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**ywca**

NENY

# YWCA NorthEastern NY CHILDREN'S CENTER PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised August 2010

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN**

**SITES CONVENIENTLY LOCATED AT:**

**44 Washington Avenue  
374 – 3394**

**Early Childhood Coordinator:  
Nancy Johnson**

**[njohnson@ywca-neny.org](mailto:njohnson@ywca-neny.org)**

**Schenectady Community College  
381-1375/381-1389**

**Site Coordinator: Sarah Brewer  
[sccdaycare@sunysccc.edu](mailto:sccdaycare@sunysccc.edu)**

**Youth and Family Services Director:  
Kimberly Siciliano, 374 – 3394 ext. 147  
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**CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION!**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Pg. 3 -Welcome & Philosophy
- Pg. 4 -Parent Responsibilities: Appropriate Language/Actions, Respectful Tone of Voice, Pick Up/Drop Off, Your Child's Cubby/Mailbox, Pet Policy, Smoke Free Facilities, Cell Phones  
-General Operations  
-Selection of Staff
- Pg. 5 -Admission to the Children's Centers  
-Required Paperwork
- Pg. 6 -Communications  
-Parent Involvement  
-Parent Conferences  
-Holidays  
-Emergency Closings
- Pg. 7 -Call-In Procedures  
-Speaking with your Child's Teacher  
-Questions or Concerns  
-Fiscal Policies  
-Registration/Processing Fee  
-Tuition Payments
- Pg. 8 -Attendance Policy  
-Late Payments  
-Late Pick-Up Fee  
-YWCA Membership Fee  
-Withdrawal from Program  
-Returned Check Fee
- Pg. 9 -Center Operations  
-Arrival  
-Departure  
-Breastfeeding Policy  
-Toilet Learning Policy
- Pg. 10 -Biting Policy  
-Room Transition Policies
- Pg. 11 -Infant Arrival  
-Behavior Management  
-Procedures and Responses
- Pg. 12 -Misbehaviors  
-Nutrition program,
- Pg. 13 -Oral Health  
-Rest Time  
-Visitation Policy  
-Fire Drills  
-The Health and Safety of Your Child  
-Annual Exams Required  
-Daily Health Checks
- Pg. 14 -Illness Chart  
-Returning to the Center
- Pg. 15 -Medication Administration  
-Appropriate Dress  
-Seasonal Clothing
- Pg. 16 -Insect Repellant Usage  
-Field Trips
- Pg. 16 -Child Abuse & Maltreatment Policy Procedures, Physical Activity, Health and Nutrition Policy
- Pg. 17 - Food from outside, Family Style Eating, Allergies, Babysitting

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to the YWCA's NorthEastern NY Children's Center. We know that you and your child will benefit from the opportunities that await you at each of our sites.

The following pages contain the YWCA NENY Children's Center policies and should assist you in becoming familiar with what you can expect from the staff and what the staff expects of you as a parent.

Our goals for you and your child are as follows:

- ♥ To develop the child's physical, psychosocial, and cognitive skills appropriate to his/her abilities, age, and personal uniqueness.
- ♥ To develop a healthy and positive concept of self-esteem within each child.
- ♥ To develop school readiness skills in the areas of reading, math, writing, and social skills.
- ♥ To actively involve parents in their child's education through daily communication, monthly newsletters, and special projects.

In the early formative years, play is almost synonymous with life. It is second only to being nourished, protected, and loved. It is a basic ingredient of physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth.

-Ashley Montague



## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

Each child is encouraged to develop into his/her own unique "star" at the YWCA NENY Children's Center. The development of the cognitive, physical, and psychosocial skills are based upon the philosophy of self-esteem. According to educator and counselor, Dorothy Corkville-Briggs, "Self-esteem is the overall judgment of oneself." Self-esteem is the mainspring that slates every child for success or failure in his/her future.

The Children's Centers classrooms utilize the Creative Curriculum as a guideline for lesson planning. The Creative Curriculum allows each teacher the ability to provide a variety of experiences to broaden the child's knowledge and create a life-long desire to learn. Participation in these experiences also provides the child with the opportunity to learn how to make choices appropriate to his/her individual personality. The Creative Curriculum encourages the following:

- Framework for decision making
- Focus on 11 interest areas
- Ongoing cycle of observing, guiding, learning and assessing children's progress
- Continuous teacher interaction
- Objective observations
- Involves child-initiated learning and direct teaching
- Small and large group learning
- Interest areas are the primary setting in which children learn

Self-esteem is the core of the Children's Center's philosophy on discipline. Verbal and non-verbal communication is phrased in a positive way so that the child learns positive interactions and social skills.

The educational and emotional development of each child is of equal importance at the Children's Centers. All teachers strive to function as the child's extended family, while recognizing that the parent is the primary and most important teacher. Parents are a vital component of the Children's Centers. Parent participation is encouraged in every facet of the child's development, both at home and in the child's education. Each of the YWCA's Children's Centers upholds the YWCA's mission of the elimination of racism and the empowerment of women.

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE/ACTIONS**

It is important for parents to remember that inappropriate language/actions are not acceptable in the Centers. Please make sure your conversations and interactions with your child, the teachers, other children and other parents are appropriate and respectful at all times.

### **RESPECTFUL TONE OF VOICE**

In speaking with your child's teacher, please be respectful at all times. Any discussions regarding your child will be discussed with you in a confidential manner. Teachers may not divulge information about other children, due to our confidentiality requirements.

### **PICK UP/DROP OFF**

Please take a moment to acclimate your child to and from the classroom setting. Teachers will try to assist with the transition, but sometimes children need that extra hug or kiss to separate more easily. Make sure to make teachers aware of any out-of-school occurrences that may assist them in making your child's day an enjoyable experience.

