

YMCA Preschool Services



Program Policies and Procedures

Revised 8/2008

We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the YMCA of Greater Miami. We are delighted to partner with you in providing great beginnings for your child. We know the responsibility that we have in teaching and nurturing your child, and we encourage daily communication between parents and teachers. Our teachers and directors are always available to answer your questions, and review your child's progress.

The YMCA is committed to providing a quality program that is safe and enriching for your child. We emphasize learning through play. We allow children to learn at their own pace and in ways that are best for them. We will be focusing on your child's social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical development. Our main goal is to encourage children to be active creative explorers, willing to try out their own ideas and think for themselves. We want to give your child a successful start in school.

This handbook provides important information about our program policies and procedures. Please review it carefully. If you have any questions contact the Director at your center.

Sincerely,

The YMCA Preschool Staff

g families, and strong communities.

Our Mission

The mission of the YMCA of Greater Miami is to put Judeo-Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

Our Values

- Caring: To demonstrate a sincere concern for others, for their needs and well-being.
- Honesty: To tell the truth, to demonstrate reliability and trustworthiness through actions that are in keeping with my stated positions and beliefs.
- Respect: To treat others as I would want them to treat me, to value the worth of every person, including myself.
- Responsibility: To do what is right – what I ought to do, to be accountable for my choices of behavior, and actions and obligations.

Our Philosophy

Our philosophy is to foster each child's cognitive, physical, social, emotional and language development in an environment that is safe and nurturing while being sensitive to the needs and development stages of each individual child. We strongly believe in "PLAY." Play is essential for children to learn. During play children are free to choose, observe, explore, create, and learn. It is also important for the child's development to have structured activities such as music, circle time, story time and nutritious meals. Teacher and children directed activities are seen all through the day, strengthening children's development. We believe that a child's early learning experiences are crucial and give them the building blocks for future academic success.

Our Goals

- To provide a nurturing, safe, healthy, positive and happy environment for all children.
- To enable each child to grow and develop to their fullest potential socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically.
- To enhance every child's self-esteem and respect for others.
- To help children become enthusiastic learners.
- To give children a successful start in school.
- To help each child recognize the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.
- To encourage children to be active creative explorers, willing to try out their own ideas and think for themselves.

Teacher and Employee Background Screening

Teachers and employees undergo a background screening investigation and pre-employment drug-screening test. Each person hired is determined to be of good moral character to work with children as assessed through personal and work reference verification.

Teacher Credentials and Certifications

Teachers are selected based on their qualifications, skills, and concern for the health, safety and development of the children. They meet all the Department of Children and Families requirements.

Confidentiality

All information about children enrolled in a YMCA program is regarded as confidential. No information regarding an individual child will be released to anyone unless written authorization is obtained from the parent or legal guardian.

Inclusion Policy

The YMCA welcomes and encourages the participation of children and adults with disabilities in all of its programs. The YMCA makes every reasonable effort to ensure that programs, activities, and services, when viewed in their entirety, are readily accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be attempted whenever possible, and the YMCA will make a strong effort to ensure that its services, programs and activities, when viewed in their entirety, are readily accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities.

Curriculum

We use the Creative Curriculum, which supports learning through play and developmentally appropriate activities that foster social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical development. The curriculum identifies skills and concepts important for preschool children to acquire in each area: literacy, math, science, social studies, technology and the arts. Skills and concepts are introduced to the children through the use of learning centers. A wide variety of materials and opportunities are made available for children to be active creative explorers willing to try out their own ideas and think for themselves.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule consists of time for: Breakfast, Lunch, Snack, Bathroom, Quiet/Rest Time, Small and Large Group Activities, Circle Time, Learning Centers, and Outdoor Play. Each age group has the schedule posted in the classroom.

Nap/Rest Time

There is an afternoon rest time or naptime. Children are provided with their own cot. The children are asked to rest but are not required to sleep. During rest time soft music will be played. For those children that are not asleep, books and quiet activities will be available.



Behavior Management

Discipline policies in our program have been established to encourage and strengthen positive behavior through opportunities for the children to interact with people and materials. One of the primary goals of the program is to maximize the learning of appropriate social skills including safety and respect for one's self and others. We use creative conflict resolution and redirection to solve conflicts. Redirection guides the child in finding acceptable means of self-expression by settings limits, defining rules, and being consistent. When a young child has a problem expressing anger and frustration appropriately, the teacher will offer alternatives that will help the child achieve the desired results. No physical punishment is used whatsoever, and food or sleep is never withheld as a form of punishment.

When children exhibit challenging behaviors the following steps will be followed:

- The problematic behavior will be studied and documented.
- The classroom teacher will consult with the director to discuss ways to work with the child to improve the behaviors.
- Our staff will request a meeting with parents to discuss and consider solutions and establish a timeline.
- Parents might be asked to agree to a consultation with an outside specialist.

The YMCA does not make it a practice to terminate participation of children from the program. However, the YMCA reserves the right to do so if the child's behavior is not conducive to the safety and well being of other children enrolled in the program, or your child's own safety.

