Hamilton
Burlington
Brantford

Shine On



CHILD CARE

YMCA Child Care Parent Handbook

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YMCA Child Care Parent Handbook

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Welcome to YMCAChild Care

Putting Children First

Choosing a child care provider is a bigdecision. You want your child to feel at home, learn, grow, and have fun in an environment that is welcoming, safe, and stimulating. And most of all you want caring and supportive Early Childhood Educators who understand what makes your child special and who have your child's well-being at heart.

It is our primary responsibility to provide your child with the best possible care to help them develop and reach their potential.

You have a responsibility as well. Your child needs lots of rest, a good breakfast and adequate clothing for his/her day's activities. He/she needs to know that you are confident in us so that they likewise will have confidence.

To further each child's personal development, it is our goal:

- To support and strengthen the family unit
- To help children develop to their fullest potential
- To care for children in a safe, positive, and caring environment

We want to work together with you to exchange information about your child's language, culture, interests, and abilities so that the sum of a child's education experience is greater than either parents or educators alone could provide.

Thank you for choosing YMCA Child Care.

CHARITABLE 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 full potential.

CORE VALUES
The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford believes that five values are particularly important in the development of good character: Caring, Honesty, Inclusion, Respect and Responsibility.

We hope the information in this handbook answers your questions. If you need further assistance or wish to speak to a member of our YMCA educator team, please refer to the contact information at the end of this handbook.

Respectful Environment

The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford is dedicated to the physical, mental, and social development of people. It is committed to providing a friendly, safe, and respectful environment that does not tolerate abusive behaviour and reinforces socially responsible behaviour.

This means that educators, volunteers, program participants, and others using YMCA programs are expected to treat others, including children and vulnerable adults, with courtesy and respect.

The YMCA is a shared experience for everyone to enjoy. The YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, inclusion, respect, and responsibility are the basis of our interactions with our members and families.

Webelieve:

- People are responsible for their actions
- Werespect each other and the environment
- Honesty will be the basis for all relationships and interactions
- Wewillcare for ourselves and those around us.
- Fostering healthy inclusive communities
- Adults will act as positive role models

Our educator and volunteer teams have the responsibility to interact with our community in a positive, professional manner. Our educator and volunteer teams also have the right to work in an environment that is safe and respectful. The YMCA will not tolerate any verbal or physical abuse directed toward an educator. This conduct may result in being asked to leave the site or program and suspension of service.

Participation within the YMCA community will be based on an expectation that all will be treated with dignity and respect. The YMCA values excellence in the delivery of quality child care services guided by shared responsibility and embraces diversity and belonging.

Licensing

YMCA Child Care Centres are licensed by the Ministry of Education and adhere to standards established in the Child Care Early Years Act to ensure that all programs provide a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment with quality care for the children they serve.

For moreinformationvisitwww.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf

Canada-wide EarlyLearning and Child Care (CWELCC)

The Government of Canada has identified child care as a national priority to enhance early learning and childhood development, support workforce participation and contribute to economic recovery. Funding under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) will be used to build and leverage the success of Ontario's existing early learning and child care system by increasing quality, accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity in early learning and child care for children ages 0-5 years.

The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford has opted-in to the Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care (CWELCC).

Base fees are mandatory fees charged to all parents required for a child to attend a YMCA Child Care program. Non-base fees include additional charges such as registration/late fees and bank service charges; and therefore, these will not be subject to further reductions under CWELCC. Actively registered families will see their base child care fees reduced by 25% on November 1, 2022, and then additionally reduced by another 25% January 1st, 2023. The chart below provides a summary of the new rates that will come into effect as part of Phase 1 of this multi-phased, multi-year program.

YMCA Hamilton Rates

Age Group	Program	Base Rate Pre-CWELCC (March 31, 2022)	Base Rate 25% Reduction (Effective April 1, 2022)	Base Rate 50% Reduction (Effective January 1, 2023)	Base Rate (Effective January 1, 2025)
Infant	Full Day	$75.00	$56.25	$35.44	$22.00
Toddler	Full Day	$64.60	$48.45	$30.52	$22.00
Preschool	Full Day	$54.30	$40.73	$25.66	$22.00
Kindergarten (JK/SK)	Before School	$11.65	$11.65	$11.65	$11.65
	After School	$18.85	$14.14	$12.00	$12.00
	Before and After School	$26.70	$20.03	$12.62	$12.62
	Full Day	$46.00	$34.50	$21.74	$21.74
The fees below apply to Primary/Junior School Age children					
			Universal Rate Reduction (Effective September 1, 2025)	**Base Rate (Effective January 1, 2025)**	
Primary/Junior School Age	Before School	$10.50	$6.50	$8.00	
	After School	$14.50	$8.50	$12.00	
	Before and After School	$25.00	$15.00	$20.00	
	Full Day	$50.25	N/A	$52.25	

YMCA Burlington Rates

Age Group	Program	Base Rate Pre-CWELCC (March 31, 2022)	Base Rate 25% Reduction (Effective April 1, 2022)	Base Rate 50% Reduction (Effective January 1, 2023)	Base Rate (Effective January 1, 2025)
Infant	Full Day	$75.00	$56.25	$35.44	$22.00
Toddler	Full Day	$64.60	$48.45	$30.52	$22.00
Preschool	Full Day	$54.30	$40.73	$25.66	$22.00
Kindergarten (JK/SK)	Before School	$15.55	$12.00	$12.00	$12.00
	After School	$22.15	$16.61	$12.00	$12.00
	Before and After School	$29.85	$22.39	$14.10	$14.10
	Full Day	$46.00	$34.50	$21.74	$21.74
The fees below apply to Primary/Junior School Age children					
Primary/Junior School Age	Before School	$17.15			
	After School	$23.90			
	Before and After School	$30.70			
	Full Day	$52.25			

YMCA Brantford Rates

Age Group	Program	Base Rate Pre-CWELCC (March 31, 2022)	Base Rate 25% Reduction (Effective April 1, 2022)	Base Rate 50% Reduction (Effective January 1, 2023)	Base Rate (Effective January 1, 2025)
Infant	Full Day	$60.00	$45.00	$28.35	$22.00
Toddler	Full Day	$48.00	$36.00	$22.68	$22.00
Preschool	Full Day	$46.00	$34.50	$21.74	$21.74
Kindergarten (JK/SK)	Before School	$11.20	$11.20	$11.20	$11.20
	After School	$11.20	$11.20	$11.20	$11.20
	Before and After School	$18.00	$13.50	$12.00	$12.00
	Full Day	$40.50	$30.38	$19.14	$19.14
The fees below apply to Primary/Junior School Age children					
Primary/Junior School Age	Before School	$13.10			
	After School	$13.10			
	Before and After School	$21.10			
	Full Day	$47.40			

For more information on CWELCC, visit: https://www.ontario.ca/page/canada-ontario- early-years-and-child-care-agreement .

Purchase of Service

The YMCA has purchase of service agreements with the City of Hamilton, Region of Halton, and City of Brantford for those families in need.

Fees

The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford accepts payment through pre- authorized debit payments (EFT, Visa and Mastercard). Fee payment schedules are billed bi-monthly (twice a month). To view the 2026 fee payment dates, click here.

Declined payments will automatically be charged a $10 for each transaction. Parents with accounts past due may be asked to leave the program unless acceptable payment arrangements are made. Accounts more than 30 days past due may result in termination of care.

Payment is required for absenteeism, sick days, vacation days, centre closures due to inclement weather, emergency closures (i.e., job action/strike) and for statutory holidays. A non-refundable, non-tax-deductible $25 registration fee is due at the time of registration; however, this fee does not apply to families eligible for Child Care Subsidy

or CWELCC.

The YMCA reserves the right to manage enrollment due to extended absenteeism. In situations where a child has been absent for a prolonged period of time, and capacity is limited, parents may be asked to withdraw from the program. Parents wishing to re-register will be placed on the waiting list until a space becomes available. Admission and discharge of children is at the discretion of the YMCA.

Late Fee Policy

It is expected that all children will be picked up from the YMCA Child Care programs by the centre's closing time. Where a parent is unable to pick up prior to closing, it is the parent's responsibility to contact an emergency contact to arrange for alternate pick up. The parents must advise this person that they will be asked to show photo ID to staff and to contact the centre educator to advise them of the change in routine. When a parent is on route to pick up the child, but will arrive after the closing time, the parent should inform the staff of the circumstances and expected arrival time. If a child is picked up past the time of the centre closure, a late fee of $20 per half hour or part thereof per child will be charged to the parent's account. The centre cell phone will be used as the official time.

Late parents will be asked to sign the Late Fee Form. Arriving late to the YMCA Program three times or more may result in the removal from the YMCA Program.

Ages and Groupings

Early Learning Child Care

Early Learning Child Care Centres are licensed programs that provide care for children from infants to 5 years of age. Our programs operate out of a variety of locations such as YMCAs, schools, senior centres, churches and stand-alone facilities. Our child care educators are trained, qualified educators who deliver programs that support children's growth and development in programs that are safe and stimulating.

School Age Child Care

School Age Child Care is a licensed child care program for children 3.8 to 12 year of age. The program is based out of the school the child attends, thereby providing them with a seamless day in one location. Every program is staffed by YMCA trained educators, selected for their educational background and aptitude for working with children. The end result is a safe, nurturing environment to begin and end their day at school.

Number of Educators Required

Age of Children in Group	Ratio of Educators to Children	Maximum Number of Children in a Group
Infants Under 18 months of age	3 to 10	10
Toddlers 18 months up to but under 30 months	1 to 5	15
Preschoolers 30 months up to but under 6 years	1 to 8	16
Kindergarten 44 months up to but under 68 months	1 to 13	26
Primary/Junior School Age 68 months up to but under 13 years	1 to 15	30
Junior School Age 9 years up to but under 13 years	1 to 20	20

Ratios During Times of Arrival, Departure and Rest Period

Except where the children enrolled are under 18 months of age, during the periods of arrival and departure of children and during the rest period, the ratio of educators to children may be reduced to less than that set out in the chart, as the case may be, if the observed ratio is not less than 2/3 of the required ratio.

YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford

Program Statement

YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford understands that learning occurs through belonging, engagement, expression, and well-being. In our childcare programs, we follow the principles of "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Year's" to ensure creating an environment where children feel sense of belonging, fostering relationships, and connections with peers, staff, and the community. Our commitment to caring is evident in the supportive and nurturing atmosphere we cultivate, where each child's unique needs are met with compassion and understanding.

In our childcare programs, we believe that every child thrives when they have a strong sense of **belonging**. We encourage collaboration, empathy, and mutual respect, ensuring that every child feels valued. By fostering a sense of belonging in our environments, we create supportive and inclusive spaces where each child can grow.

