



YMCA of  
Greater Vancouver

# YMCA Early Learning Programs

Family Handbook

*Building healthy  
communities*

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## Welcome to YMCA Early Learning Programs

Welcome to the YMCA of Greater Vancouver! At YMCA Child Care and Preschool Programs we put the best interests of your child as our top priority and we value parents as the expert of their children. We look forward to embarking on a partnership with you to ensure your child reaches his/her full potential. This family handbook provides you with important information you will need to know while our child is in our care. We recommend you keep this Family Handbook to use as a reference guide while your child is in our care.

### Our Commitment to Children & Families

The YMCA is dedicated to strengthening families and communities. We value the strength of each family and respect the various backgrounds that enrich our programs. We recognize that each child is an individual and that each family has different needs, interests and expectations. Our goal is to build partnerships and work with families and neighborhood organizations to help children grow to be healthy, caring, competent adults. We support families by providing information, resources and programs that will assist them in their role as parents and help sustain a healthy family lifestyle.

### YMCA of Greater Vancouver

#### Mission

The YMCA of Greater Vancouver is a charity dedicated to strengthening the foundations of community.

#### Vision

We are building a community in which a generation of children and families reach their full potential.

#### Values

- Do the right thing
- Put people first
- Keep our promises
- Lead by example



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Staff**

All YMCA Early Learning staff are dedicated to the safety and well-being of all children in our care. Staff are professionals who have the necessary qualifications to meet child care and preschool licensing regulations and provide a quality program for your child.

All staff must adhere to a number of policies and procedures, as well as Ministry, health and fire regulations. Annual review of these policies and procedures ensures our staff are knowledgeable and prepared to handle any situation. All staff are First Aid/CPR certified, have passed Criminal Record Checks and provide references attesting to their suitability for working with children.

### **Volunteers/Students**

YMCA programs are enhanced by the involvement of volunteers and school placement students. Volunteers and students in our child care programs provided a clear criminal record check, three professional references and undergo child protection training prior to being in our programs. Volunteers and students are not responsible for and are never left alone with children and are always under the supervision of a paid YMCA staff member.

### **Role of the Family**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in the program whenever possible. Parental involvement is a key element to the success of your child's experience in YMCA Child Care. Participation can include verbal or written feedback, sharing information about your child's development, attending meetings, workshops, fundraising events or volunteering on field trips or in the classroom. Whatever your special talent, interests or schedule may be, there are plenty of ways to get involved. Please speak with a program staff or visit our website for more information.

### **Duty to Report**

We are required by law under the Child, Family and Community Service Act to report any suspected cases or disclosures of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities for investigation. Our responsibility is to report suspicions or disclosures, not to determine if abuse has occurred. Investigations are the responsibility of the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) and/or the police, and they are responsible for contacting the parent/guardian.

If a report is filed, the educator filing the report does not disclose information about who the report was filed on to any other staff members, including their supervisor, only that a report was made. The report is kept strictly confidential.

## Child Guidance

The YMCA is committed to helping children grow to their fullest potential in a safe, caring and nurturing environment, however it is necessary at times to set limits and standards of appropriate behaviour. YMCA staff are guided by the YMCA Child Guidance Policy which they are required to adhere to at all times when interacting with children in a YMCA program. Staff are required to review this procedure on an annual basis.

YMCA Child Care Programs provide an environment where children are treated with respect, adults are caring and activities are planned based on children's interests and developmental needs. Our goal is to assist children to learn self-regulation and to develop socially acceptable and appropriate behaviours.

When approaching a challenge or problem, we apply a strength-based approach. A strengths-based approach means entering a situation and identifying the strengths of the child first and then supporting them to build on their strengths to overcome challenges.

YMCA Child Guidance Policy and Procedures have been developed to provide a framework to:

- Assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence and self-discipline
- Assist children to develop socially acceptable and appropriate behavior
- Recognize that each child is an individual whose age, experience, environment, developmental level and background influence his/her behavior
- Ensure staff use positive and proactive strategies for guiding children's behavior.

## Inclusion

The YMCA of Greater Vancouver, in keeping with our mission and vision, believes in the development of healthy, confident children. We're committed to treating children with respect and dignity and helping them grow and develop to their full potential in a safe, nurturing and learning environment.

Central to our work at the YMCA is diversity and social inclusion. We believe that all children and families should have an inclusive and respectful experience in our program.

- YMCA programs are designed to develop children in spirit, mind and body. Every child is a unique individual and adds value to our program.
- Parents and families are involved, consulted and informed partners with YMCA staff and volunteers.
- YMCA staff and volunteers strive to ensure the environment and programs are adapted to meet the needs of all children.
- YMCA staff and volunteers as needed seek out community partners to enhance our ability to support children with special needs through training and consultation.

## **YMCA Curriculum – Playing to Learn**

Our YMCA Playing to Learn curriculum focuses on small group, play based, inquiry programming provided by qualified educators who engage in play with your child. YMCA Playing to Learn curriculum combines three decades of experience in child care delivery, with the latest body of knowledge on how the brain develops and how children learn.

Throughout the early years your child will be learning through developmentally appropriate play experiences that will prepare him/her for school. YMCA Playing to Learn aligns with the BC Ministry of Education's Early Learning Framework.

### **Infant (age 3 months – 18 months)**

- Educator/Child ratio 1: 4
- Infants individual schedule is followed (input from family required)
- Infant daily record is documented (sleep times, eating, diapering)
- A significant play experience is written daily in each child's journal
- Educators write weekly documentations highlighting learning that occurred during a play experience.
- Program includes opportunities for exploring indoors and outdoors, songs and stories, discovering creative and sensory materials, imitation play and lots of time for hugs and cuddles.

### **Toddler (age 18 months to 36 months)**

- Educator/Child ratio 1: 4
- Toddlers follow a flexible group schedule
- Toddler daily record is documented (sleep times, eating, diapering)
- A significant play experience is written daily in each child's journal
- Educators write weekly documentations highlighting learning that occurred during a play experience.
- Program includes opportunities for exploring indoors and outdoors, music and movement, discovering creative and sensory material, puzzles, stories, blocks, dramatic play and learning to play with others.

### ***What to Bring (Infant/Toddler)***

- Please ensure all of your child's belongings are clearly labeled with their name.
- You will be required to supply:
  - Complete change of clothing
  - Seasonal outdoor clothing (muddy buddy, boots, sun hats, etc.)
  - Blanket for rest time and/or a sleep toy
  - Diapers, wipes and any creams or lotions
  - Bottles/sip cups
  - Formula or expressed milk if your child has not transitioned to Homo/2% milk
  - Training underwear and extra clothing (for children toilet training)

### 3 – 5 Year Olds

- Educator/Child ratio 1:8
- Preschool children follow a flexible group schedule
- A significant play experience is written daily in each child's journal
- Educators write weekly documentations highlighting learning that occurred during a play experience.
- Program includes opportunities for exploring indoors and outdoors, creating with the arts (visual, dramatic and music), discovering science, engaging in mathematics and literacy activities, developing social skills, gross and fine motor skills and problem solving.

#### *What to Bring (3 – 5 Year Olds)*

Please ensure all of your child's belongings are clearly labeled with their name.

You will be required to supply:

- Complete change of clothing
- Seasonal outdoor clothing (muddy buddy, boots, sun hats, etc.)
- Blanket for rest time and/or a sleep toy



### Field Trips

Field trips can be an important part of our child care program. We often take children for neighborhood walks or to visit local parks which allow them to get to know their community. This is considered a part of our regular routine and is often done spontaneously. For major field trips parents will be notified ahead of time including if the children will be using public transportation.

## Program Information

### Hours of Operation

Our hours of operation vary depending on the location and type of program. Site specific hours of operation are provided in Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

### Professional Development Day

Each year in October (usually the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday) all YMCA of Greater Vancouver Early Learning Centres close for a professional development day for our educators. Providing our educators with professional development to keep them up to date on the latest research on early childhood development and best practice is a critical component of a quality early learning environment. It is also mandatory for our educators to attend professional development training in order for them to maintain their Early Childhood Educator (ECE) credentials.

### Christmas Closure

All of our Early Learning centres will be closed between Christmas and New Years Day. Notice of actual closure dates will be provided each year in early spring so that families have plenty of time to organize their schedules.

### Unscheduled Closures

In the event of severe weather conditions such as a heavy snowfall, our YMCA Early Learning Programs may be closed. In the event of a closure every effort will be made to contact you before the program is scheduled to open.

