



Building healthy
communities

YMCA Kids Club Family Handbook

March 2024



Welcome to YMCA Kids Club

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

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

For more than 136 years, the YMCA has been part of the Greater Vancouver community, helping kids realize their potential and develop the confidence, relationships and leadership skills needed to lead our community into the future. 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.



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 shapes health for children today and into the future.

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

All 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 him/her 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 Commitment to Families and Children

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 policy on an annual basis.

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

YMCA BC, 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 parents/caregivers 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/caregivers, 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 (where appropriate) strive to ensure our programs are adapted to meet the needs of all children through inclusive environments of global supports, strategies, and resources.
- YMCA staff and volunteers (where appropriate) seek out community partners to enhance our ability to support children with special needs through training and consultation.

YMCA Curriculum & Environment

A Place To Connect

The YMCA's a Place to Connect curriculum focuses on engaging children in fun activities that they help to plan and lead. A major component of this program is creating a positive social environment where children engage in physical activity for a minimum of 60 minutes per day.

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 different 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.

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.

Authorized Pick-up List

You are required to notify centre staff 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.

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.

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.

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 and/or withdrawal of services.

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.



Program Information

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.

Personal Effects

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

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.**

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.

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.

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 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.

Program Information

Illness

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.

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.

Emergencies

In the case of an emergency or natural disaster, we will attempt to contact families as soon as possible. If a child needs medical attention, we will attempt to notify parents/guardians prior to taking the child to the nearest hospital/clinic.

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.

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.

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.



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.

Monthly fees for our Kids Club programs cover the 10-month school year. Monthly fees includes 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.

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 by your bank/financial institution.



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.

Affordable Child Care Benefit

The government's ACCB program is available to families based on provincial eligibility requirements. Parents who receive the provincial child care subsidy are responsible for the difference between the subsidy and YMCA fees. Parents are responsible for keeping their subsidy current and for the full child care fee if their subsidy expires. For more information, contact 1-888-338-6622 or visit gov.bc.ca/childcare.

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.

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.

Registration Information

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.**

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 before and after school care hours.



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. Our YMCA annual CommUNITY Campaign focuses on raising much-needed funds to support proven YMCA programs that help others reach their potential. One hundred per cent of donations to the YMCA annual fundraising campaign CommUNITY live healthier lives.

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.

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. Upon receiving written notice, our administrative team will deactivate the child's account and cancel any pre-authorized payments that were set up.

*** 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.

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.



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 Greater Vancouver, which includes swim lessons for kids
- Employment and newcomer programs
- Leadership development programs for youth
- Chronic disease management and mental wellness programs

To learn more, please visit our website at gv.ymca.ca.

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