Parent Involvement

Parents are needed, and valued as an essential part of the educational process. Parents are welcomed into the classroom as observers or volunteers. Teachers will seek parental involvement in many ways, including being resource persons within the classroom setting, or assisting children and teachers with the various projects of the Center. We seek and value your active involvement and do everything possible to achieve good communication between parents and teachers. Parents are free to visit the Center at any time. However, observing parents or guardians must be listed on the child's registration form in order to access the program area. Volunteer parents must complete the YMCA volunteer application and background screening process.

Parent Orientation

Parents are given a tour of the Center prior to or upon enrollment. The Program Policies and Procedures Handbook and Parent Bulletin Boards will also help orient new families. Parents may visit the Center, ask staff for any clarification of policies, request a conference, or call the director at any time.

Parent Conference

We will be evaluating your child three times a year. We will offer times for parents to come in and review this evaluation with the classroom teacher. If you are unable to attend, we will send the evaluation home. If you have any questions, you may call to arrange a telephone conference with the teacher.

Tuition Policy

We appreciate prompt payments of tuition. We want to focus on the development of your child and not on collecting fees. We don't want to deprive your child of his/her early years' learning experience. Please follow our fee policy.

- Parents are required to pay the registration fee prior to the child's start date.
The registration fee is not refundable.
- Weekly fees are due in advance. Payments must be made every Monday before 6:00 pm.
- Payments made after the due day and time are considered late and are subject to a late fee.
- If your weekly payment is not received within five (5) working days of the initial missed payment, your child will not be able to attend the program until the account is up to date.
- Weekly fees are due regardless of absences or holidays. Credit will be given for illness by providing a medical note signed by a doctor.
- After a check is returned for non-sufficient funds a fee will be applied to your account.
All future payments must be made by money order. If the returned check and bank charge are not paid, the child will not be able to attend the program until the account is paid in full.
- Vacation Policy: The program allows two-weeks credit for vacation per calendar year. Due to staff scheduling, a two-week notice, in writing, of vacation time is required.



Admission and Registration Requirement

- Complete the registration forms.
- Provide at least three emergency names and telephone numbers of individuals that can pick up your child and can be contacted in case of an emergency.
- Provide the child's original Student Health Examination Form DH 3040 and the child's original Florida Certification of Immunization Form 680.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the YMCA of any changes in address, telephone numbers, and emergency contacts. We will not accept changes on the registration information over the telephone, written notes, or faxes. The parent must complete a new registration form with the new information.

The Student Health Examination Form DH 3040 must be updated yearly. The Immunization Form 680 must be updated as needed according to the child's age. Children without current immunization and health examination **will not be able to attend the program until the information is up to date.**

What To Bring

The parents are required to bring a change of clothing in a labeled bag on the first day of school for their children. We ask you to bring a small pillow and blanket (blanket should be 24" wide by 36" long). Parent must take the blanket, pillowcase, and change of clothing every Friday and replace it with clean ones every Monday. Toddlers must also bring pampers and wipes in their bag.

Arrival /Sign In

We would like to emphasize the importance of your child's timely arrival. The children enjoy having a consistent beginning, middle and ending routine to their days. Late arrival deprives your child of the daily routine. The children must be at the YMCA by 8:45 am. The parents or other designated person must bring the children inside the classroom. The parents must sign-in their children with their teacher every morning.

Sign In-Out Procedures

The YMCA is committed to ensuring the safety of children; therefore, children must be signed out by the parent or persons indicated on the registration form. Full signature is required. Only authorized persons will be able to sign-out children. Identification will be required for those indicated on the registration form. We will not accept telephone calls, faxes, or written notes to change information on the registration form. All changes must be made by completing a new registration form. The YMCA cannot refuse to release a child to their parents. Therefore, if one of the parents is not allowed to pick-up the child, a copy of the court order must be provided to the Center.

Late Pick-Up Fees

The program closes at 6:00 pm. Children must be picked-up by 6:00 pm. A late fee of \$5 will be charged within every 15 minutes thereafter (6:01 pm to 6:15 pm \$5, 6:16 pm to 6:30 pm \$5, etc.) The YMCA reserves the right to suspend children for FAILURE to pay the late fee. The YMCA reserves the right to terminate participation from the program after three late pick-ups.

Nutrition

Breakfast, lunch and snack are provided. The meals are provided by a contracted catering company. All meals meet the nutrition quantity and guidelines of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Child Care Food Program. If your child has a particular dietary need, substantiated by a doctor's note, the Center will provide an alternative meal. Monthly menus are posted on the parent information board.

Holiday Celebrations

In keeping with our diversity and inclusion, teachers honor holidays and traditions in ways that are simple and meaningful to the children, while respecting diverse beliefs and practices. Parents who have an objection to this policy must meet with the Director so that proper arrangements can be made to respect your wishes.