In the event of a power failure, our programs may be unable to open or may be required to close early. When possible, parents will be notified of a potential closure or if the program must close earlier than the normal scheduled closing time.

### Drop Off and Pick Up Procedure

The safety and well-being of all children participating in YMCA Early Learning programs is of the utmost importance, therefore, we expect all parents to drop off and pick up their children from their children's classroom teacher daily.

Children may not be dropped off before the program opens.

### When Someone Else Picks Up Your Child

You are required to notify centre staff if someone other than those listed on the authorized pick up list will be picking up your children. If this person is unknown to the staff, they will be required to show photo identification. The alternate pick up person must be 16 years or older.

### Statutory Holidays

YMCA Early Learning Centres are closed on the following statutory holidays each year.

New Years Day  
Family Day  
Good Friday  
Easter Monday  
Victoria Day  
Canada Day  
BC Day  
Labour Day  
Thanksgiving  
Remembrance Day  
Christmas Day  
Boxing Day

## Late Pick Up

We expect that all children are picked up on time, respecting our staff's work schedules and personal commitments. Frequent late pick up can result in withdrawal of services. Further information regarding our Drop off and Pick Up Policies are included in our registration package.

## Failure to Pick Up

If a child is not picked up by closing time, staff will contact parents/guardians and emergency contacts. If after 30 minutes staff are unable to contact parents/guardians or emergency contacts, staff will call the Ministry for Children and Family Development who will take your child into care until you can be located.

## Custody

If a custody agreement or court order is in place for your child, a copy must be on file. Staff will act in accordance with this legal document. If issues around custody exist and there are no legal documents on file, our staff do not have authority to deny either parent access to their child.



## Nutrition

**Snacks:** YMCA Early Learning Centres offer a variety of nutritious snacks prepared on-site. To ensure your child receives a well-balanced diet, our menus follow Canada's Food Guide. Snack plans are posted weekly for your information.

**Lunch:** Some of our programs provide a lunch program prepared by an on-site cook. This is a for-fee service only available at locations that have an approved commercial kitchen. In programs that do not have a lunch program we require children to bring a lunch (including a drink). We encourage families to pack healthy foods, and your help in sending nutritious foods is much appreciated.

## **Nut and Food Allergies**

The YMCA cannot guarantee a nut-free facility however, to protect children with nut allergies, nuts or food products that contain nuts may be prohibited in our Early Learning Centres if a child with a severe allergy attends the centre. On occasion other serious food allergies are brought to our attention. If this is the case parents will be asked to refrain from sending that particular food.

Please inform staff of any food allergies or dietary restrictions.

## **Anaphylaxis**

Parents of children that have been diagnosed with an anaphylactic allergy have the responsibility to provide a detailed individual emergency plan for their child and to train all Centre staff and volunteers on their child's emergency plan prior to the first day of care. It is the Parent/Guardian's responsibility to inform centre staff of a child's allergy at the time of registration and provide an annual update of any allergy changes.

## **Medication**

YMCA child care staff can administer prescription medication in its original container, with the pharmacist's label stating the child's name, medication prescribed, dosage, duration and expiry date. Over the counter medication will only be administered when accompanied by a written letter from your child's doctor stating, name of child, medication prescribed, dosage, duration, expiry date and reason for administering. In both cases parents must complete a YMCA Medication Form to authorize the administration of the medication provided.

## **Illness**

It is important to prevent the spread of infectious diseases to other children and staff; therefore, when your child shows signs of sickness, or has a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or higher (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), we require your child to stay home.

When your child develops symptoms or develops a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), while at the program, staff will contact you to request your child be picked up.

Your child must be symptom free for a period of 24 hours prior to returning to the child care program. It is advisable to seek medical consultation to ensure your child is fit to return to group care.

## **Clothing & Weather**

Regardless of the weather, we spend time outdoors every day. Please ensure your child has appropriate clothing for the relevant season (i.e. rain gear or winter coat). During warmer weather, please ensure your child has a hat and sunscreen at the centre.

## **Emergencies**

In the case of an emergency or natural disaster, we will attempt to contact families as soon as possible. If only long distance telephone lines are available (i.e. local lines are down or engaged), we will leave a message with your out of town emergency contact.

If a child needs medical attention, we will make every effort to notify parents/guardians prior to taking the child to the nearest hospital/clinic.

