriculum.

For children two years old and older children may view up to 30 minutes of age appropriate, educational passive technology. An occasional exception to the weekly passive technology viewing limit may be made for a special event or project, including a holiday event, or for educational content that is related to the child care's curriculum. Parents/Guardians will be informed of the title and duration before viewing whenever possible. Videos will be free of advertising and brand placement. Screen time will not be permitted during breakfast, lunch or snack time.

Toilet Learning

When your child starts showing signs of readiness, we will begin working together to toilet train your child. Please also work with this at home in the evenings and on the weekends. We will ask you to provide pull ups during this process. Children should wear comfortable clothes easy for them to pull up and down themselves. Clothes worn during these transition times should not have zippers, buttons, onesies, and overalls are not recommended. When you and the teachers feel that your child is ready to begin using the toilet, please speak to a teacher about your methods and practices at home. Together we can develop a plan that best suits your child. No child will be forced to use the toilet if he/she shows resistance. If your child has more than one accident during the day, he/she will be placed back in a pull-up.

If your child is still using diapers or pull-ups, you must supply the pull-ups and wipes as well as **three** changes of clothes including underwear and socks. When your supply is getting low, the teacher will notify you in your communication log. Each child will also have a sticker chart to help motivate them.

Transitioning

When it is time for your child to move to the next age group you will be given a transition paper if this occurs during the school year. A typical transition plan will be that your child will start by visiting the first two days in the mornings, the 2nd two days in the afternoons and then the fifth day he/she will spend all day in the new classroom. You will have an opportunity to meet with the new teachers before your child is moved. The teachers will also meet to talk before your child joins the new class.

To Toddler room- Your child will move to the Toddler room once there is an opening and we also feel that the child is ready. We will let the child visit a few hours at a time, while the child gets used to the new staff. After about a week or so, the toddler will remain on the toddler side.

To 2-3 year old rooms-Your child will move once there is an opening and we feel that your child is ready. Typically, the child visits two mornings, two afternoons, and then a full day on Friday. If one week of transitioning is not enough, we will transition a few more days, until the child is comfortable enough to remain in the new class.

Transportation

If your child is transported in the YMCA bus for a field trip, you must sign a permission slip. Separate permission slips will be signed for each field trip. All children must be buckled in a seat.

Typical day (approximately)

- Arrival
- *Free-play* (children get to choose the table activities they would like to play)
- *Breakfast*
- *Circle time* (singing songs, reading stories, calendar and weather discussion)
- *Academics*
- *Art/craft time* (daily craft projects)
- *Centers* (certain centers are available including housekeeping blocks etc. Children may choose which center to go to)
- *Outdoor play* (when appropriate)
- *Lunch*
- *Quiet reading*
- *Nap*
- *Snack*
- *Academics* (numbers, letters, writing etc.)
- *Outdoor play*
- *Free play/Centers*
- *P.M. Circle time*
- *Dismissal*

Vacations

Please notify the staff when your child will be on vacation. It will help them better plan for their day. Tuition payments are still due during vacation.

Withdrawal

Parents may withdraw a child from the program at any time. **A 2-week written notice is required.** Parents not giving two-week notice will still be responsible for tuition.