



# YMCA Kids Club Family Handbook

September 2024





We acknowledge, with much gratitude, that YMCA BC's work takes place on land steeped in rich Indigenous history and the traditional, unceded territories of the Coast Salish, Interior Salish, and Dakelh or Carrier Peoples, who have been the lands' traditional stewards and continue to protect and care for the lands, waterways, and airways that YMCA BC currently operates on.

# Welcome to YMCA Kids Club

Welcome to YMCA BC! Our YMCA Kids Club program has the best interests of your child as our top priority, and we value parents and guardians as the experts of their children. We look forward to partnering with you to ensure your child reaches their full potential.

This handbook will provide you with the information you need to know while your child is in our care.

For more than 138 years, the YMCA has been supporting communities, helping kids realize their potential and develop the confidence, relationships and leadership skills needed to be future leaders. YMCA Kids Clubs offer school-age children a safe and nurturing space during before and after school hours, and are committed to helping kids grow strong physically, socially and emotionally. Our programs take a child-focused approach and are healthy, creative places where kids have the opportunity to develop values, self-confidence and social skills. The YMCA complies with the Ministry of Health – Community Care Assisted Living Act, Child Care Licensing Regulation (CCLR) regarding Guidance and Treatment of Children.



## Play, Relationships & Health

The YMCA's approach to working with school-age children is based on three principles that we believe to be important: play, relationships and health.

Play is the way children explore and learn about themselves and the world around them. During play children practice skills, discover personal abilities and further develop a sense of self. Playing with others also teaches children about boundaries and expectations.

Children who have caring relationships with their families, adults outside the family and peers develop social competencies, positive values and the valuable skills needed to build friendships of their own.

The YMCA works with children and families to develop a healthy lifestyle and environment that will support them through their childhood, adolescent and adult years. We strive to have an impact on the values and culture that shape health for children today and into the future.

We welcome and encourage parent involvement in our program. Parents/guardians are welcome to visit at any time.

**DISCLAIMER: YMCA BC reserves the right to make amendments to the terms and conditions stated in this handbook and will provide notifications when changes occur.**

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Staff

YMCA Kids Club staff are dedicated to the safety and well-being of all children in our care. Staff are professionals who have the necessary training and experience to deliver quality programs. All staff are First Aid/CPR certified and receive annual training on topics such as child development and positive guidance practices. Staff adhere to a number of policies and procedures, as well as licensing, health and fire regulations. Our Kids Clubs follow a staff to child ratio of 1:10 as often as possible.

However, there may be times when circumstances change and a program is required to operate with a staff to child ratio of either 1:12 or 1:15, both of which adhere to the child care licensing regulation.

YMCA staff are not permitted to provide services to families that are beyond their roles and responsibilities as a YMCA Kids Club staff member, such as babysitting or house-sitting. Furthermore, staff cannot engage in any social media activity/interaction with Kids Club families and/or child(ren) at any time. Should you have any concerns, please contact our office at 604.939.9622.

## Volunteers/Students

We may accept work experience students from local high schools, early childhood practicum students and volunteers to help in our programs. All students and volunteers provide a clear criminal record check, three professional references and undergo child protection training prior to volunteering in our programs.

## Contacting School Staff

Our YMCA Kids Clubs strive to provide children with a safe and welcoming environment at all times. If at any point a child demonstrates behaviour that is concerning, the YMCA may contact school staff (principal, teachers, counsellors, etc.) to consult on how we can best work together to support the child and provide them with a positive Kids Club experience.

## 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 determine if abuse has occurred. Investigations are the responsibility of the Ministry for Children and Family Development and/or the police, and they are responsible for contacting the parent/guardian.



# YMCA Curriculum & Environment

## YMCA A Place to Connect™

YMCA A Place to Connect™ is specially designed for children aged 5-12 who participate in our Kids Club programs. Drawing inspiration from the principles that underpin our Playing to Learn™ curriculum, this program focuses on fostering an active, healthy, and fun environment where children are encouraged to make their own choices.

Our Kids Club programs emphasize the development of new physical, cognitive, emotional, and social skills in a caring and nurturing environment. Developed by child care experts at the YMCA of Greater Toronto, YMCA A Place to Connect™ ensures a high-quality approach to before and after school care across Canada.

The curriculum is rooted in comprehensive research from developmental psychology, human development, neuroscience, education, risk management, diversity and social inclusion, social services, and child care. Our goal is to make YMCA Kids Club programs the most enriching and supportive places for school-age children. Research shows that children thrive in environments that offer them the opportunity to shape their experiences, emphasizing choice, leadership, strengths, and relationship-building.