Birthdays

We want to acknowledge your child's birthday by making his or her day special. If you would like to send something for the class, you are more than welcome to do so (only store bought food and snacks are allowed). Please let the teacher know what you plan to do. We are more than happy to accommodate you the best we can. Please do not bring candies to the party or small toys for the children.

Clothing/Toys From Home

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes that allow for active play. Creativity often involves messy, wet, or sticky substances. Pants and T-shirts prove the best, even for girls, since dresses may hamper climbing or other active play. For your child's protection do not send him/her with jewelry, sandals, or small hair accessories such as beads and barrettes. Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home. Sometimes arguments have arisen among children over their possessions. We have plenty of age appropriate toys and supplies in the Center.

Lost and Found

The YMCA will not be responsible for items lost at the Center. We will make every effort to save the items that are found. Found items will be displayed to be claimed by the parents at the end of each week.

Allergies

If your child has an allergy you will need to submit a letter from your doctor stating the allergy. If the allergy is related to food, you need to provide a letter from the doctor indicating the special diet your child requires.

Medication

We cannot administer medication without a form signed by the parent. You must complete a Medication Authorization and give the medication to the teacher or director. Children must never have medication in their cubbies or bags. The medication must be in the original container with the child's name, prescription number, name of doctor and dosage. Over the counter medicine such as Aspirin, Tylenol and cough syrup will not be administered without proper doctor's instructions. You must provide a dropper or measuring spoon. Medication will not be given with a regular spoon.

Illness Policy

If you suspect that your child is not well, please keep him/her at home. If your child becomes ill while in our care, you will be called and asked to come pick him/her up. Children may not be in school if:

- They have fever of 101 degrees or more
(must be fever free for 24 hours to return to preschool)
- They have diarrhea (must be diarrhea free for 24 hours to return to school)
- They have a discharge from their eyes
- They have open exposed lesions
- They have thick colored discharge from the nose, eye or ears
- They have severe coughing or difficulty breathing
- Pink Eye
- Stiff Neck
- Unusually dark urine/or gray or white stool
- Yellow skin or eyes
- Ring Worm
- Impetigo
- Chicken Pox
- Head Lice
- Strep Throat
- Any other unusual sign or symptom of illness
- Measles
- Fifth Disease
- Hand Foot and Mouth Disease
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Herpes Simplex
- Meningitis

Health checks:

The staff members are required to check your child(ren) for illness or injury upon arrival and authorized to deny care for the day if needed. Your child will not be accepted into the Center if she/he has symptoms of a contagious disease, illness or injury that might require medical attention.

Note: If your child is sent home for any contagious condition, including but not limited to the above mentioned, you must present a doctor's note to return to the Center. The Program will notify all parents in writing whenever the children in the program have been exposed to a communicable disease.

Accidents and Injuries

We always have a person on staff with a current CPR and First Aid certification. First Aid will be administered to a child for minor injury. For injuries requiring emergency care, 911 will be called and parents will be notified immediately. As authorized by the parents on the release form, in the event parents, guardian or emergency contact cannot be reached, the YMCA staff will obtain medical treatment for the child.

Accidental Medical Coverage

In case of accidental injury to your child, your personal medical policy bears primary responsibility. The YMCA maintains accidental medical coverage that is secondary to your personal insurance.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements

All staff are mandated by law to report their suspicions of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline in accordance with section 39.201 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.).

Calendar

The preschool program operates all year (January to December). The director will provide you with a list of the closing dates and holidays for the program. The program calendar will be included in your registration package.

Weather Emergency Program Closing

As a community service organization, the YMCA of Greater Miami will strive to remain open unless instructed to do otherwise by city or county authorities. Watch your local news station for the latest Hurricane Advisories.

The YMCA of Greater Miami Hurricane Policy follows the issuance of Official Hurricane Advisories:

Tropical Storm Advisory

Tropical Storm Watch

- The Preschool will remain open and will accept children in regularly scheduled programs.

Tropical Storm Warning

- The decision to open or close will depend on how close and how intense the storm is. Parents should contact their local YMCA.

Hurricane Advisory

Hurricane Watch

- The Preschool will remain open, but will not admit children.

Hurricane Warning

- The Preschool will be closed.

We have established several phone numbers to inform our members/parents and staff regarding the facility status of your local YMCA.

YMCA of Greater Miami Association Office
305-357-4000

In the event that the local number is not working please call:
Y-USA
1-877-248-5863 Ext. 2518

Weather Hotline Number for YMCA of Greater Miami
1-866-492-0884

We will also attempt to communicate opening/closing through the local media. If you are unable to call, we will attempt to post projected opening times or facility status at the front entrance of our buildings.



YMCA
OF GREATER MIAMI

www.ymcamiami.org

Homestead Family YMCA Developmental Learning Center
1034 NE 8 Street • Homestead, Florida 33030
305-247-0393

Martin Luther King Jr. YMCA Preschool
2000 NW 62 Street • Miami, FL 33147
305-636-1844

Opening 2009
Allapattah YMCA Preschool
2370 NW 17 Avenue • Miami, Florida 33142
305-635-9622

We build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities

