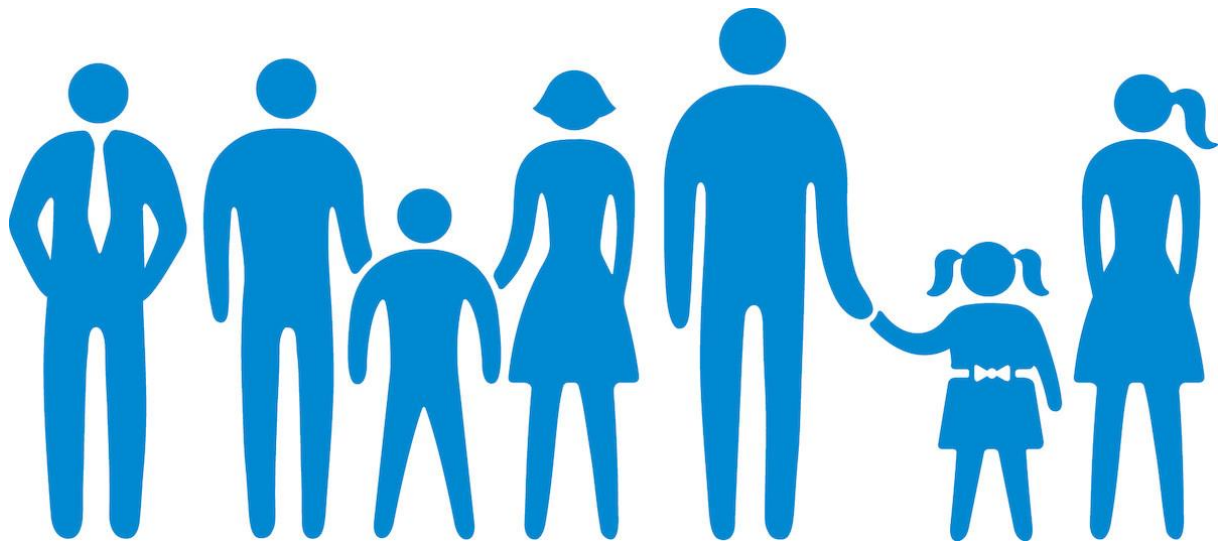




FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# STANWOOD-CAMANO YMCA SCHOOL AGE CARE FAMILY HANDBOOK





FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to the YMCA of Snohomish County's School-Age Care Programs. We are pleased to provide care for your family! By selecting the YMCA, you are giving your child the opportunity to benefit from a quality program that has a foundation of YMCA tradition and an organization that is nationally recognized as the authority in child care.

Your child will have daily opportunities to play with new friends, learn new skills, build self-confidence, and enjoy many fun and challenging activities designed to meet his or her developmental needs. Our philosophy strongly emphasizes a community approach to learning. The activities we plan for children, the way we organize the environment, select materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with children, are all designed to accomplish our overall goal of developing the whole child.

We offer a well-rounded staff team that is fully trained in supervision and positive approaches to promoting the well-being of every child physically, emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually.

It is a pleasure to work with your family. Please take a few minutes to read this handbook. It has been designed to answer your questions, promote communication between our staff and your family, and to assist you in understanding our policies and procedures. If you have any additional questions, please contact the Director at your child's program or the Program Director at your Branch.

Once again, welcome and thank you for choosing the YMCA of Snohomish County. We look forward to working together to create an exceptional learning experience for your child. We hope to not only meet, but to exceed the expectations of you and your family.

Peyton Tune  
President & CEO  
YMCA of Snohomish County



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## PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

### Help children achieve their potential through:

- Pursuing an interest they are passionate about
- Feeling a sense of belonging and making new friends
- Practicing the core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility
- Providing opportunities to gain knowledge, skills, and abilities by trying new things
- Encouraging physical activity
- Teaching healthy eating options
- Providing daily homework support

### Support and strengthen the family unit to:

- Improve healthy living among family members
- Increase family ability to work and play together
- Help families share their values
- Increase "sense of community" with other families

### Deliver school-age care programs for children in a positive YMCA environment by:

- Providing safety, support, care, and fun for children
- Broadening community, national, and world understanding of children and parents through our daily programs

The mission of the YMCA of Snohomish County is building a community where all people, especially the young, are encouraged to develop their fullest potential in spirit, mind and body. A high-quality holistic YMCA program implements the mission into all program activities. School-Age programs offer a stimulating and nurturing environment for children to develop social, physical and intellectual skills. Activities are the tools YMCA use to help children experience the YMCA mission.

## YMCA OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY MISSION STATEMENT

To inspire, nurture, and strengthen culturally vibrant communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The YMCA of Snohomish County is an organization committed to diversity, inclusion, and non-discrimination. We welcome all people regardless of ability, age, background, ethnicity/race, faith, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

## CULTURE OF INCLUSION

The Y believes that in a diverse world we are stronger when we are inclusive, when our doors are open to all, and when everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. As our laws and communities continue to change, one thing is constant: the YMCA is, and always will be, a place where individuals and families from all walks of life are welcomed and supported. We demonstrate this through equitable practices and procedures and offering programs and services that continually evolve to meet the changing needs of our community.

## LOCATION, CONTACT INFORMATION, AND HOURS OF OPERATION

School / Program	Serving	Address	Hours of Operation	Contact	School District
<b>Twin City Elementary</b>	Cedarhome Twin City Stanwood	26211 72nd Ave NW Stanwood, WA 98292	Monday-Friday Before School Care 6:30am- 9am Wednesday Late Start 6:30am – 10:20am After School Care 3:30 pm-6:30 pm	360 572 1139	Stanwood- Camano
<b>Utsalady Elementary</b>	Utsalady Elger Bay	608 Arrowhead Rd Camano Island, WA 98282	Monday-Friday Before School Care 6:30am- 9am Wednesday Late Start 6:30am – 10:20am After School Care 3:30 pm-6:30 pm	360 572 1135	Stanwood- Camano

# ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

## PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Prior to attending the program, each child must enroll in School Age Care. The enrollment process consists of completing the online registration and billing packet. All forms must be completed before your registration is final. At least two full business days are required to process the registration before enrollment is finalized at which time attendance is permitted. Any child that may require special accommodations must also have the appropriate forms completed for individualized care.

## REGISTRATION FEE

All programs require a \$50 non-refundable registration fee per child, per school year.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Y staff members are trained to help children with mild to moderate diverse-abilities. However, our facilities are not adequately staffed to work with children who need significant assistance with personal care, constant one-to-one support, or have great difficulty managing their behavior in a group setting. If your child requires specialized accommodations, please contact your local Y family branch.

## WITHDRAWALS AND VACATION

A 15-day written notice is required for all withdrawals, vacation requests, or changes in care to be eligible for credit or refund if eligible. Please request a Child Care Change Request Form to provide this notice.

## KEEPING RECORDS CURRENT

All enrollment paperwork is scheduled to be updated at least annually, late summer/early fall to ensure that we have the most current information necessary to properly care for your child. Please contact your director when you have new or changed information for your child's records.

## MONTHLY PAYMENT

All school-age care tuition is due by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to receiving care. Methods of accepted payment are Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover, personal check, money order, bank draft, or cash (please do not send cash in the mail).

Automatic draft is our preferred payment method. Families have the option to pay in full on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month prior to care or split their payments in two on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> prior to care. To schedule automatic payments complete and return a draft authorization form with at least 15 days' notice of next draft.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Child records are kept confidential. Only those staff that must have access to the information will have access. Licensors are granted access to all center records including child records during inspections to evaluate and enforce the practice of ensuring all records are complete and current.

# SITE CLOSURES

## HOLIDAY CLOSURES

YMCA School-Age Care programs are closed on the following days:

- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- The day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

Programs may close early on New Year's Eve.

Programs may shut down for 1-3 days at the end of the school year and/or the end of summer for site preparation and staff training. Notice will be provided of the specific dates at least 6 weeks prior to the closures. Subject to change if the school calendar changes.

## **UNSCHEDULED CLOSURES DUE TO UNSAFE CONDITIONS**

For the safety of our members, staff, and volunteers, it may become necessary to close the YMCA school-age care programs without prior notice. The YMCA of Snohomish County Severe Weather Closure Policy applies to snow, severe weather, icy, or other dangerous road conditions, power outages, disaster, or any unforeseen reason.

All families are encouraged to have a backup plan for care in the event of an emergency. The YMCA will make every attempt to provide care however, the YMCA cannot guarantee that staff will always be able to get to the schools or that the school will be open to provide care in every situation. As a means to keep families posted on the status of the program's operation, site staff will send out text messages and emails. Updates are also available via our website and Facebook page.

## **WHEN SCHOOL IS CANCELLED**

If the school district deems it appropriate to close schools for the entire day, the Y will also close for the day. The YMCA does not have access to the schools and therefore we cannot provide care.