### **YOUR CHILD'S CUBBY/MAILBOX**

Please make sure to check you child's mailbox/cubby at the end of each day. Newsletters, your child's artwork, bills, and other important messages are placed there for your convenience. Please help to keep the Center clean by taking this information home with you on a daily basis. Cubbies/mailboxes will be cleaned on a bi-weekly basis. All information will be discarded at that time. You will be notified of your Centers cleaning schedule and given notice when it is approaching.

**Your child may be dis-enrolled for your actions. Please keep this in mind as you participate in the Children's Centers.**

### **PET POLICY**

**Please do not bring a pet into the center without first asking permission of the Site Coordinator. We are regulated by New York State Office of Children and Family Services and therefore we have guidelines we must adhere to in regards to animals in the center.**

### **SMOKE FREE FACILITIES**

The YWCA NENY Children's Centers are smoke free facilities. There are designated smoking areas at all sites. Please ask your Site Coordinator for these locations.

### **CELL PHONES**

The use of cell phones in the children's center classrooms is discouraged. Please end any calls prior to entering the center. This ensures that communication between parent and teacher can take place upon arrival and departure from the center.

### **GENERAL OPERATIONS**

The Centers are licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Each site operates year-round except for major holidays, and is open Monday through Friday. The YWCA NENY is a not-for-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors. The Washington Avenue site is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the SCCC site is in the process of accreditation with hopes of achieving this by spring 2011. This recognizes the high quality early childhood education that the YWCA NENY provides on a regular basis to the families in the community.

### **SELECTION OF STAFF**

The Children's Centers advertise positions to the community when they become available. Current qualified employees are eligible to partake in the interview process for new positions as well. Prospective employees are interviewed by the Youth and Family Services Director, in conjunction with the Early Childhood Coordinator and a member of the Human Resource

Department and are hired based on a number of factors. Education and experience in the field of early childhood education are of primary importance. Other factors include the employee's educational philosophy and personal references.

All prospective employees, students and volunteers who have regular and substantial contact with the children are screened through the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register. Additionally, all staff members are fingerprinted. Substitutes, volunteers and SCCC student interns are never left in charge of a group of children. They are always with a regular staff member. The YWCA NENY Children's Center hiring process is available upon request through the Human Resource Department.

Retention of employees is of utmost importance to the Children's Center Team, since consistency is an essential part of a successful early childhood experience for each child. The Children's Center Administration team works very hard to provide staff with opportunities for time off, professional training and promotion within the children's center department, as well as the YWCA NENY.

### **ADMISSION TO THE CHILDREN'S CENTERS**

Prior to enrolling a child in a Center, parents are encouraged to set up a time to take a tour. During the tour parents will meet their child's prospective teacher, be given an enrollment packet and urged to return for an additional tour with their child. Visiting the program allows both child and parent to become comfortable with the environment, staff and daily schedule.

### **REQUIRED PAPERWORK**

The Children's Centers are required to maintain a file on all children enrolled. The following information must be in every child's file:

- 1) Children's Center Application
- 2) Blue Card
- 3) Informational Sheets with meal plan
- 4) Consent to Release Form
- 5) Physical Form –due yearly with immunizations
- 6) Child Care Fee Agreement
- 7) Security Statement
- 8) CACFP Income Eligibility Form/Meal Selection Sheet/Infant Meal Plan
- 9) Allergy Note from Child's Pediatrician (if applicable)
- 10) Membership card and payment
- 11) Deposit
- 12) Medication Administration Form, filled out by a physician, if applicable
- 13) Family Intake Form

Records, including registration information, assessments and injury reports, concerning children enrolled at the centers are confidential. The only person's permitted to see a child's file will be the parent or legal guardian, center administration, contracted auditors and the New York State licenser. Information will not be given to others without written consent from the parent.

All information in your child's file must be kept current. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the program of any changes such as:

- Home/Work/Cell Phone Number and Address
- Child's Physician, address and phone number
- People authorized to Pick Up Your Child
- Emergency Contact Individuals
- Household Income Changes

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Teachers and program administrators may contact you in a variety of ways, including the following: phone call, email, face-to-face conversations, notes in your child's cubby or through the daily report that your child receives each day. If you have a particular way you would like teachers and administrative staff to contact you, please notify the Site Coordinator and we will do our best to use that form of communication with you.

Parents are expected to communicate, on a daily basis, any pertinent information about your child that may be helpful to us in providing the best possible care. Daily communication between parent and staff is vital to the success of your child's experience at the YWCA NENY Children's Centers.

Children's Center staff is always looking for input, suggestions or advice on how to better the program. Please bring any ideas to your Site Coordinator or put them in writing to the Youth and Family Services Director. Additionally, program evaluations are done in a confidential manner on an annual basis.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parental involvement is essential to the continuing success of the program. You are encouraged to share your time and talent; go on field trips and visit your child's classroom. The staff welcomes and invites your suggestions and participation in events and activities.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES AND CHILD ASSESSMENTS**

Children are assessed three times per year with the purpose of providing teachers and parents with a visual of a child's progress in the program, detailing areas of strength and areas that the child may need extra assistance working on. The Creative Curriculum provides a Developmental Continuum for each age group that allows teachers to assess children based on these fifty age appropriate checkpoints. Additionally, assessments are a compilation of various observations made by teachers over a period of time, use a developmental checklist and the Developmental Continuum Assessment for Creative Curriculum. Any unseen skills will be presented to children during their regular activities to see if they are successful in meeting them. Teachers will also use a child's intake forms to gather additional information and may also verbally speak with parents about any questions or concerns they may have about a child's progress. The information gathered will be used to lay the groundwork for a child's future educational goals. Parents may request a conference with their child's teachers, the Site Coordinator and/or the Youth and Family Services Director at any time during their child's enrollment. Additionally, child assessments are presented to parents in October, February and May, as well as within two weeks of a child's enrollment. These assessments help parents to see the progress their child is making in their classroom. Parent conferences are offered twice per year in October and May to discuss your child's assessment and any other concerns you may have. You may sign up for these in your child's classroom. All attempts will be made to accommodate parent's schedules for appropriate meeting times.