We prioritize the **wellbeing** of every child, providing opportunities for physical, emotional, and mental growth in a safe and supportive environment. Through our program, we help and encourage our children to develop healthy habits, manage their emotions, and build resilience in a caring and supportive environment.

Engagement. Every child is an active and engaged learner in our program and we provide opportunities for hands-on learning experiences that ignite curiosity and foster a love for exploration. Through our interactive experiences, children are encouraged to actively participate in their learning journey. By embracing their natural sense of wonder and curiosity, we aim to inspire lifelong learners who are eager to discover and understand the world around them.

Expression holds a high importance in our interactions, as we encourage children to express themselves authentically and openly communicate their thoughts and feelings in all forms. We understand each child's unique voice and perspective, and foster an environment where children feel empowered to communicate openly and respectfully and support their learning and growth.

Our View of the Child

At the YMCA we view each child as competent and capable individuals, we understand and respect each child's individuality with unique potential and worth. Therefore, we embark on a vision to ignite the potential and resilience in children's lives. We appreciate and value each child's individuality, growth patterns, genetic makeup, past experiences, and thinking styles. Our approach to their growth and development is holistic, ensuring that we nurture and enhance their well-being.

At the YMCA we understand that children learn through play. Play is intrinsic and non-judgmental it is undertaken without external goals and sanctions. This means children are self-learners and do not require an adult to choose what or how they should learn. When the child's natural activity of play is supported by caring and responsive professionals in positive, developmentally appropriate learning environments, we believe, a child will flourish. The child's innate competence, capacity, curiousity and potential will be maximized.

"[YMCA Playing to Learn] is a wonderful, academically sound, and highly accessible document. At the heart is the view of children, teachers, and parents as capable and competent. This is one document that will be highly valued in the field, not just sitting on a shelf." Jean M. Clinton, BMus MD FRCP(C), Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences, McMaster University

Our Curriculum

YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford has a well-established, research-based approach to early learning. Our YMCA curriculum, YMCA Playing to Learn and A Place to Connect, aligns in philosophy, standards, and recommendations with the provincial framework. At the YMCA we understand that children learn best through play. Play by definition is enjoyable, spontaneous, active, and undertaken without external goals and sanctions. Play can take many forms, be prompted by the environment, initiated by play partners (educators) or most often and most valuably, emanate from the child. This means children are self-learners and do not require an adult to choose what or how they should learn. When a child's natural activity of play is supported by caring and responsive professionals in positive, developmentally appropriate learning environments, we believe, a child will flourish. Play and development are intertwined: neither precedes the other. The child's innate competence, capacity, curiosity, and potential will be maximized.

Each child has the ability to reach their full human potential through play. Our intention is to provide the best possible environment that allows the best possible play for all children in our care. We endeavour to meet the play needs of all children and must do whatever possible to support the natural urge to play.

YMCA Program Statement

Belonging

Goal:Supporting positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, and staff

YMCA Approach:

- The Welcoming children and parents/caregivers
- Build trust through availability, sensitivity, and care.
- Create an inclusive and respectful environment.
- Interact with parents daily to share reflections on their child's day.

Goal:Fostering engagement and communication with parents

YMCA Approach:

- Ongoing communication with families in-person/digitally (YMCA apps) highlighting children's well-being, daily activities/development, and health.
- YMCA staff keep a record of each infant, toddler and preschool age child's development through daily logs and written documentation.
- Use strategies like documentation, interviews, events, and surveys to engage parents.
- Confirm preferred communication methods with families.

Goal: Involving community partners

YMCA Approach:

- Build supportive relationships with local schools and community agencies.
- Plan learning opportunities that engage the community to share knowledge and learn from events and conferences.
- Wevalue the diversity and dynamics of the families within our communities.
- Collaborate and engage with community agencies to support children's learning and development.

Well Being

Goal: Promoting health, safety, nutrition, and well-being

YMCA Approach:

- Provide safe supervision of children.
- Serve family-style meals/snacks following the Canada Food Guide identified in a posted schedule.
- Ensure daily indoor and outdoor active play.
- Implement child safety and protection training and procedure.
- Ensure play environments adhere to sanitization, disinfecting and emergency procedures.
- Communicate by posting any communicable diseases and prevention strategies.
- Staff will have standard First Aid CPR Level C Training.

Goal: Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans

YMCA Approach:

- Design flexible learning spaces that meet children's needs.
- Create home-like environments with natural elements, soft furnishings, plants, etc.
- Provide an environment encompassing a range of materials with diverse needs.
- Children of all abilities are able to participate authentically in all play environments.

Goal: Incorporating indoor, outdoor, active, rest and quiet activities

YMCA Approach:

- Create a flexible daily schedule based on children's needs and interests through small group transitions.
- Include active and quiet play opportunities throughout the day.
- We embrace all weather, with children dressing accordingly to jump in puddles or play in snow. If the weather is too severe, we move play indoors to ensure safety of our children.

Expression

Goal: Providing child-initiated and adult-supported experiences to foster exploration, play and inquiry

YMCA Approach:

- Welcome children to choose interest-based activities by providing related materials.
- Encourage play that fosters a desire to learn by asking reflective and inquiry-based questions that scaffold and extend the child's play.
- Plan activities based on children's interests.
- Participate as engaged co-learners and design engaging and adaptive play areas, to encourage further exploration and learning.

Goal: Supporting staff continuous professional learning

YMCA Approach:

- Offer child safety and protection training, curriculum training, external learning events, and legislated training.
- Provide mentorship and coaching from Childcare supervisors.
- Supervisors will conduct staff meetings for reflection and planning based on the learning needs of educators.
- Links are made between theories, research, YMCA curriculum, the YMCA Program Statement, provincial pedagogy, and children's interests to inform the planning decisions YMCA staff make.

Engagement

Goal: Encouraging children to interact, communicate and self-regulate

YMCA Approach:

- Provide small group experiences and role model respectful interactions.
- Offer a flexible learning environment and plenty of materials.
- Engage as play partners and promote problem-solving skills.

Goal: Document and observe implementation of YMCA program statement

YMCA Approach:

- Observe and document children's play and learning to scaffold and extend their individual development.
- Staff collaborate with their team to reflect on observations to adapt to the learning environment.
- The programstatement and various policies are reviewed with all staff, students, and volunteers upon hire and annually.
- People Leaders mentor, support and provide reflective observations to staff, ensuring that the approaches outlined in the programstatement, as well as compliance with policies and procedures, are being implemented, and documented on the Performance Profile bi-annually.
- Program and personal goals for staff areset annually to align with performance management.
- Families and staff will actively participate in any surveys that may influence regular and ongoing development of the program statement.

ChildSafety and Protection Policy

The YMCA is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people in its care. It recognizes its responsibility to promote safe practices and to protect children and young people from harm, abuse, and exploitation. Our Child Care educators are trained in the identification and reporting of suspected abuse, as outlined in the Child and Family Services Act. The Child and Family Services Act requires that everyone who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is in need of protection, shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to the Child Protection Agency. Further action will then be determined the Child Protection Agency.

YMCAApproach to Inclusion

The YMCA is experienced in providing inclusive programming for children with special needs, working closely with parents, YMCA educators/staff; school network and linking with community partners who support children with special needs to ensure the child's individual needs are met.

YMCA educators also receive consultation/training with either the YMCA Inclusion Services team or community inclusion teams. They provide environmental and developmental tools and resources to ensure optimum success for all children in the YMCA Before and After Care Programs and Preschool Child Care Programs, inclusive of physical, social, and learning environment challenges.

It is essential that all pertinent information specific to the child's unique needs be made available to the educators at the time of registration inquiry. Once the inquiry takes place, a conversation will occur with YMCA educators/staff; and the child's parents to ensure that upon entry to a YMCA program, the appropriate support and resources are in place to ensure optimum success for the child. A review of the child's plan will occur annually or upon request of the parties involved. On occasion, despite our child care staff's efforts, there may be a situation where our program cannot reasonably meet the unique needs of a child. If this is determined, we will arrive at a decision in consultation with the child's family and link them with local agencies that can best support the child's needs.

Prohibited Practices

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach to managing unwanted behaviour.

Any practice based on harmful disciplinary methods that affect the emotional or physical well-being of children are not permitted in any YMCA child care programs.

These prohibited practices include the following:

- Corporal punishment of a child.
- Physical restraint of a child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller or other device for discipline or in place of supervision, unless required to prevent the child from hurting themselves or someone else, used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Locking exits for the purpose of confining a child or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless required during an emergency as part of YMCAHBB's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Harsh or degrading measures, threats or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- Depriving a child of basic needs, including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting bodily harm on a child, including making a child eat or drink against their will.
- Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or engaging in a prescribed sexual act, as defined under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*. O. Reg. 137/15, s. 48; O. Reg. 126/16, s. 34; O. Reg. 197/26, s. 15.

These prohibited practices apply to all YMCA HBB employees, volunteers, and students interacting with children receiving care.

Monitoring Procedures

The YMCA recognizes that how adults interact with children impacts their overall learning, developmental health, and well-being. The following measures will be implemented to ensure that educators understand and are following through with supporting positive interactions between children, families, and educators.

All educators are expected to comply with the YMCA's stated policy and procedures, and the association's Child Care Program Statement. Annually, educators will receive

training on the Association's policies and procedures, including Safegurading Child and Youth and Prohibited Practices. Completion of required training and review will be documented through YMCAHBB's digital acknowledgement and/or Policy and Procedure Checklist.

Health and Illness

All children must be immunized or provide a notarized letter of exemption prior to attending the Child Care program. All medical information and immunization records must be kept up to date.

Educators will observe the children as they enter the program and before they interact with other children in order to detect any symptoms of ill health, this is part of a daily health check. If symptoms of ill health are observed, the educator will ask that the child be taken home and not return to the program for a minimum of 24 hours, dependent upon the child's symptoms and local Public Health guidelines. The parent or guardian may be asked to provide the centre with a doctor's note clarifying the child's health.

In addition to looking for and documenting symptoms of ill health such as fever, rash, or gastrointestinal symptoms, if educators are aware of any sudden or gradual changes to a child's behavior, sleeping or eating patterns or signs that a child has lost some previously acquired skill they will contact the parent/guardian to inform them.

Parents are to keep their children at home if they display any one of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Diarrhea – twice in one day (once in one day if during an outbreak)
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash/skin condition
- Communicable disease
- Obviously, infected discharge
- Lethargy and irritability and are not able to participate in program
- Persistent pain
- Cough (frequent bouts – 3 to 5 times/ hour, especially if choking or vomiting)
- Head lice, eggs (nits) seen

Children with diagnosed communicable diseases will be excluded according to Health Department recommendations.

Children should not return to the program until they are ready to participate in all aspects of the program, including outdoor activities.

Medication and Non-Prescription Skin Products

Educators will administer only prescription medication or patent medicine that contain a Drug Identification Number with written confirmation by the parent/guardian. Parents/ guardians will be required to fill out the Administration of Drugs and Medications Permission Form giving authorization to the Supervisor or designate to administer the drug or medication. This form will include a schedule for administering the medication and dosage. Medications must be in their original container as supplied by a pharmacist or the original package and that the container or package is clearly labeled with the child's name, date of purchase and expiration, the dosage of the drug or medication, name of drug, instructions for storage and administration of the drug.

All products (excluding asthma inhalers and epi-pens) containing Drug Identification Numbers (DIN) require an Administration of Drugs and Medications Permission Form, including vitamins, Tylenol, and Lactaid.

Non-prescription (over the counter) skin products such as sunscreen, moisturizing skin lotion, lip balm, insect repellent, diapering creams and hand sanitizer can be administered in the program only when the parent/guardian provides written authorization using the Authorization for Non-Prescription Skin Products form. Parents/guardians can complete a single authorization form for multiple non-prescription skin products. All products must be provided to YMCA educators on site in the original packaging, labelled with the child's full name and the name of the product.

Anaphylaxis and Restricted Foods

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction which can be fatal, resulting in circulatory collapse or shock. The allergy may be related to food, insect stings, medicine, latex, exercise etc. Exposure to even a minimal amount of a substance that a child is allergic can trigger an anaphylactic reaction. To reduce the risk of anaphylactic shock, foods containing nuts/peanuts are not permitted at the child care centres. You will be notified in writing with any updated restrictions and information pertaining to triggers within our program. 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, educators, students, and visitors to YMCA Child Care Programs.

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, Educator's gifts etc… However, due to a variety of reasons, including religious observance, severe allergies or intolerances, parents may choose to supply food and or drink for their child. Where a child requires special food and is bringing meals or snacks from home, the parent will be required to provide instructions on the Individual Support Plan (ISP). YMCA Supervisors will review with parents:

- Food or drinksupplied by a parent will be in a containerlabelledwith thechild's name
- Food or drink that requires refrigeration or to be kept frozen is kept in the fridge or freezer at temperature directed by the local medical officer of health

- No food or drink will show visible signs of spoilage or mold (changes to the odor, discolouration or curding)
- No food or drink will be beyond its expiry date
- Educator will use proper food handling techniques in accordance with the direction of the local medical officer of health
- Snacks will provide nutritional value as well as refreshment; these foods will be easy for the child to handle and not be detrimental to dental health
- All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations set out in the Health Canada documents "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide" or "Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants"

An Individual Anaphylaxis Plan indicating the type of anaphylactic allergy will be placed in the enrollment file/binder and all YMCA educators, placement students orvolunteers will sign off they have read and understand the plan. The YMCA will post a list of known allergies or food restrictions ofthe enrolled children in each playroom/play area, the food prep area, serving/eating area, and other spaces where caution and awareness is required.

The YMCA will work with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) and/or physician to develop an individual plan for their child. The Anaphylaxis Individual Emergency Plan 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.

The parent will sign the Anaphylaxis Individual Emergency Plan to show that they consent to the method by which the educator is trained to administer emergency medication and identify how training was provided i.e., YMCA training, supervisor to educator, parent, doctor, etc. Parent will give consent for a child to self-carry on the Administration of Medication form.

Concussion Policy

YMCA Hamilton|Burlington|Brantford is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants in YMCA programs.

Despite the best efforts of YMCA educators, participating in recreational activities can result in injuries, including concussions. A concussion can have long-term complications if it is not dealt with properly.

To ensure the safety of all participants in YMCA programs, this Concussion Policy was developed to:

- Provide a clear understanding of concussion related injuries;
- Provide a clear procedure for dealing with concussion related injuries when adults and children participating in a YMCA program are injured during the course of an activity;

- Reducethe risk of long-term complicationsrelated to concussions by requiring parents of individuals under the age of 18, who suffer a concussion to have their medical doctor and parent/guardian sign a form clearing the participant to return to physical activity as part of the participant's Return to Physical Activity (R2P) Plan; and
- Reduce the potential long-term complications of concussion related injuries to adult participants of YMCA programs.
- The information contained in this Concussion Policy is intended to supplement existing emergency procedures at YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford including first aid procedures.

Serious Occurrence

The safety and well-being of the children in our child care programs is of the highest priority. We work diligently to provide a safe, creative, and nurturing environment for each child. In spite of the best precautions, serious occurrences can sometimes take place. Licensed child care programs are required to report serious occurrences to the Ministry of Education. To support increased transparency and access to information, a "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" will be posted at the centre in a visible area for 10 days. The Serious Occurrence Posting will give parents information about the incident and outline follow-up actions taken and the outcomes, while respecting the privacy of the individuals involved. Longer-term actions taken by the operator will also be included to help prevent similar incidents in the future, where applicable.

Emergency Management

The safety and protection of children at the YMCA is of paramount importance. To ensure the wellbeing of children in our care, the YMCA has developed a detailed emergency management plan which provides critical response instructions for YMCA educators in the event of an emergency in our child care centre. Our Emergency Management Plan includes:

- The roles and responsibilities of YMCA staff in the event of an emergency
- Clear instructions on key action steps required in the event of an emergency
- Expectations regarding communication with parents
- Expectations on required emergency contacts to local response agencies
- Instructions on the documentation and post-emergency action steps for educators following resolution of an emergency

In the event of an emergency, parents will be called, and a notification will be placed on the main entrance of the centre. A statement will also be pushed out through YMCA social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter), ymcahbb.ca and digital applications (Weemarkable and YMCAHBB app).

YMCA Educators receive annual emergency management training on these critical emergency management procedures.

Smoke Free Policy

In accordance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017, no person shall smoke or hold lit tobacco and medical cannabis, or use electronic cigarettes (i.e., vaping) in or around the child care centre whether or not children are present. This includes playground, school property and surrounding area.

Head Lice

If head lice are detected while your child is attending our program, we ask that you pick them up immediately. A child with head lice will be allowed to return to the program when they are nit free.

Hours of Operation

Hamilton Early Learning Child Care Centres:
Open 7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Hamilton School Age Child Care Centres:
Open 7:30 am - 6:00 pm

Burlington Early Learning Child Care Centres:
Open 7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Burlington School Age Child Care Centres:
Open 7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Brantford Early Learning Child Care Centres:
Open 7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Brantford School Age Child Care Centres:
Open 7:00 am - 6:00 pm

All programs are closed on:

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

Fees arerequired during holiday closures. All Child Care programs will closeearly on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

PA Days and Holidays Break

The YMCA will provide full day care on professional activity days and school break programs at select locations in Brantford, Hamilton, and Burlington. A separate registration will take place for these programs. The YMCA offers Kinder Connection for 4-5 years old and Summer Day Camp during the months of July and August. Please visit our website ymcahbb.ca for more information.

Excursions

Throughout the year, trips may be made to places of interest that add an educational benefit to the children. A notice will be posted in advance of the excursion informing you of the destination, time and date. If a parent is uncomfortable with their child attending an off-site trip, they may withdraw their child from the break program at least 72 hours before the program date and credit may be applied.

What is a Typical Day?

Beforeand After Care (School Age Child Care)

Before School

The morning component allows the children to ease into their day including:

- Board games, arts, and crafts
- Outdoor play (at least 15 minutes prior to school bell)
- Low organizational games
- A nutritious snack is served every morning

After School (End of school day until 6:00 pm)

Programming strives to create a balance between structured activities and free play including:

- Active play, dramatic play
- Board games, arts, and crafts
- Outdoor play (minimum of half an hour)
- A quiet area is available for children to read books or complete homework (homework is optional)
- A nutritious snack is served each afternoon

EarlyLearning Child Care

Early Learning child care centres incorporate scheduled and unscheduled opportunities and activities in the program each day. While each centre's schedule may differ, they will include:

- daily opportunities for creative, sensory, fine, and gross motor, dramatic play, and science experiences
- activities including games and exploration;
- nutritional morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack
- outdoor play of a least one hour two times each day
- rest/quiet time

Child careeducators ensure the daily programis reflective of the children's interests and developmental needs and allows for personal growth, development, and learning.

Introducing Your Child tothe Early Learning Program

Parents/guardians can help prepare their child for Child Care by outlining to them the types of activities that they will be involved in throughout the day. Special emphasis should be placed on the fact that you will be leaving but will return. Parents are encouraged to bring their child for up to 3 play visits during the two weeks prior to the admission date. This gives the child an opportunity to become familiar with the centre and to make new acquaintances before the first day of care. The parents must remain in the centre during these visits until the child's registration form is completed, forwarded to administration, and filed at the centre. During the initial period of adjustment, tears are a very natural occurrence. Educators will use their specialized skills in helping children overcome this difficult time. Settling your child into an activity before leaving can also be helpful. Parents can call the centre during the day to see how their child is doing and documentation describing your child's day will be available at pick up time.

Parents are encouraged to call ahead to set up an appointment for an initial visit to the child care centre. During this visit you will receive several registration forms. It is necessary for you to fully complete these forms and return them, along with a copy of your child's immunization record and the Method of Payment Form before your child's first day. Your child will have the opportunity to participate in scheduled play visits prior to their first day.

YMCAChild Care Enrolment Options

The YMCA Child Care provides Full Time and Part Time registration models for families. Part time care is considered anything less than 5 days, children must be registered for a minimum of two days a week. Within our School Age Child Care programs children can be registered for mornings only, afternoons only or mornings and afternoon combined. A fee is established for each category.

The YMCA community – educators, volunteers, participants, and community partners – embrace and support every family definition. **If you require further information on the YMCA Child Care services including availability and fees, please contact us at:**

Email: ccadmin@ymcahbb.ca

Phone: 1.833.665.7326

Waiting List Policy

The YMCA will strive to accommodate all requests for the registration of a child at one of our programs with a commitment to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion within our programs and communities. Where a program is operating at capacity and spaces are unavailable for new children to be enrolled, the waiting list procedures set out below will be followed. No fee or deposit will be charged to a family for placing a child on the waiting list.

Receiving a Request and Placing a Child on the Waiting List

Brantford: Any new families looking to sign up for a Brantford YMCA School Age Child Care program must be added to the Brantford One List for programs.

Hamilton and Burlington: Families will submit their request online for their child to be placed on the waiting list through YMCA's online parent portal.

Children will be placed on the waitlist that corresponds to their age group at the time of intended enrollment. The age groups are defined as follows:

- **Infants:** 0-18 months
- **Toddlers:** 18 to 30 months
- **Preschoolers:** 30 months to 44 months
- **Kindergarten:** 3.8 years to age 5
- **School Age:** 6-12 years

Eligibility to register on a waitlist will begin at birth for Infant care, and 6-months ahead for all other program levels age groups. A child must meet

the minimum age requirement for their respective age group by the intended enrollment/start date for child care.

- Upon receipt of the request, the child's name and enrolment status will be added to the centre's waiting list in chronological order, based on the date and time that their request was received.
- Families are responsible for keeping their contact information up to date.

Determining Placement Priority when a Space Becomes Available

- When a child care space becomes available, we will review the waiting list, looking first for families who have been placed on a priority list, then using chronological order to offer a space. Priority groups are determined at the discretion of the YMCA; an example of a priority space may be, but not limited to, a child of a current YMCA HBB employee, transfers between YMCA HBB centres, or a sibling of a child who is already receiving care at a YMCA HBB centre;
- Once children on the priority list have been placed, other children on the waiting list will be prioritized based on program room availability, and spaces will be offered to families based on the centre's ability to meet the needs of each child in care.

Offering anAvailableSpace

- Families of children on the waitlist list will be notified via phone or email when a spot becomes available. They will have 2 business days to accept or decline the offer. The primary name will be the contact for all correspondence.
- If an enrollment offer is accepted, the family has 2 business days to complete registration and pay all applicable fees.
- Where a family has not responded within the given time or if the space is declined, the child will be removed from the waiting list.

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

- The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families on the list and therefore, only the child's position on the waitinglist will be provided to families when obtaininginformation regarding the waiting list;
- Names of other children or families and/or their placement on the waiting list will not be shared with other individuals.

Withdrawal and Schedule Changes

Two weeks' written notice is required for withdrawal or for a change of schedule. Two weeks' fees will still be charged if notice is not given prior to withdrawal. Preschool parents withdrawing their children during the summer months and wishing to re-register for the fall will be placed on the waiting list and must re-register when a space becomesavailable.Admission anddischarge ofchildrenis atthediscretion oftheYMCA.

The YMCA allows two scheduled changes to a child's registered days within the school year. Any additional changes are subject to an administrative fee.

Tax Receipts

The YMCA issues official tax receipts to families on February 28th of each fiscal year. The YMCA will issue child care tax receipts in accordance with CRA regulations.

YMCAGuidelines for Child Care Program Closures

Severe Weather Conditions

In cases of severe weather conditions, many schools adjust their school hours and close earlier than the regular dismissal time. Schools generally close before the school day begins in the morning.

When school boards announce closures:

- YMCA programs operating out of those schools will also be closed (no refunds will be issued for these days).
- In cases of severe weather conditions, parents are asked to listen to local radio/TV announcements, check YMCA website, YMCA app and social media for information on school closures.

If the school has not been closed:

- If schools remain open and severe weather conditions progress throughout the day, YMCA educators will call parents to encourage early pick up. A message will also be placed on the Child Care Centre's voice mail advising of closures.

In the event the school building is being closed:

- If the school building is closed during YMCA program time due to an emergency, the educators and children will move to the emergency evacuation location. Parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child immediately.

In the case of an emergency centre closure, which is outside the control of the YMCA, parents will be responsible for fees not exceeding 2 (two) consecutive days. This includes emergency closures such as inclement weather closures, centres without heat/hydro, job action/strike. This means that should a centre need to close for up to 2 (two) days, parents will be expected to pay for care.

Our full day child care centres not located in schools will also follow the above policies.

Safe Arrival & Dismissal Policy

The intent of this policy and the procedures within is to support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care at YMCA Child Care Centre's.

The YMCA will ensure that any child receiving care is only released to the child's parent/guardian, or to an individual that the parent/guardian has provided authorization to release the child to. Children will not be released to anyone who is under 16 years of age. Designated persons picking up a child may be requested to show photo identification. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.

Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, educators must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out in the following Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy.

Parental Access Policy

1. The YMCA shall grant parents access to their children while the children are enrolled in our programs.
2. Access by non-custodial parents, even if name is omitted from registration form, shall be permitted unless a court order or a separation agreement prohibits such access. (Note: There must be proof that the person is the non-custodial parent)
3. The onus shall be on the custodial parent to provide the YMCA with a certified copy of the court order or separation agreement in the event that he or she wishes to deny access to the non-custodial parent.

If Your Child Will Be Away

The YMCA educator needs to know where your child is every day to ensure your child is safe. If your child is registered but cannot attend the program on their scheduled day, please notify the centre via program's communication app, email, and/or contact the program at the phone number provided during registration. Parents areasked to keep the centre supervisor updated with current emergency information i.e., new cell phone number, change of address.

Payment is required for absenteeism. The YMCA reserves the right to manage enrollment due to extended absenteeism. In situations where a child has been absent for a prolonged period of time, and capacity is limited, parents may be asked to withdraw from the program. Parents wishing to re-register will be placed on the waiting list until a space becomes available. Admission and discharge of children is at the discretion of the YMCA.

Impaired Parents / Guardians

YMCA educators have been directed to follow specific procedures should a parent/ guardian who is impaired arrive to pick up their child. Educators will request the parent to take a cab or to contact an alternate person who can be responsible for drivingthem home. If this is not observed by the parents, the Police and the Child Protection Agency may be called.

Volunteers and Students in the Program

Throughout the year you may see students doing field placements as well as volunteers in the centre. Field placements and volunteering give an opportunity to learn through experience. It allows volunteers and students to learn and apply basic principles and techniques for guiding and nurturing young children. While on a placement, students and volunteers will never have unsupervised access to the children in the centre and they are not counted in our staff/child ratios. Students and volunteers undergo a vulnerable sector criminal record check and are oriented into the program before beginning their placements.

Your Privacy – Information Collection, Use & Disclosure

The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford is committed to and respects your privacy. We recognize that when you choose to provide us with any information about yourself or your company, you trust us to act in a responsible manner. That's why we have put this policy in place to protect your personal information. The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act refers specifically to personal information. Your information is used only for the purpose for which it was given to us. It will not be shared, sold or loaned to anyone or any business. Any information that you give will be compliant to the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act of 2000. For more information, please see our website www.ymcahbb.ca

YMCA-Program-to-Program Information Exchange

For thesafety and wellbeing of children in our care, the YMCA willshare information with other YMCA program areas as children transition or enroll in new YMCA programs.

Parent Issues & Concerns Policy and Procedures

Intent

YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford is committed to service excellence in the delivery of YMCA programs, services and supporting our charitable mandate. It is recognized that from time to time there may be concerns/complaints and parent issues that may arise. The YMCA recognizes that parents/guardians have the right to raise such complaints/ concerns and/or parental issues, and that they need mechanisms to do so. This policy is intended to create a transparent and timely method of responding to public complaints. The YMCA recognizes that when a person has a complaint about the YMCA, the way in which his/her complaint is handled is critical to the person's ongoing relationship with our organization.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in YMCA child care centres and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing within our program. As identified in the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford's program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and educators, and foster the engagement of an ongoing communication with parents/ guardians about the program and their children. Educators are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction. Complaints aredefined as but not limited to an expression of dissatisfaction with regard to a service/program (e.g., program-related, educator-related, and operational).

Procedure

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians will be taken seriously by the YMCA and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties as quickly as possible. Complaints/concerns are encouraged to be discussed with the educator who is most connected to the concern/ situation, either in person, by phone or by email. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/ guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

If the complaint is not resolved or if the parent/guardian is uncomfortable discussing the issue with the relevant educator, the parent/guardian can inform the supervisor, manager, or General Manager of the program. This process can be used to resolve many inquiries or matters of simple error that can be corrected to your satisfaction.

Process

YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford is committed to handling concerns/ complaints/parental issues promptly, consistently, and fairly. Complainants will be treated with respect and kept informed of the status of the complaint. YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford child care department will respond to all complaints within 2 business days of receiving the complaint. The initial response to a concern/complaint/ parental issue will be to confirm the complaint has been received and to indicate expectations for how long the investigation will take if it can be reasonably assessed at that point. The YMCAHBB aims to resolve all concerns/complaints and parental issues within 10 business days of receiving them. If this time limit cannot be met, parents/guardians will be informed of the reasons and given a revised timeframe. Upon completion of the investigation, parents/guardians will be provided with clear reasons for the decisions relating to the complaint.

Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, educator, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party. If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or educator feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or Manager.

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the Manager/ General Manager. Please refer to Page 28 for office phone numbers and emails.

If you have been unable to resolve your concern through the informal process described above, a formal complaint may be made in writing to: Complaints c/o Vice President, Communications YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford 79 James St South, Hamilton, ON L8P 2Z1 or via email to feedback.hbb@ymcahbb.ca.

Please provide your contact information, as the YMCA will not respond to anonymous complaints. If you are unable to register the complaint in this manner due to a disability, you may contact the YMCA to request accommodation, which will be provided appropriate to your needs and circumstances.

For more information, view our full Parent Issues and Concerns Policy

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly: http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/CASLocations.aspx

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

For more information, visit http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx visit http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx

Y Saves Lives Campaign

Everyone deserves a chance to have a healthy life, connected to community and meaningful relationships. It is proven that we have a better chance of doing so when we have a YMCA in our community. In fact, the Y saves lives. Across more than 120 locations, YMCA Hamilton|Burlington|Brantford is a place where all can find belonging. We provide a social network and reduce isolation. For some the Y is home, for many we are a second home. We are founded on promoting equity and improving the health and well-being of all members of our community. To do so, we must reach more people, break down barriers to access, and provide increased programming that is responsive to people from all backgrounds, abilities, and life situations. That is why YMCA Hamilton|Burlington|Brantford is launching The Y Saves Lives Campaign to raise $25 million to make bold and targeted investments to double the number of people we serve from 270,000 to 550,000. Will you join us in saving more lives in our community?

Financial Assistance

As a charitable organization, the YMCA strives to serve all segments of the community, including those with limited financial means. Donors to the YMCA make this possible. If financial circumstances are limiting your ability to participate, assistance may be provided. Please contact us for more information. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

Accessibility

YMCA Hamilton | Burlington | Brantford strives to provide safe and accessible services for all members, participants, volunteers, and staff. To this end, the YMCA of Hamilton/ Burlington/Brantford is committed to ensuring that all persons with disabilities are treated equally with respect to the delivery of YMCA programs and services. The YMCA has developed accessibility policies which aredesigned to inform and educate members, staff, and volunteers that the YMCA is dedicated to adhering to the requirements of the Accessibility for all Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, O.Reg. 429/07 and is committed to providing accessible services to all members.

November 11, 2026



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