

# Committed to Quality Programs

YMCA Kindercare Centres are licensed under the Day Nurseries Act. These Provincial Government standards are established in order to ensure that all programs provide a safe, healthy and stimulating environment with quality care for the children they serve. Centres are inspected at least once annually to confirm compliance with the Day Nurseries Act.

YMCA standards on quality and safety exceed the Provincial requirements. All the YMCA Kindercare Programs are evaluated throughout the year using various tools and methods:

1. Monitoring Behaviour Management – Each staff will be evaluated twice per year on Behaviour Management techniques. Observations are noted on a checklist and reviewed with the staff by the person completing the evaluation. At this time, program strengths and areas that need improvement are discussed with the staff and a follow-up plan is developed if needed.
2. HIGH FIVE – Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) implemented HIGH FIVE in 1994 to ensure that the developmental needs of school age children are considered and incorporated into after school and recreation programs. All YMCA School Age Staff receive training on Healthy Child Development. Each program is evaluated annually using the HIGH FIVE tool, Quest. The Quest tool is a comprehensive and statistically validated checklist that is used by a trained observer. The observer watches a program for 30 minutes to an hour, and scores observable aspects of the program. This allows the Kindercare managers and program staff to identify areas that require attention.
3. The YMCA program also uses an internal audit as an evaluation tool.
4. Each YMCA staff receives a formal performance review. This involves establishing goals within the first six weeks of employment, a midyear review of the goals and a final performance review at the end of the school year.
5. Programs are offered in the Hamilton, Flamborough, Brantford and Burlington regions and to ensure consistency between regions there is a once per year cross visitation that is completed on select sites by an Area Supervisor.
6. Parent Satisfaction surveys are conducted regularly. The YMCA contracts an outside evaluator to tabulate and report on the survey results. Participants are also asked to fill out a survey. This information is used to ensure that the programming remains relevant and that the needs of the community are met.

YMCA of  
Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford



# Parent Handbook



Caring · Honesty  
Respect · Responsibility



# About the YMCA

The YMCA is one of the largest not-for-profit providers of licensed childcare in Canada. The YMCA of Hamilton/ Burlington/ Brantford is an independent, charitable organization affiliated with YMCA Canada and YMCA International. Founded in 1856, the YMCA of Hamilton/ Burlington/ Brantford has been providing quality Child Care in the area for more than 25 years. We have been helping children to develop in spirit, mind, and body for more than 150 years.

Our School Age Child Care programs provide a positive, safe and nurturing environment where children can develop to their full potential. We pride ourselves in values based programming, which incorporates the YMCA Core Values of **Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.**

The YMCA of Hamilton/ Burlington/ Brantford builds Developmental Assets that help youth to succeed.

Mission → The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford is a charitable organization helping people achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body through participation and service to the community.

Vision → Creating healthy communities in which individuals and families have opportunities to reach their potential.

# YMCA Strong Kids

The YMCA is a leading Canadian charity. The YMCA Strong Kids Campaign is focused on raising much needed financial support for children, teens and families who are unable to afford the full cost of participation in a YMCA program or activity. The YMCA Strong Kids Campaign helps one person at a time, one family at a time, or one program at a time. That might mean providing the funds to help a child attend day camp for the first time, help a struggling teen find employment, enable a child to participate in a recreation or fitness activity, enable a struggling family to use a child care facility, help youth gain the confidence and skills to avoid addiction, violence, and isolation. Each YMCA association offers unique programs to serve the needs of their community; each community has children, teens, and families that need your help. We encourage you to invest in a child today. **No Risks. Only Returns.**

# Program Details

## AGE REQUIREMENTS AND RATIOS

The YMCA Kindercare program serves children from age 3.8 – 5 years old.

- Kindercare maintains a staff to child ratio of 1:10
- All children must be independent in the washroom

## ENROLLMENT OPTIONS

Children can be registered for the program on a full-time and/or part-time basis. All registration packages must be fully completed before your child will be accepted into the program. Methods of payment include Visa, Master card or Preauthorized Debit.

**Full-time** - Children requiring care 5 days/week

**Part-time** - Children requiring care on regular scheduled days (min. 2 regular scheduled days/week)

## TYPICAL DAY

Each centre has a posted program plan highlighting the activities for the week. Nutritious snacks are served in accordance to Canada's Food Guide.