Teachers are trained to administer the assessment as part of their orientation training. Results are kept in each child's file in a locked cabinet. You will be asked to fill out a questionnaire on the Family Intake form, as well as when your child progresses to the next classroom, regarding what you would like to see your child working on and ideas that you feel the teachers could use to work more successfully with your child.

## **HOLIDAYS**

In addition to the holidays listed on the holiday list, the Board of Director's at the YWCA also elects one additional day per year as a staff holiday. When that date is known, parents will be notified. Payment for this day is required in your weekly fee, just as it is required for your child's sick and vacation days, as well as the attached listed holidays.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

- 1) Delays or closings will be announced on the following TV or Radio Stations: TV Channels are 6, 10, and 13. Radio stations are: WGY, WRVE, WHRL, WPYX, WTRY FM, WOFX, WKKF, WROW, WPTR FM, FLY92, B95.5, and WGNA.
- 2) The **Washington Avenue Site** will be announced collectively as the YWCA NENY Children's Centers. **The Schenectady County Community College Site** runs by college guidelines and therefore, if they close or delay, will be announced as the YWCA @ Schenectady County Community College.

- 3) If we open late, children may be signed in beginning at the announced late opening time.
- 4) If we close early, your child needs to be picked up by the announced early closing time or late fees apply. The late fees are the same as outlined in the Parent Handbook.
- 5) As a courtesy to parents, the Children's Center staff will try to contact parents when the Sites are closing early. This is done by the numbers you have listed on your child's blue card. **It is your responsibility to keep those numbers current. Alternate numbers are also recommended, so we can try to reach you in a number of different locations.**

**Fees for the day are still assessed to each parent.** The YWCA staff will do their best to notify you of the need to close the Centers with as much notice as possible. Relocation to the SCCC Center may be a possibility and decided upon at the discretion of the Youth and Family Services Director. We will be announced as the YWCA NENY Children's Center. We try to make this decision by 6:15am. Many of you are on your way by this time, so please listen to the radio on your way to drop off. When SCCC cancels classes, the SCCC Children's Center is also closed

### **CALL-IN PROCEDURES**

**When your child is going to be absent from the Center for any reason, please call at least one half hour in advance of your scheduled drop-off time.** This includes outside appointments, absences and vacations. If you are a college student, please adhere to your class schedule. If you are over a half hour late, the Site Coordinator or designee may choose to deny care for the day. Should this happen, you will still be responsible for payment of care for that day.

The Children's Center reserves the right not to accept your child after 9:30am or your scheduled drop off time, if you have not complied with the above procedure.

### **SPEAKING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER**

Over the course of your child's enrollment in the children's center, we will use a variety of communication techniques to keep the lines of information open between you and your child's teacher. All phone messages may be given to the staff that answers the phone. If you would like to speak with your child's teacher, please leave a message or call back between the hours of 1:00 and 2:30pm, unless you have an emergency and need to convey important information. That is the time when the children are napping and teachers can devote a couple of minutes to a conversation with you. If that is not a convenient time to call, please try to touch base with your child's teacher at pick-up or drop-off time. They may be able to set up a more convenient meeting time.

### **??QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ??**

In the event that you have questions or concerns regarding your child, please consult with your child's teacher immediately. If your child's teacher is not available or your concerns have not been addressed, you are welcome to speak with one of the following:

- 1.) Your child's Site Coordinator (Listed on cover)
- 2.) The Youth and Family Services Director: Kim Siciliano (518) 374 - 3394 ext.147
- 3.) If the Youth and Family Services Director cannot help you, she will direct you to the Executive Director, Rosemary (Rowie) A. Taylor (518) 374-3394, ext 104

### **FISCAL POLICIES**

#### **REQUIRED DEPOSIT**

A deposit is required to enroll your child in the children's center. The amount will be equal to the weekly fee agreed upon at the time of registration. For example, if your weekly fee is \$100, you will need to pay a deposit of \$100 to hold your child's place, as well as your first week's payment of \$100. The deposit will be used when you disenroll from the center to cover payment for your child's last week of care. A two-week written notification of disenrollment is required.

## **YWCA MEMBERSHIP**

An adult membership is required for a child to be enrolled in the Children's Center and is to be renewed annually. The cost is \$30.00/year. Membership allows you and your child(ren) to participate in YWCA programs and activities as described in the Program Brochure. This membership is honored at any YWCA in the USA. Your membership also means you are making a difference in your community as you lend your support and voice to those issues advocated by the YWCA.

Failure to pay this membership annually can result in dis-enrollment from the Children's Center. Summer Fun Days and UPK only students are exempt from paying this fee.

## **TUITION PAYMENT**

Tuition is due every Wednesday the week after services are rendered. If you cannot pay on Wednesdays and need a different day, it must be reflected in your fee agreement and on record with your Site Coordinator. The amount you pay depends upon any financial assistance you may receive and will be reflected in your rate. Parents are responsible for regular tuition payments, regardless of the number of days attended due to illness, vacation, holidays, school breaks, etc. When the center is closed on a payment day, fees are due the next business day before the close of business. If you receive subsidies, you must follow the Guidelines given to you at enrollment.

If you receive Department of Social Services subsidies, DSS does not pay the YWCA NENY for days your child is absent, unless they are sick **(And only up to 12 days/6 month period for these circumstances)**, so please make sure your child is in attendance. **Any unexcused absences could result in disenrollment.**

If you have questions or issues with your bill, please contact our Finance department at ext. 103 and speak with Christine Yost.