## Registration Information

### Registration Fee

A \$50 non-refundable registration fee will be charged upon registration of your child in a YMCA Early Learning program.

### Deposit

Upon registration a refundable deposit equal to one half (½) of your monthly child care rate will be taken to secure your child's space. The deposit will be refunded when 45 days written notice of withdrawal is given.

### Child Care Fees

Fees are due and payable on the first of each month and may be paid by per-authorized payment through Visa, MasterCard or direct debit. Failure to pay fees can result in termination of care.

### Declined Fees

If funds are unavailable we will attempt to withdraw fees a second time (up to 30 days from original payment date.) A fee of \$15 may be applied if funds are unavailable at the time of withdrawal. The YMCA will not be responsible for any costs charged by your bank/financial institution.

### Government Subsidy

The government's Child Care Subsidy Program is available to families based on provincial eligibility requirements. Families who receive the provincial child care subsidy are responsible for the difference between the subsidy and the YMCA fees. Parents are responsible for keeping their subsidy current and for the full fee child care fees if their subsidy expires. For more information, contact 1-888-338-6622 or visit [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare)

### YMCA Financial Assistance

As a charity that serves all segments of our community, the YMCA of Greater Vancouver provides financial assistance in times of need. This short term support is made possible due to the generosity of our donors, members, volunteers, staff, corporate and community partners.

### Absence from Care

No discounts or refunds are issued for missed days, statutory holidays, sick days, vacations or closures due to inclement weather.

### Tax Receipts

We will provide payers with an official Child Care Income Tax receipt on or before February 28 of each year for the prior year's fees.

### YMCA Children's Membership

Children registered in a full time child care space are entitled to a free membership at one of the YMCA of Greater Vancouver's Membership Centres. This will allow your child to participate at no cost, in any program included in their membership such as swimming lessons, drop in parent participation programs or other activity programs. Their membership will include 10 complimentary guest passes so you and others of your choosing can also enjoy a YMCA experience. Some programs have age restrictions. For more information on programs and services as well as YMCA Membership locations please visit [www.gv.ymca.ca](http://www.gv.ymca.ca)

## Withdrawal from Program

A minimum of 45 days notice is required for withdrawal from your child care program and must be received on the 1st or 15th of the month prior to the month you wish to withdraw your child. (June 1st for July 15th or June 15th for July 31st) An additional month's fee will be charged if the required notice is not given. Your deposit will be refunded if adequate notice is received.

## Withdrawal of Service

In some situations, it may be necessary for the YMCA to withdraw services; however, we will make every attempt to work with the family to resolve the issue to the mutual satisfaction of all parties, provided that the arrangement does not compromise the mission and values of the YMCA, put staff, the child or other participants at risk, or diminish the value of the YMCA experience for other participants. Situations are dealt with on an individual basis, taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of the family.

**The following situations may be considered cause for terminating care:**

- Behavioural concerns (the YMCA is not equipped to deal effectively and appropriately with a child whose behaviour requires ongoing significant intervention, such as persistent unprovoked physical violence, persistent bullying, verbal harassment or unauthorized departure from the centre)
- Unresolved custody issues (if a family's custody issues result in continuous conflicts at the centre, and places the child, staff and other children at risk)
- Inappropriate conduct, including harassment, threatening behaviour, violent acts toward staff, children or other families involved in the program
- Late pick up issues
- Non-payment of fees
- Philosophical differences (when the needs and opinions of a family do not fit with the principles, policies and procedures of the YMCA)

## Privacy of Information

The YMCA of Greater Vancouver respects the rights of individuals to the protection of their personal information. The YMCA is committed to maintaining the confidentiality, privacy, and accuracy of personal information it collects, uses and discloses. YMCA staff and volunteers who have access to personal information follow fair information principles, in keeping with privacy laws. We collect, use and disclose personal data in order to better meet your needs, ensure the safety of children in our care, collect statistical data, satisfy government and regulatory obligations, and inform you about the program in which you are registered. We may contact you periodically to inform you about other YMCA programs, services and opportunities that may be of interest and benefit you. To view our Privacy Policy, please visit our website.

### **YMCA Strong Kids Campaign**

As a charity, the YMCA relies on the generosity of people in our community and works hard to ensure no one is turned away because of their inability to pay. YMCA Strong Kids is an annual fundraising campaign focused on raising much needed funds to support YMCA programs that give kids the opportunities they need to reach their potential: to live healthier, happier lives today, and grow into productive adults in the future.