## A Typical Day in Kindercare includes:

- Washroom routines
- Lunch Break
  - lunch provided by parents, we encourage peanut free lunches
  - YMCA will provide milk
- Free play
- Quiet Time (children can rest/nap on cots if they require it)
- Crafts
- Snack
- Circle Time
- Outdoor Play

*\*Some programs will work on workbooks as part of their programming*

## YMCA KINDERCARE STAFF

All Site Supervisors have received Director's Approval from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and their Early Childhood Education Diploma. They also receive on-going YMCA professional development training. All Staff must be 18 years of age or older.

## ADMISSION/DISCHARGE POLICY

- There will be no discount or refund for sick days, vacations or snow closures
- Parents will be required to pay for all days registered
- Payment is required for Statutory Holidays when a child regularly attends on the weekday on which the holiday falls.
- Refunds or changes to enrollment status will not be issued unless a change of status form is submitted to the SACC office. The YMCA requires 2 weeks written notice.
- Admission and discharge is at the discretion of the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford
- Failure to provide notice does not exempt the payment of two weeks fee.
- A non-refundable, non-tax receiptable registration fee is required at registration.

## CENTRES ARE CLOSED ON

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

**Winter Break, March Break, Summer:** Programs will be operating at specific locations, for school aged children during the Winter and March Break. See your school aged site supervisor for further details. The YMCA offers Day Camp during the summer months. Look for more information on our website or contact your local YMCA.

**Professional Development Days:** Programs are offered at a limited number of sites on professional development days at an additional fee. Programs operate in central locations.

**Early Dismissal Days:** Child Care is provided on Learning Community Days. There is an additional fee for this service.

## IF YOUR CHILD IS GOING TO BE AWAY

The YMCA Staff need to know where your child is every day to ensure your child is safe. If your child is registered but cannot attend the SACC program, please contact the SACC staff on the centre cell phone. This number can be obtained from your site supervisor.

## TAX RECEIPTS

Tax receipts will reflect all payments made and processed from January 1 until December 31. There will be a replacement charge of \$25 for any lost or duplicate receipts. Tax receipts will be issued to the person making the payments.

## COMMUNICATION

Each SACC program has a cell phone that enables the staff to contact parents should they need to in the event of an accident or illness. It also enables the parents to contact staff when necessary. For general enquiries about the SACC programs, please contact your local SACC Office in Hamilton (905-317-4916), Burlington (905-632-500 X 6236), or Brantford (519-752-6568 X 114).

## HEALTH AND MEDICATION POLICY

In order to prevent other children from becoming ill, parents must provide alternate arrangements for their children in the event of illness. Should your child become ill during our program, he/she will be supervised away from the other children and parents will be contacted and asked to pick up the child. Once the child is able to fully participate in all aspects of the program, including outdoor activities, he/she may return to the program. Our staff will administer a drug or medication to a child ONLY from the original container or package supplied by a pharmacist. The container or package must be clearly labeled with the child's name, name of the drug or medication, date of purchase, instructions for storage and administration. Parents will be required to sign a medication authorization form.

### Anaphylaxis Policy

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction which can be life threatening. The allergy may be related to food, insect stings, medicine, latex, exercise etc. This policy is to help support the needs of a child with a severe allergy and provide some information on anaphylaxis and awareness to parents, staff, students and visitors to YMCA Child Care Centres.

- The YMCA will communicate with families in the program of anaphylactic allergies and will request that the causative agents are not brought into the program – i.e. food, snacks, teacher's gifts etc.
- An Information Sheet indicating the type of anaphylactic allergy will be placed in the child's file.
- For School Age Centres in shared spaces this information will be placed on the parent board and the food preparation area.
- The YMCA will offer training on anaphylaxis allergies at least once per year.
- The YMCA will work with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) and/or physician to develop an individual plan for the child.
- The Information Sheet will be used to capture all relevant information including emergency procedures in the event of exposure to allergens. Any medication to be administered must be prescribed by a doctor and be current.
- Parents will sign the information sheet to show that they consent to the method by which the staff is trained to administer emergency medication and identify how training was provided.
- All staff, students, volunteers will review the individual plan annually.

## SNACKS AND LUNCHES

During P.A. Days, Christmas break and March Break, each child will need to bring their lunch to the program. Freezing drinking boxes and sandwiches the night before will ensure the children have a cool and refreshing lunch. We encourage a peanut free lunch. A morning and afternoon snack is provided in all our programs. Although snacks are nutritious, these are not a substitute for breakfast or dinner. A snack menu is posted for parents to view at each location. Due to the increasing number of food allergies and cross contamination concerns, we will not permit children to bring snacks to our programs during daily program.

## BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

It is the goal of our YMCA to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment for all participants. The YMCA teaches the core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Children who attend the program are expected to follow the behaviour guidelines and to interact appropriately in a group setting.

### Behaviour Guidelines

- People are responsible for their actions
- We respect each other and the environment
- Honesty will be the basis for all relationships and interactions
- We will care for ourselves and those around us

**When a child does not follow the behaviour guidelines, we will take the following steps:**

1. Staff will direct the child to more appropriate behaviour
2. The child will be reminded of the behaviour guidelines and rules, and a discussion will take place.
3. If the behaviour persists, a parent will be notified of the problem.
4. The staff will document the situation. This written documentation will include what the behaviour problem is, what provoked the problem, and the corrective action taken.
5. Staff will schedule a progress check or a follow-up conference.
6. Staff should notify their supervisor/ manager and general manager.
7. If the problem still persists, staff will schedule a conference that includes the parent, child (optional), staff and Area Supervisor. The Area Supervisor will have all the documentation and notes to help determine possible solutions and action plan.
8. If a child's behaviour at any time threatens the immediate safety of that child, other children, or staff the parent will be notified and expected to pick up the child immediately.
9. If a problem persists and a child continues to disrupt the program, the YMCA reserves the right to suspend the child from the program. Expulsion from the program will be considered in extreme situations.

**The following behaviours are not acceptable and may result in the immediate suspension of a participant for the remainder of the current day and the next two consecutive days:**

- Endangering the health and safety of children and/or staff, members and volunteers
- Stealing or damaging YMCA or personal property
- Leaving the program without permission
- Continuing to disrupt the program
- Refusing to follow the behavior guidelines or rules
- Using vulgarity, profanity, or obscenity frequently
- Acting in a lewd manner

## OUTDOOR PLAY

The YMCA strives to provide safe outdoor environments that promote creative and constructive play for the children in their care. To assist in achieving this goal, all YMCA SACC programs are required to follow the standards set by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and the YMCA. Each day the SACC staff will inspect the playground and report any problems to the school. Each program is required to go outside for a minimum of 20 minutes each day. Clothes may get dirty.

## NO SMOKING

Parents are reminded that there is no smoking allowed on any school or YMCA property.

## CHILD ABUSE POLICY

The YMCA SACC staff are trained in the identification and reporting of suspected abuse, as outlined in the Child and Family Services Act. Staff have a legal responsibility to report suspected child abuse - physical, sexual, emotional and neglect.

## HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED

Parents are encouraged to participate whenever possible in programs through family events and being part of the parent advisory committee. Touch base with your site supervisor who can give you more information.

## YMCA KINDERCARE NAPTIME POLICY

The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford Kindercare program will provide a quiet time for a maximum of one hour each day. Cots will be provided to children for a rest period/nap time after lunch. During this time, the children can look at books or participate in quiet activities and if they choose to sleep, they will be woken up after one hour. Each child will be asked to rest on their cot for a half hour, after which they may participate in quiet activities. The lights will be dimmed, and quiet music may be played.

## SCHOOL CLOSURE

In cases of severe weather conditions, many schools adjust their school hours and close earlier than the regular dismissal time. Schools generally close before school begins in the morning. When the school is closed for the day, the YMCA program will also be closed (no refunds will be issued for these days). If the school has not been closed by the end of the school day and the weather appears to be more severe, YMCA staff will call parents to encourage early pick up. Parents are asked to listen to the radio for information on school closures. In the event the school building is being closed during our program time due to an emergency, the staff and children will move to the emergency evacuation location. Parents will be notified and asked to pick-up their child immediately.

## LOST AND FOUND

In an effort to alleviate some problems with lost and found items, we suggest labeling all clothing and belongings with iron on labels. The YMCA is not responsible for lost, misplaced or damaged belongings. All lost and found articles will be kept at the centre. Please do not send your child with electronic devices (Gameboys, iPods, MP3 players, Cell Phones etc.).

## ARRIVAL AND PICK UP

Each child must be signed in and out upon arrival and departure by an adult 16 years or older. The staff must ask for photo identification. The YMCA must release the child to a parent, even when the parent's name does not appear on the registration form, unless a court order or custody agreement is provided to the YMCA stating otherwise.

## LATE FEE

The YMCA School Age Childcare Program is open until 6:00 pm daily. If a parent is late picking up their child, a fee of \$20 per half hour or part thereof is charged per child. The fee is payable to the staff on duty.