## **SIBLING DISCOUNT POLICY**

**A \$25 reduction in one child's rate will be granted for siblings in the program. There will be only one \$25 reduction per family. No other sibling discounts apply.**

## **RETURNED CHECK FEE**

There is a \$30.00 service charge for each check returned for insufficient funds. **Two returned checks during your child's enrollment would require future payments to be made in cash or money order.** Starter checks are not accepted.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

It is imperative that children be at school for their scheduled times. Regular attendance is a must. This is especially true for the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program, as participation in this program begins your child's official school record. If a child does not attend program for more than two weeks, with no communication from the parents, the Children's Center will consider the child disenrolled from the center. Therefore, a child's slot will be given away to serve other families.

## **LATE PICK UP FEE**

PLEASE MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO SIGN OUT YOUR CHILD, GATHER THEIR BELONGINGS, AND BE EXITING THE CENTER BY 5:30, AS TEACHERS HAVE FAMILIES AND OBLIGATIONS OUTSIDE OF WORK. But, if for some reason, you cannot get to the Center by the specified closing times, a late fee will be assessed, according to the center classroom clock. PLEASE CALL THE CENTER AS SOON AS YOU KNOW YOU WILL BE LATE. When your child is picked up after closing time, fees are as follows: \$25.00 per child for any portion of the first fifteen minutes and \$2.00 for each additional minute. On the next date that your child returns to the center payment arrangements must be made with your Site Coordinator.

**If you are more than a half an hour late and we have had no correspondence with you or an authorized pick-up person, the Child Protective Unit at the Department of Social Services will be called. We know this is a drastic measure, so please make sure there are current phone numbers listed on your child's authorization pick-up blue card.**



If four (4) late pick-up fees are assessed within a six-month period, your child will be dis-enrolled from the Center.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

Withdrawal from a Center requires **written** notification no less than two weeks prior to the intended date of withdrawal.

**Failure to give this notice will result in the loss of your deposit.**

The YWCA NENY Children's Centers reserve the right to require a child be withdrawn if the child's or their parent's behavior is determined to be detrimental to the program, or if the health and safety of other children or families is jeopardized. Only after all appropriate referrals have been made and appropriate communication channels with the family have been used will parents be asked to withdraw their child from the program.

### **CENTER OPERATIONS**

Site	Open	Close
Washington Avenue	7:00am	5:30pm
SCCC	7:30am	5:30pm

### **ARRIVAL**

The Centers will require you to "sign in," **using your full name** and escort your child to their classroom each morning.

**Children should arrive with clean clothing and/or diapers** and are not to be left in the hall or any unsupervised area. If your child attends full time, we ask that he/she arrive by 9:30am or at your scheduled arrival time. This allows for home to school transition time and enables your child to participate fully in all activities. **All teachers are required to do a daily health check of your child while you sign them in.** Please make sure to stay until the health check is complete.

Additionally, breakfast is served at approximately 9:00am. Please help your child to remove their outdoor clothing and place it neatly in their cubby upon arrival. It is also important to inform your child's teacher of any information relevant to provide an enjoyable and educational environment. **Please supervise any siblings or visitors that may be with you at this time and remember each classroom is age specific, so younger children should not be let loose in an older sibling's room, and vice-versa.**

### **DEPARTURE**

You will be required to "sign out" your child at the end of each day. All children must be picked up by each Center's closing time. Only people listed on your child's authorization pick-up form may sign your child out. **Children will only be released to persons 16 years of age or older.** Please have identification with you, as our teachers may ask you for it to verify your ability to pick up a child. If you are sending someone who is not on your child's pick-up authorization, your child's teacher needs written permission from you to allow this to happen. This person should also bring identification. Any unauthorized person will not be able to pick up your child. This procedure is in place for the protection of your child. Please make sure you and all persons authorized to pick up your child adhere to this policy. **Please supervise any siblings or visitors that may be with you at this time and remember each classroom is age specific, so younger children should not be let loose in an older sibling's room, and vice-versa.**

### **BREASTFEEDING POLICY**

The YWCA NENY provides an atmosphere that welcomes breastfeeding families. Mothers may use the designated area at the Washington Avenue site or the SCCC site for breastfeeding their infant. Please ask teachers for the location of these spaces. We will do everything we can to help mothers continue breastfeeding when they return to work or school. We will do our best to feed your infant per your required schedule and will train our staff so they are able to support breastfeeding families.

## **TOILET LEARNING POLICY**

Toilet learning should be a non-stressful experience, which is appropriate to each child's individual development and involves the child, parents and caregiver. Toilet learning is one task that we as adults cannot initiate or control for the child (much as we wish we could). We will respect each child's timetable, emotional and physical needs and self-esteem as we help him/her learn to make the transition from diapers to using the toilet independently.

We will work with parents to ensure that toilet learning is consistent between home and school. Parents and caregivers will maintain communication about progress and will share any concerns or questions they have.

We will consider beginning the toilet learning process when there are indications that a child is ready. To get a sense of this readiness, we will use the "Toilet Learning Readiness Indicators." We will not begin the process for reasons such as: expense of diapers, convenience, age of child, and comparison to other children or siblings. We do not feel these factors are true indicators of a child's readiness for toilet learning.

We will need an adequate supply of clothes, pull-ups or diapers during the toilet learning experience to keep your child dry all day. Pull-ups seem to make the transition a much smoother one. Diapers or pull-ups may be used for walks or field trips to eliminate as many accidents as possible.

### **WE WILL NOT.....**

We will not punish or shame a child in any way for accidents. We will change them immediately into dry clothing. This demonstrates respect for the child, acceptance of accidents as inevitable, and understanding that young children do not learn by intimidation, fear or shame.