100% of donations to YMCA Strong Kids go directly toward helping children, teens and young adults. From helping a child go to camp or a vulnerable toddler attend a safe and nurturing child care centre, every donation helps children and families access YMCA programs they are unable to afford on their own.

## **Appendix 1**

### **YMCA Child Care Programs List**



**THE YMCA OF GREATER VANCOUVER  
EARLY LEARNING CENTERS - 2018**

<b>CENTRE NAME</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>	<b>Licensed to Care for Children</b>
Beach YMCA Child Care	1475 Burrard St., Vancouver, BC V6Z 3B5	604-683-3417	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	18 months - 5 years
Bob & Kay Ackles YMCA Nanook House	1255 E 10th Ave., Vancouver, BC V5T 2B6	604-872-7011	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	18 months - 5 years
City Hall (Surrey) YMCA Child Care	13450 104th Ave., Surrey, BC V3T 1V8	604-588-6301	7:00 am - 5:30 pm	Infant - 5 years
Coast Capital Savings Early Childhood Centre	955 Burrard St., Vancouver, BC V6Z 1Y2	604-673-6184	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	Infant - 5 years
Coast Capital Savings Early Learning Program	955 Burrard St., Vancouver, BC V6Z 1Y2	604-673-6184	9:00 am - 11:30 am 9:00 am - 2:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Crescent Beach Early Learning Program	2756 127th St., Surrey, BC V4A 6L5	604-535-1313	9:00 am - 11:30 am 9:00 am - 2:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Djavad Mowafaghian Child Care Centre	4698 Oak St., Vancouver, BC V6G 3V4	604-879-4159	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	Infant - 5 years
Elm Drive YMCA Child Care	B-855 Elm Dr., Chilliwack, BC V2P 4Y8	604-792-7823	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	Infant - 5 years
False Creek YMCA Child Care	1399 Fountain Way, Vancouver, BC V6H 3T3	604-732-7733	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Gibsons YMCA Child Care	783 School Road, Gibsons, BC V0N 1V9	604-886-8845	7:30 am - 5:30 pm	Infant - 5 years
Kids at Heather	710 W 12, Vancouver, BC V5Z 0A5	604-873-9011	7:00 am - 6:00 pm	Infant - 5 years
Kids at Heather Preschool	710 W 12, Vancouver, BC V5Z 0A5	604-873-9011	9:30 am - 12:00 pm 9:30 am - 1:30 pm	30 months - 5 years
Little Rae YMCA Preschool	200-761 Cardero St., Vancouver, BC V8G 2G3	604-417-6257	9:00 am - 12:00 pm 9:00 am - 1:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Little Scholars	1411 Foster St., Coquitlam, BC V3J 2N1	604-939-9548	7:30 am - 5:00 pm	Under 3 years
Metrotown YMCA Child Care	489-4800 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC V5H 4J2	604-439-9618	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	Infant - 5 years
Mole Hill YMCA Child Care	1164 Comox St., Vancouver, BC V6E 1K5	604-684-9628	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Northside YMCA Preschool	46465 Bernard Ave., Chilliwack, BC V2P 1H6	604-792-8010	9:00 am - 1:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Platypus YMCA Child Care	1-40137 Government Rd, Squamish, BC V8B 0N7	604-898-1087	7:45 am - 5:30 pm	18 months - 5 years
Renfrew Station YMCA Child Care	2925 Hebb Ave., Vancouver, BC V5M 4Y2	604-251-2436	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	18 months - 5 years
Tong Louie Jr YMCA Child Care	14988 57th Ave., Surrey, BC V3S 7S6	604-575-5510	7:00 am - 6:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Tong Louie Jr YMCA - Preschool	14988 57th Ave., Surrey, BC V3S 7S6	604-575-5510	9:00 am - 11:30 am 9:00 am - 1:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Vista Point YMCA Child Care	100-5828 Thunderbird Blvd., Vancouver, BC V6T 0P8	604-222-0552	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	30 months - 5 years
Woodwards YMCA Child Care	7-111 W Hastings St., Vancouver, BC V6B 1H4	604-685-8355	7:30 am - 6:00 pm	18 months - 5 years