### What Can Your Child Expect in YMCA Kids Clubs?

- **Nurturing Relationships:** Caring YMCA staff will encourage your child's individual development and attend to their emotional needs.
- **Physical Activities:** Engaging in games, outdoor play, and physical activities.
- **Social Interaction:** Spending time and having fun with other children.
- **Interest-Driven Activities:** Planned activities based on their interests, allowing them to explore arts and crafts, science, math, reading and more.
- **Leadership Opportunities:** Chances to take on leadership roles within the program, fostering confidence and responsibility.

We believe YMCA A Place to Connect™ is the best approach to ensuring a child's continued enthusiasm and capacity for lifelong learning. Our curriculum weaves our mission, vision, and values into programming, striving to develop responsible, respectful, caring, honest, healthy, and inclusive citizens.



# YMCA Curriculum & Environment

## Activities & Environment

As the YMCA is committed to promoting healthy living, children in our Kids Clubs have the opportunity for indoor and outdoor physical activity and are served a healthy snack daily. The YMCA Kids Club environment is child-centred, age-appropriate and flexible to meet the diverse needs of children. Routines vary depending upon daily activities, however each of the following interest areas are always available:

### Arcade:

An indoor games area where children can do puzzles and play board games.

### Diner:

A snack area where children can help themselves to a healthy snack consisting of at least two food groups (one of which being fruits and vegetables).

### Centre Stage:

A dramatic arts area that provides a place for imagination and creativity where children can create plays and musical productions.

### Lab:

A science area that provides children the opportunity to experience and experiment with science and nature.

### Lounge:

A quiet area where children have space to relax, read a book or chat with friends.

### Stadium:

An outdoor games area where children can be active, and play sports and games.

### Studio:

An art area that provides children a chance to work on art projects using a variety of materials.

### University:

A quiet space for children who choose to do homework, equipped with the necessary scholastic resources.

### Workshop:

An area for building and engineering with blocks and other materials.

## Play it Fair!

Our YMCA Kids Club programs also offer Play it Fair! activities. Created by Equitas, Play It Fair! is an educational Toolkit developed to promote human rights, non-discrimination and non-violent conflict resolution for children ages 5 - 12. Children also have the opportunity to contribute to their community by participating in philanthropic activities, such as fundraising events.

## Out Trips

Off-site trips can provide valuable experiences for children and allow staff the opportunity to extend program activities outside of the regular program location. All excursions are carefully pre-planned and adequately supervised. Families will be notified at least one week in advance of any out trips. Staff and children do not leave the program without first notifying families.



# Program Information

## Hours of Operation

Our standard hours are 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. and school dismissal to 6:00 p.m. However some exceptions apply, so be sure to check the hours of your location. YMCA Kids Clubs are open for most non-instructional days, and many locations remain open during spring, summer and winter breaks.

## Statutory Holidays

**YMCA Kids Club programs are closed on statutory holidays during the year:**

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Labour Day
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Thanksgiving Day
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

**\*YMCA Kids Clubs will be closed for all federal, provincial and municipal statutory holidays.**

## Drop Off and Pick Up

The safety and well-being of all children in our care is our top priority, therefore we expect parents/guardians to follow our procedures.

Before school, parents/guardians must sign children in and ensure that a staff member is aware that you are dropping off your child. Children are released from the program when the school bell rings.

YMCA staff escort children in kindergarten to their classrooms.

After school, older children make their own way to the program and YMCA staff pick up and escort kindergarten children from their classrooms to the program.

Parents/guardians must sign children out upon pick up and ensure that a staff member is aware that you are taking your child home.

Children will not be released from care when:

- the person appears incapable of providing safe care (ex. intoxication/drug use). Staff will suggest an alternative such as call a friend or taxi. If staff feel the child is at risk and the person makes the decision to drive, staff will call 9-1-1.
- the person is not on the authorized pick-up list and/or the parent has not given written permission for the child to be released.
- the person is unable to provide proper photo identification.

## Failure to Arrive After School

If a child does not arrive to the program after school dismissal and staff have not been notified in advance of absence, staff will contact parents/guardians and/or emergency contacts. If staff are unable to confirm the child's whereabouts, they will call 9-1-1 and report the child missing.

## Authorized Pick-up List

You are required to notify centre staff, in writing, if someone other than those listed on the authorized pick up list will be picking up your child. If this person is unknown to the staff, they will be required to show identification. This also applies to people on the authorized pick-up list.

# Program Information

## Late Pick Up

We expect that all children are picked up on time, respecting our staff's work schedules and personal commitments.. Late pick-ups may result in additional charges of \$1.00 per minute and/or withdrawal of services.

## Failure to Pick Up

If a child is not picked up by closing time, staff will contact parents/guardians and/or 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, the parent who registered the child care will be deemed the custodial parent and staff will only follow instructions from this parent unless otherwise instructed by a court order. If a family's custody issues result in conflict at the program, and places the child, staff and others at risk, the family may be asked to make alternate care arrangements.

## Clothing and Outdoor Play

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

## Inclement Weather

If the decision is made by the school to close due to inclement weather, YMCA Kids Clubs will be unable to operate. A refund will not be offered for these closures.

## Program Closures

The YMCA will make every attempt to keep programs open however, there may be times where your YMCA program will need to close or operate on reduced hours. These include situations such as but not limited to staff shortages, outbreaks, public health orders, power outages, water main breaks etc. The YMCA will make every effort to provide notice regarding closures and reduced hours in a timely manner. All families will receive a notification via ePACT. Refunds will not be issued for these closures.

## Child Membership

Any child, who is registered full-time at a YMCA Kids Club will receive a complimentary child membership that can be used at any of our five Health, Fitness and Aquatics facilities: Langara Family YMCA, Robert Lee YMCA, Tong Louie Family YMCA, Bob Chan-Kent Family YMCA, Bettie Allard YMCA.

## Personal Effects

The YMCA is not responsible for any personal items/articles that are brought, used or left at our programs or facilities.



# Program Information

## Emergencies

It is essential that parents/guardians keep us informed of current phone numbers so we can contact notify you in the event of an emergency. In the case of an emergency or natural disaster, we will attempt to contact families as soon as possible. In the event that we need to evacuate the building, parents/guardians will be notified where to pick up their child(ren).

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

The staff and children will practice monthly fire and earthquake drills and a full evacuation drill will be practiced two times per year. In the event of an earthquake, if possible, we will remain on site.

Wildfire smoke can result in poor air quality and may be harmful to the health of vulnerable populations, including children. We are committed to providing the best possible protection to the children and staff by following these guidelines:

- Keeping up to date on the air quality rating. [www.gov.bc.ca/air-quality-advisories](http://www.gov.bc.ca/air-quality-advisories)
  - if Low 1-3: children will engage in outdoor activities as usual.
  - if Moderate 4-6: children will engage in outdoor activities with caution. Staff will use judgement to assess the air quality and either decrease the physical activity of the children, or limit the time spent outside.
  - if High 7-10: children will remain indoors and staff will ensure children are provided other opportunities for active play.

## Nutrition

YMCA Kids Clubs offer a variety of nutritious snacks prepared on-site. To ensure your child receives a well-balanced snack, our snack plans follow Canada's Food Guide. Snack plans are posted weekly for your information. Due to children with allergies and food restrictions the YMCA discourages bringing foods that may contain nut products. This applies to treats brought in for celebrations.

## Food and Allergies

Please inform staff of any food allergies or dietary restrictions. A healthy snack is provided each afternoon, but on non-instructional or early dismissal days, we require children to bring a lunch (including a drink). We encourage families to pack healthy foods, and your help in not sending non-nutritious foods like candy or pop, is much appreciated. The YMCA cannot guarantee that our YMCA Kids Club programs will be free from allergens (e.g. nuts, gluten, dairy). To protect the health and safety of children and staff with allergies, some food items may be prohibited. If this is the case, parents/guardians will be informed upon registration. If your child has an anaphylaxis allergy, you will be required to provide the program with an epi-Pen. In accordance with directives from the medical health officer YMCA employees will administer an epinephrine auto injector where anaphylaxis is suspected. Non-prescription anti-histamines will only be used for non-anaphylactic reactions and require a "Consent to administer non-prescription drugs" form.

## Medication

Staff may administer medication if your child is on a strict medication schedule. Prescription medication must be in the original container stating the child's name, dosage and time to be given, and a consent form must be completed. Non-prescription medications require a consent form signed by a doctor.

# Program Information

## Illness

If you think your child is ill, please keep them at home. You must not mask symptoms of illness such as fever with medication prior to bringing a child to care. Sick children need to have opportunities to rest and recover.

It is important to prevent the spread of infectious diseases to other children and staff; therefore, when your child is vomiting, has diarrhea or a fever of 38 degrees Celsius or higher (100 degrees Fahrenheit), we require your child to stay home.

When your child develops symptoms or develops a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius (100 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.

### **A child should not attend when they:**

- cannot fully participate in the program
- have a fever of 38 degrees Celsius or higher (100 degrees Fahrenheit)
- has diarrhea
- is vomiting
- have a new or unexplained cough
- have a combination of 2 or more of the following:
  - diarrhea
  - vomiting
  - fever
  - persistent cough
- has conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- are infectious
- have skin infections or new or unexplained rash

### **A child may return to care when they:**

- are able to fully participate in the program
- their fever has remained below 38 degrees Celsius for 48 hours without medication
- are symptom free for 48 hours
- are symptom free for 48 hours
- are symptom free for 48 hours or longer if advised by a medical professional
- has seen a doctor and 24 hours after first drops have been given
- has seen a doctor and 24 hours after first dose of antibiotics or has been cleared to return by a physician
- has been examined by a doctor and has received medical clearance

The YMCA adheres to all Public Health Orders and parents/guardians are expected to adhere to all public health orders and recommendations to ensure that our child care programs are as safe as possible. If a child comes to the program ill, parents/guardians will be asked to find alternate care for that day.

# Registration Information

## Fees

A \$100 non-refundable registration fee is due upon registration.\* Fees are due and payable on the first of each month and may be paid by pre-authorized payment through Visa, MasterCard or direct debit. A Pre-Authorized payment method is a requirement for YMCA Child Care enrollment even if you are being funded by another third party.

Monthly fees for our Kids Club programs cover the 10-month school year and include additional hours of care on non-instructional school days and early dismissals for children who are registered full-time in the program or for part-time children providing that the day falls on a regularly scheduled day.

For programs that offer pick-up/drop-off from other schools, care on non-instructional and early dismissal days, will only be provided if the day aligns with the school the YMCA Kids Club is located in.

Monthly fees do not include winter, spring, or summer breaks and a separate registration is required. Our child care fees are pro-rated based on the number of days of care in the school year. This provides families with a consistent monthly fee and as such, there is no reduction in March or December.

\*not applicable to locations that are part of the provincial \$10 a day program

## Declined Fees

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

Families are responsible for the full cost of their monthly child care fees even if they are being funded by other third parties and/or groups. Child care services will be withdrawn for any accounts that are unpaid by the end of the current month. Monthly child care fees must be paid in full each month.

## Repayment

Should it become necessary to close your YMCA child care program for longer than five business days due to situations beyond our control such as natural disasters, unsafe weather conditions, unsafe building hazards, or any other unforeseen situation, the YMCA will make every effort to provide an alternate location. When it is not possible to secure an alternate location, the YMCA will refund your prepaid child care fees in a timely manner. Refunds will not be issued for unforeseen closure of less than five business days.

## Affordable Child Care Benefit

The Provincial Governments' Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) is available based on Provincial eligibility requirements. Parents/Guardians are responsible for keeping their funding up to date and will be billed for the full cost of child care, without notice if their ACCB benefit expires. YMCA BC is not responsible for sending out reminders regarding ACCB renewal. For more information, contact 1-888-338-6622 or visit [gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://gov.bc.ca/childcare).

## YMCA Financial Assistance

We want to make sure that all children have an opportunity to benefit from a YMCA Kids Club experience, so we offer YMCA financial assistance to assist families in affording care. For more information, please speak with your program leader.

# Registration Information

## 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.

## Registration Changes

Changes to your current registration must be made in writing and must be received by the 1st of the month prior to the month you wish to make the change. To make changes to your registration, please email us at [ymcakidsclubs@bc.ymca.ca](mailto:ymcakidsclubs@bc.ymca.ca).

## Medical/Emergency Information (ePACT)\*

ePACT is a secure emergency network that YMCA BC uses to collect medical and emergency contact information electronically. ePACT maintains the same levels of security as online banking, and limits access only to the administrators we assign for enhanced privacy. ePACT replaces paper forms to make it easier for families to share emergency information.

Families will receive an email invitation to share information with us via ePACT. Follow the instructions to create or log in to your account, and enter the required information. You can update your information at any time, and we will automatically be notified.

Please note, important information will be sent to the email addresses in ePACT.