**We will help a child with cleaning up after they go to the bathroom, but cannot physically help them wipe themselves. As tissue paper can be difficult to use when a child is first learning to toilet, please provide wipes for their bathroom trips. This will eliminate soiled underwear.**

## **BITING POLICY**

Biting is a typical toddler behavior. It is also seen in children who have a hard time communicating orally. They bite to communicate a want or a need, instead of using their words. However, we understand that no child should be in danger of being bitten. We will do our best to make sure that all safety precautions are taken to keep children safe. Should a child be bitten, the following procedures will be followed:

### **When a child is bitten, teachers will:**

- 1) separate the children immediately
- 2) comfort the child who has been bitten
- 3) wash the wound with soap and water
- 4) apply ice to the area
- 5) complete an accident report
- 6) alert the Site Coordinator
- 7) inform the parents of both children

### **Conditions Regarding the Child Who Has Bitten:**

- 1) If this is the first time, or a sporadic incident, parents will be alerted and a behavior plan will be discussed.
- 2) If this is a continual behavior that teachers have been documenting, we may suggest an evaluation by an outside source.

## **ROOM TRANSITION POLICIES**

### **Toddler –Pre-K Room Transition Policy:**

- 1) Children will begin transitioning 2 weeks before their birthday or decided upon (decision made by Site Coordinator, Teaching team in both classrooms, and parent) transition date.

- 2) During **week 1**, children will spend about ½ hour in their soon-to-be classroom. The ½ hour should vary throughout the week. Use the following schedule as a guide:

Monday: ½ hour during breakfast  
 Tuesday; ½ hour during circle time  
 Wednesday: ½ hour during lunch  
 Thursday: ½ hour during story time  
 Friday: ½ hour during Center time

<b><u>Topics to be covered with Child and/or Parent:</u></b>	
Rules of classroom	Meet and greet all teachers
Daily Routine	UPK Policies
Nap time procedures	Diapering Policies
Bathroom Procedures	Toilet Learning Policies
Quiet Signal Used by teacher	Mailbox/cubbv location

- 3) During **Week 2**, each child will spend increasing amounts of time in their “new” classroom. Use the following schedule as a guide:  
 Monday: 1 hour in new class during circle time and activity choices  
 Tuesday; 2 hours in room during activities and lunch  
 Wednesday: 3 hours during lunch and nap  
 Thursday: 4 hours during circle time, activities, lunch and nap  
 Friday: Full Day in new room
- 4) Both classroom teachers should talk about this schedule and decide what works best.
- 5) **A child may never be transitioned without some sort of orientation** to his/her new classroom, even if it is a three-day orientation. See below for three day “Speedy” Orientation Schedule to be used:

Day 1: 2 hours spent with new class in morning during activity time  
 Day 2: ½ day spent with new class  
 Day 3: ¾ of the day spent with new class  
 Day 4: Transitioned to new class

### **INFANT ROOM TRANSITION POLICY**

As infants are the most vulnerable population we deal with and complete “creatures of habit,” we provide a 10-Day Transition Schedule to ease the move to the Toddler Room.

Day 1: The infant will go to the Toddler Room in the AM for 20-30 minutes of activity accompanied by the Infant Teacher.  
 Day 2: The infant will go to the Toddler Room in the PM for 20-30 minutes of activity accompanied by the Infant Teacher.  
 Day 3: The infant will participate in breakfast and 20-30 minutes of activity accompanied by the Infant Teacher.  
 Day 4: The infant will participate in lunch and 20-30 minutes of activity accompanied by the Infant Teacher.  
 Day 5: The infant will participate in Afternoon Snack and 20-30 minutes of activity accompanied by the Infant Teacher.  
 Day 6: The infant will spend Breakfast and Morning Activity Time in the Toddler Room.  
 Day 7: The infant will spend Large Motor time and Naptime in the Toddler Room.  
 Day 8: The infant will be dropped off in the Toddler Room and stay in that room through lunch.  
 Day 9: The infant will spend Large Motor time through PM Activity Time in the Toddler Room  
 Day 10: Drop-Off and Pick-Up will be in the Toddler Room

### **INFANT ARRIVAL AND PREVENTION OF SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME**

Teachers will wake any child brought in to the center before accepting them. We also put all children to sleep on their backs on a firm mattress. Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys and other soft items are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment for infants younger than eight months. If a blanket is used, the infant is placed at the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the crib mattress, reaching only as far as the infant’s chest. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position. These practices help guard against Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

Behavior management is a key goal of the early childhood years. The purpose of this policy is to assist a child in how to take responsibility for his/her behavior and to learn the cause and effect of their actions. Discipline is necessary to ensure a safe and fun environment for all participants in the Children's Center. Our goal is to have each individual child live and learn in harmony with others.

Teachers will use all of their resources with a child in the event of a behavior problem. When the teacher has made every effort to bring about a positive behavior change and has been unsuccessful, the Site Coordinator will be made aware of the situation. YWCA's Children's Center staff will communicate with the parent/guardian about the child's behavior, in a timely manner. The parent/guardian will be encouraged to become actively involved in the behavior management process. When self-control falters and self-discipline fails, other procedures will be enacted to ensure the safety of the child and others around them.

### **Behavior Management Procedures and Responses:**

The following are examples of misbehaviors and the steps that will be taken to alleviate the problem in the safest and quickest way possible. The procedures are not intended to be considered as punishment, but to elicit a response that will effect a change in behavior and ensure the safety of all.

#### **Misbehaviors:**

- Disrespectful language or gestures
- Unreasonable and continuous noise (yelling)
- Abuse of Children's Center staff and other children including hitting, kicking, and spitting, biting, etc.
- Inappropriate display of affection
- Throwing objects
- Arson
- Continuous inability to follow directions

#### **Procedures:**

- 1) Immediate intervention is required by the staff member who is supervising the child.
- 2) The parent will be notified of the behavior.
- 3) A written record, including the date of the factual recording of the incidents, will be kept by the Children's Center staff.

#### **Responses:**

All behavior issues will be documented and shared with parents, your child's teachers and the Site Coordinator. Children with reoccurring issues will be given a verbal warning, then three written reports, followed by a 1-day, 2-day, and 5-day suspension. Throughout this process, parents will speak/meet with the Site Coordinators and your child's teacher to address the behavior problem. A behavior plan will be developed that may include accessing outside assistance and possibly referring the child for evaluation.

Additionally, some or all of the following responses may be used depending upon the severity of the inappropriate behavior.

- A verbal reminder
- Parent Conference (in person or by phone)
- Withdrawal of privileges (including field trips)
- Time-out
- Behavior Contract
- Temporary suspension (up to five days)
- Counseling/referral for evaluation
- Mandatory enrollment in another program

The potential possibilities of any child  
are the most intriguing and stimulating  
in all creation.

- Ray Lyman Wilbur

Should teaching staff feel that a child needs additional services to be successful in the classroom, they will approach you and request a meeting. At that meeting, documentation will be provided to you reflecting their concern for additional evaluation and/or services for your child. The teacher and/or Site Coordinator will provide you with the phone number or application forms to move the process forward. Many children in our centers receive services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy. We work closely with the therapists, setting up a three-way communication between teachers, parents and therapists, using a daily journal. Please speak with the Site Coordinator for specifics on this process.

### **NUTRITION PROGRAM**

The Centers participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are served on a daily basis. All meals and snacks meet the guidelines of the NYS Department of Health for portions and the type of food to be served. Menus will be posted on the bulletin boards and copies will be available for home use if requested.

Meals are eaten family style in a relaxed atmosphere within each classroom. Teachers eat with the children and act as role models. Proper table manners are emphasized and no child is forced to eat.

Please do not send food, candy or gum with your child. Arrangements for birthdays or special occasions need to be approved in advance with your child's teacher.

If your child has allergies or is unable to eat certain foods, please make your child's teacher aware, so that this information may be given to our Nutrition Coordinator. **Also, a written note from your child's pediatrician is required for any allergy that will require the Nutrition Coordinator to make substitutions to the pre-planned menu.**

### **ORAL HEALTH:**

At least once daily teaching staff will provide an opportunity for tooth brushing and gum cleaning to remove food and plaque. Please provide your child with a toothbrush (toothpaste is optional) so that they can participate in this daily activity.

### **REST TIME**

All classrooms have a scheduled rest period after lunch. Each child has his/her own cot and is encouraged to bring in their favorite blanket or stuffed animal. At rest time the teachers put on soft music, turn off the lights and may rub children's backs to help them relax and fall asleep.

It is clear that not all children sleep, especially in the older classrooms. However, children are expected to rest quietly on their cots to allow the other children to sleep. During rest time, quiet activities are provided for those children that are not sleeping, once others who wish to nap have fallen asleep.

### **VISITATION AND OPEN DOOR POLICY**

The Children's Centers have an open door policy by which parents or guardians may observe the program. Parents/Guardians of children in the YWCA's Children's Centers will be allowed unlimited access to program premises and their children at any time whether visits are scheduled or unannounced. Staff will interact with parents in a courteous and respectful manner.

According to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Regulations, "Each day care center shall establish such other rules and policies as are necessary to provide for monitoring and control of visitors to protect the health, safety and welfare of children in care. Each sites visitor control procedures require every visitor to the center to sign in upon arrival and list their purpose at the center, the date, time of arrival and time of departure." All visitors should be asked if they signed in and then should never be left alone with children, unless they are a special therapist working one on one with a child. Enrolled parents and teachers do not have to sign in.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

The evacuation routes and procedures are posted in each classroom. After exiting the Centers, the Site Coordinator or designated teacher will check attendance to assure that all children are present and accounted for. The Site Coordinator will notify the teachers when it is permissible to return to the building. Fire drills are conducted monthly and are documented. Additionally, children may not be dismissed during a fire drill. They must re-enter the building and be signed out. Children who pull the fire alarm while enrolled at a Center, creating a false fire drill, will face disciplinary action, including to, but not limited to dismissal from the Children's Center.

## **THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD**

### **ANNUAL EXAMS**

Each child is required to have a medical examination annually. Each child must have a written statement to be included on the health forms that he/she is free from communicable diseases, and can participate in "day care."

It is extremely important to make the Center aware if your child has been exposed to a contagious/communicable disease such as: measles, chicken pox, rubella, mumps, skin infections, conjunctivitis (pink eye), Fifth's Disease, or Pediculosis (head lice).

### **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services Regulations state that prescription and over-the-counter medication may be given only with the medical written consent form stating that the day care provider may administer said medication and specifying the circumstances, if any, under which the medication may not be administered. The medication must: a) be in the original bottle, b) state child's name, dosage, and time of administering. If directions are necessary, please also provide written documentation. A parent must also give the Center written approval to administer the medication on the daily sheet. **For the safety of all our children, NO MEDICATION is to be stored in your child's diaper bag, backpack or cubby.**

***Remember, we can only administer medication when there is a Medication Administration Training Certified staff member on-site. Please contact your individual site to make sure someone will be present at the times your child needs medication. If there is no certified staff member present, it will be your responsibility to come and give your child the required medication.***

### **DAILY HEALTH CHECKS**

Teachers will make a daily health check of each child and their general condition will be assessed at check-in time. In the event of accident or illness requiring immediate medical attention, the Site Coordinator or other person in charge will immediately call for an ambulance. The Parent or legal guardian will be contacted. The Center reserves the right to have you take your child home if they are too ill to participate in Center activities.

We are aware that having your child at the Center facilitates your ability to pursue important daytime endeavors. We are also aware that keeping your child at home when he/she is not feeling well will impose problems. However, we ask that you consider how your child's health will affect the other program participants. Please keep children who are ill at home, as you would want other parents to do with their sick child.

When taking a child to the doctor, parents should inform the doctor that the child attends a child care center, so that they can advise when the child may return to school. **The centers reserve the right to ask for a written notice from a child's physician following an illness before he/she may return to school.**

### **Returning to the Center:**

If your child has been sent home with a fever, you may send them back to the Center **ONLY IF** he/she has a normal temperature without the aid of medication. Children who leave the Center in an ambulance must have a doctor's note to return. Also, refer to the conditions above for specifics on bringing your child back to the Center.