**\*IMPORTANT: Your child(ren) cannot attend the YMCA Kids Clubs program if we do not have the required ePACT information.**

## Absence from Care

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

## Kindergarten Gradual Entry

Each September, children in kindergarten typically have a gradual entry schedule for the first few weeks of school. Unfortunately, our YMCA Kids Club programs are not able to provide additional hours of care during this time. We do encourage children to attend during our regular hours of operation.



# YMCA Policies and Procedures

## 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 socially acceptable 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 policy on an annual basis. Our program provides an environment where children are treated with respect, adults are caring, and activities are planned based on children's interests and developmental needs.

## Prohibited Practices

A prohibited practice is any behaviour that puts children at risk or inhibits their growth, self esteem, and healthy development. The following practices are unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment.

- Corporal punishment
- Any form of abuse-physical, emotional, sexual or neglect
- Depriving a child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing, bedding or participation in activities
- Leaving children unsupervised
- Deliberately using harsh or degrading measures on a child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect
- Locking exits of a child care centre for the purposes of confining a child
- Using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine a child when separating them from other children
- Interacting or relating to children or vulnerable persons outside of a YMCA program activity (e.g. weekend home visits, baby sitting, on line chatting, etc.)

## Inclusion

In keeping with our mission and vision, YMCA BC 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 and nurturing learning environment. Central to our work is diversity and social inclusion. We believe that all children and /guardians should have an inclusive and respectful experience in our program.

- YMCA programs are designed to develop children in spirit, mind and body. We recognize that every child is a unique individual and adds value to our program.
- Parents/guardians, staff, and community partners work together in collaboration to meet each child's developmental needs and support their strengths and stretches within the program.
- YMCA staff and volunteers strive to ensure our programs are accessible to meet the needs of all children.
- Where appropriate, YMCA staff and volunteers (where appropriate) seek out community partners to enhance our ability to support children with diverse needs through training and consultation.

# Withdrawal of Service

**A minimum of one month's written notice is required to withdraw your child from the program, and must be received by the first of the month prior to the month you wish to withdraw your child.\* An additional month's fee will be charged if the required notice is not given. If you wish to withdraw from the programs, please email us at [ymcakidsclubs@bc.ymca.ca](mailto:ymcakidsclubs@bc.ymca.ca). Upon receiving written notice, our administrative team will deactivate the child's account and cancel any pre-authorized payments that were set up.**

**The withdrawal policy applies to all parent/guardians even if the child is scheduled to start at a later date; or if the child is not accepted into the elementary school in which the program serves. Once the child is registered the parent/guardian is fully responsible for all child care costs.**

**\* Please note that withdrawals for September must be received by June 30th.**

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:**

- Inappropriate conduct, including harassment, threatening behaviour, violent acts toward staff, children or other families involved in the program.
- Behavioural concerns (the YMCA does not have the resources to deal effectively with a child whose behaviour requires ongoing significant intervention, such as persistent unprovoked physical violence, including biting, hitting, and scratching; persistent bullying; verbal harassment; or unauthorized departure from the centre.
- Unresolved custody issues (if a family's custody issues result in ongoing conflicts at the centre or with staff).
- Late pick-up issues.
- Non-payment of fees.
- When a family's requests cannot be accommodated, as they conflict with the principles, policies and procedures of the YMCA.

## Code of Conduct

YMCA BC is dedicated to the spiritual, physical, mental and social development of people. We are committed to providing a friendly, respectful environment and reinforce socially responsible behavior. We do not tolerate abusive behavior.

This means employees, volunteers, program participants, and others using YMCA facilities are expected to treat others with courtesy and respect. Discrimination or harassment on such grounds as age, race, ancestry, colour, place of origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, family status, marital status, political beliefs or because that person has been convicted of a criminal or summary conviction offence that is unrelated to the employment of that person is against the law, and is not acceptable in YMCA programs or on YMCA premises.



Throw  
kindness  
around  
like confetti

YOLO



## YMCA BC

**YMCA BC also offers a variety of other programs that help children and families thrive, including:**

- Summer, spring and winter day camps
- Overnight camps and outdoor education programs at YMCA Camp Elphinstone
- Health, Fitness and Aquatics programs operating in our centres of community throughout the Lower Mainland, which includes swim lessons for kids
- Employment and newcomer programs
- Chronic disease management and mental wellness programs

**To learn more, please visit our website at [gv.ymca.ca](http://gv.ymca.ca).**

## Privacy of Information

YMCA BC respects the right 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 at [gv.ymca.ca](http://gv.ymca.ca).