The Children's Center reserves the right to request that your child receive additional medical attention as per the Children's Center Staff Handbook and Office of Children and Family Services Regulations, and may not allow your child to return to the center until such medical attention is obtained with documentation.

The Children's Center abides by the Office of Children and Family Services Health and Safety Regulations. Due to that fact, the following rules have been established:

## ILLNESS CHART

- ◆ A **fever** of 100 degrees or higher requires a child to stay home until the fever has been gone for 24 hours. A doctor's note may be required before a child can return to school. (101 for infants under 18 months of age)
- ◆ **Colds** are inevitable in group care settings. However, staff is not available to keep a child with a cold inside during scheduled outdoor play. If a child is too sick to participate in the classroom activities, they are probably too sick to be around other children, and should stay home. A doctor's note may be required before a child can return to school. Check with your Site Coordinator.
- ◆ **Diarrhea**, If a child has more than two liquid stools during the day, they may be sent home. A doctor's note may be required for the child to return to school. Check with your Site Coordinator.
- ◆ **Vomiting** – If a child vomits, he/she will be sent home. If a child has vomited in the preceding 12 hours, is listless, or has a poor appetite, he/she should not be brought to the center. A doctor's note may be required before a child can return to school. Check with your Site Coordinator.
- ◆ **Undiagnosed Rashes**: Unless diagnosed by a doctor as non-contagious, center staff will send home a child who has or develops a rash during the day. A doctor's note will be needed to return to school.
- ◆ **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)** – The eyes must be clear for at least 24 hours before the child may return.
- ◆ **Throat infections** diagnosed by a physician – If the child is being given an antibiotic, he or she may not return until they have been on medication for 24 hours.
- ◆ **Indication of a Strep Throat Infection** – Symptoms include high fever, sore throat, and/or ear discomfort. A child may return to the center 24 hours after the start of antibiotics. A doctor's note will be needed to return to school.
- ◆ **Draining abscess** or other **skin lesions** including, but not limited to, RINGWORM, IMPETIGO, ATHLETE'S FOOT or other fungal infections. The child may return to the Center 24 hours after treatment starts, with a physician's note and the area covered.
- ◆ **Coxsackie Virus**: A child may return to the center when they are showing no signs of fever or vomiting.
- ◆ **Ear infection** – Symptoms include pulling the ears, ear pain, fever, irritability, and poor appetite. The child may return once a physician has diagnosed the condition and the child is receiving medication.
- ◆ **Lice**: A child may return to the center 24 hours after treatment has started, as long as they are nit free.
- ◆ **Chicken Pox**: A child may return when the most recent lesion has healed over.
- ◆ **Measles**: A child may return the sixth day after the onset.
- ◆ **Mumps**: A child may return the tenth day after the onset of symptoms.
- ◆ **Poison Ivy**: A child may return after lesions cease to ooze.
- ◆ **Scabies**: A child may return after eggs and mites are destroyed.

**IN ALL CASES, THE YWCA OF SCHENECTADY CHILDREN'S CENTERS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO SEND A CHILD HOME WITH SUSPICIOUS OR PROLONGED SYMPTOMS. WE ALSO RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REQUIRE A DOCTOR'S NOTE BEFORE A CHILD MAY RETURN TO SCHOOL. CHECK WITH YOUR SITE COORDINATOR FOR THIS DETERMINATION.**

## **APPROPRIATE DRESS**

**No child will be accepted to the program unless they have disposable diapers and wipes** (those still in diapers/pull-ups) or a change of clothes with them for day-to-day changing. They must also arrive at the center with a clean disposable diaper and clean clothing. A health care provider's authorization is required for the use of cloth diapers when there exists a documented medical reason for their use. Otherwise, the center uses only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups. Failure to provide these items will result in **additional charges of \$1.00 per diaper on your weekly bill**. It is the

parent's responsibility to make sure that these items are kept in their child's cubby at all times. The Center will provide reminders for these supplies.

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes. Do not send your child in their best clothes as some of the activities they will be participating involve paint, markers, crayons, glitter, and other "messy" items. Appropriate footwear includes sneakers for summer and boots for outdoor winter play. Sandals are acceptable for outdoor water play, but should not be worn on a regular basis. Close-toed shoes are the best for the activities your child will be participating in.

**A blanket, pillow, and your child's favorite stuffed animal may be sent for naptime to make this an enjoyable time for all. This should be taken home and cleaned weekly. Clothing that is soiled by bodily secretions will immediately be placed in a plastic bag and put in your child's cubby to be sent home that day for laundering.**

**The Children's Center is not responsible for lost, stolen, misplaced, or broken possessions, money, or clothing.**

### **SEASONAL CLOTHING**

Outdoor play will be provided except during inclement weather. Generally, if the temperature is above 20 degrees, without a wind chill, the children will go outside. Please dress your child accordingly. If your child is too ill for outdoor play, they may be too ill to be around other children, and should probably stay home.

#### **Fall/Winter:**

Weather permitting, the children will continue to go outdoors to play or go for walks. Please send your child to school with snow pants, a jacket, a hat, mittens, a scarf, and boots.

#### **Spring/Summer:**

Please dress your child in loose, comfortable clothes. We participate in a lot of outdoor activities during the warm weather. During summer, it's a good idea to keep a bathing suit, sandals, and towel in your child's cubby at all times.

**As clothing in you child's cubby gets soiled, please take it home to be washed.**

### **INSECT REPELLANT USAGE:**

When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellent due to high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET are used, and these are applied only on children older than two months. Staff will apply insect repellent (provided by the parent) no more than once a day and only with written parental permission.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an integral part of our curriculum. Both the children and staff enjoy them. The procedure for field trips is:

- 1) A note will be sent home describing the field trip and outlining the fee required with a due date. If you cannot pay the fee by the due date, please speak with your child's teacher.
- 2) We may ask for chaperones on certain trips and would appreciate having any parents or guardians help us out in these situations. Sometimes it makes the difference between classrooms being able to take a trip or having to stay at the Center.
- 3) Once money has been collected and chaperones established, reminders, verbal and written, of the trip will be sent home.

Additionally, field trips involve expert listening skills and attention to safety, as the trips occur in a more open environment than the classroom. Your child's teacher reserves the right to have a child not participate in a field trip if he/she does not possess the listening skills to ensure his/her safety. You may also request your child not participate in a field trip.

When a child does not participate in a field trip, for any reason, every effort will be made to locate a space in another classroom for your child. If there are no spaces available, you are responsible for making alternate child care arrangements. Your fee will remain the same for that week. If you are late for a field trip, every effort will be made to locate a space in another classroom for your child. If there are no spaces available, then you are responsible for locating alternative child care arrangements.



## **CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

As mandated by law, the YWCA NENY Children's Centers shall report suspected cases of child abuse and maltreatment to the State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment. It is understood that, by state law, immunity is granted to all persons who, acting in good faith, file a report of suspected child abuse and maltreatment.

Any staff member who has "reasonable cause" to suspect that a child in care is a victim of sexual or physical abuse or maltreatment shall immediately notify their Site Coordinator. The Site Coordinator will notify the Youth and Family Services Director and the Site Coordinator will make the decision regarding whether or not to notify the authorities.

## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, HEALTH AND NUTRITION POLICY**

Evidence is mounting that today's children are not getting the physical exercise their minds and bodies need. Physical activity and healthy nutrition are two ways to combat obesity in young children. (A Good Start In Life by Norbert Herschkowitz, M.D. and Elinore Chapman Herschkowitz)

Teachers will provide children with at least one hour per day of moderate physical activity. Examples of moderate physical activity are a brisk walk, structured games in the gym, Playground time, swim lessons, etc.

Teachers will provide at least 20 minutes of structured activity time, then free play will be offered in the gym.

Teachers will provide outdoor activity time whenever possible. Parents should provide appropriate outdoor clothing for their child every day. Weather requirements for outdoor play are 20 degrees with the wind chill factored in. As long as this temperature is met, all attempts to go outside must be made.

Teacher's will hi-lite all physical activity time in their lesson plans totaling to at least one hour every day.

During activity play time attempts will be made to make sure every child is engaged in the activity, not waiting for their turn.

Multiples of equipment will be available or a number of choices will be given, so children are constantly on the move.

### **Sample Gym Class:**

10:00 Class reports to gym for 30 minutes of aerobics and 10 minutes of free play

3:30 Class goes for a 10 minute walk, then goes to playground for 10 minutes

## **HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

The YWCA NENY Children's Centers Nutrition Program prides itself on providing healthy meals to all our participants. We are monitored by the Child and Adult Food Program who evaluates our menus and how we serve the children. All of our meals are prepared at the 44 Washington Avenue site and delivered fresh each day to our other three sites. Our menus rotate on a four-week schedule. Meals provided are breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Staff do not offer children younger than four years old the following foods: hot dogs: whole or sliced into rounds, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Breakfast is at 9am, lunch is at 11:45am and afternoon snack is at 3pm, approximately.

## **FOOD FROM OUTSIDE**

Food brought in from outside must have a nutrition label on it for teachers to assess whether or not the food contains nuts. Even a trace of certain products could set off a severe allergy in some children. We strongly urge parents to send in healthy food choices for their children. Snacks high in sugar do not help children in large group settings to concentrate, cooperate or focus.

At birthday and holiday celebrations, we strongly encourage parents to provide healthy alternatives to the usual cupcakes, cake and candy. If parents choose to bring in a "sweet," we also request that you provide a healthy alternative as well.

During classroom holiday celebrations, teachers will put a request form out two weeks prior to the event requesting mostly healthy foods for the party. Once again, anything brought in to the center needs to have a nutrition label.

## **FAMILY STYLE EATING**

Teachers will not eat alternative foods during children's mealtimes. CACFP requires that the children are served family style and that teachers are eating with the children. Only Nutrition Program provided foods will be allowed in the classrooms. Teachers will use their breaks to eat in a separate place from the children. Exceptions to this rule will be at the discretion of the Site Coordinator.

Seconds will be offered but not forced upon children. Food will never be used as a punishment; either withholding of or forcing of food upon a child is prohibited.

Coffee and soda in the classrooms is not permitted at any time.

All classrooms will have water readily available for children and teachers. Parents may be asked to bring in a water bottle for this purpose.

### **ALLERGIES**

Due to the high number of children who have nut allergies, we are a **NUT FREE FACILITY**. Please do not send any food in with your child that contains nuts. This includes birthday parties, breakfast, snack or lunch. The YWCA NENY Children's Centers will do all that they can to provide participants with allergies the safest and healthiest early childhood situation. We understand that allergies may affect the foods a child can have and substitutions may be a necessity. **A doctor's note will be required for any special menu changes.** CACFP requires us to provide this to them in order to change a menu item.

We require all children with a severe allergy to wear an ID bracelet to that effect. Parents must also provide any necessary medication should a child have a reaction while in care. The appropriate medication administration consent form must be completed. This includes benadryl and an epi-pen.

A written list of any allergy restrictions or requirements for the classroom must be provided prior to enrollment. This will allow teachers to best prepare for the arrival of your child. If you have any questions or concerns about these policies and procedures, please do not hesitate to speak directly to your Site Coordinator or contact the Youth and Family Services Director at 374-3394, ext. 147. We appreciate your cooperation on this matter and look forward to a successful partnership.

### **BABYSITTING**

Sometimes our teachers do some part time babysitting for families that attend the Center. If you are going to have a teacher sit for you, you must sign a waiver before they can do so. Please keep the Children's Center separate from babysitting, the two should never overlap. Please see the Site Coordinator for this form.