## **WHEN SCHOOL IS DELAYED**

If the school district delays school start times, the Y will delay opening under the same time guidelines. (For example: School start two hours late, Y programs open two hours late).

## **WHEN SCHOOL IS DELAYED THEN CANCELLED**

The YMCA may close the Y School-Age Care program, call parents, and send children home with an adult authorized for pickup. Please have alternative arrangements for your child if you work out of the area so that we can contact someone locally to take over care of your child. It is necessary for the YMCA to receive your permission prior to releasing your child to anyone not yet on your child's authorized list.

## **WHEN SCHOOL IS LET OUT EARLY OR THE SCHOOL'S AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS ARE CANCELLED**

The YMCA will make every attempt to contact families and will close that afternoon. If the program must close early, parents will be called to pick up their children as soon as possible.

## **CLOSURE CONDITIONS ON NON-SCHOOL DAYS**

If it snows during a Non-School Day when the YMCA is scheduled to offer full day care, you will be notified through email and our Facebook page. Any decision will be based upon weather conditions and road conditions reported by the Washington State Patrol and/or the State Department of Transportation.

## **ADJUSTMENTS FOR MISSED DAYS**

Scheduled shut-down days, holidays, and possible emergency closure days have been taken into consideration when planning for fee schedules. Pro-rating and refunds will not be issued for closure days. This practice also applies to additional care hours/days that may arise due to school calendar changes made after fees have been set. Emergency Closure Days are not included in any plan.

## **SAFETY FIRST**

The safety and well-being of your children, you and our staff are of the utmost concern to the YMCA. We appreciate the opportunity to be a part of your family and are dedicated to providing a safe and healthy environment that allows for the development of our youth. If you have any questions regarding our severe weather policy, please do not hesitate to contact your on-site staff for more detailed information.

# **PROGRAM PRACTICES**

## **SIGN IN/OUT PROCEDURES**

- Anyone picking up a child must be listed as an authorized pick up on the child's registration form.
- Parents/Guardians and/or only those authorized to pick up the child must sign in and out their child(ren) with an electronic PIN.
- Identification may be checked at any pick up. Be prepared to show your driver's license or photo identification.
- The YMCA respects the rights of parents/guardians to access their own child. However, if YMCA staff feel a parent/guardian is in an unsafe condition to drive or otherwise leave with their child (such as under the influence of drugs or alcohol), the YMCA staff may suggest that the parent or the Y staff call the other parent/guardian, a friend or relative, or a cab. The YMCA staff may also call 911 for assistance and to report the incident.
- Pick up your child on time each day. If an emergency arises and you are unable to reach the site before closing, call the staff to inform them of your progress.

## LATE PICK UPS

1-10 minutes	\$10 per child
11-30 minutes	\$30 per child
31 or more minutes	\$30 plus \$1 every minute thereafter

Late pick-up fees will be due with the next month's payment. Consistent late-pickups may result in suspension or expulsion from the program at the sole discretion of the YMCA.

## CUSTODY ISSUES & CHILD RECORDS

The registering parent/guardian is the only authorized party to make changes to their child(s) records. The registering parent/guardian may choose to authorize another person to make changes to their child(s) records.

Parenting plans will be honored to the extent feasible and requires legal documentation. Please note that when a child's care fees are paid by two parents, the full payment must still be received for care to continue.

## ACCESS TO CHILDREN DURING CARE

Parent or guardians may visit and inspect the school-age care facility in which their child is enrolled during normal operating hours without advance notice. The YMCA prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any child, parent, or guardian who exercises this right. Any parent/guardian, whom the YMCA determines poses or may pose a risk to any child or individual at the school-age care facility, will be asked to leave immediately.

## FAMILY AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

At the Y we strive to provide you with timely and relevant information on our programs, engaging you as a partner in your child's success. This includes surveys, monthly newsletters, daily informal communication, and program learning objectives. To best support you and your family at our Y, please feel free to provide suggestions for improvement regarding these communication tools.

## TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE

Before School Care

Until start of school:

- Snack, child-led activities, group time, and physical activity

After School Care

End of school until closing

- Snack, group time, homework support, outdoor play
- Afternoon activities include literacy, math, science, active play, and youth-led activities.

See your site's schedule posted on the Family Information Board.

## HOMEWORK SUPPORT

Space and materials will be accessible at the site to study and work on homework. Staff will be available for support. Thirty minutes of quiet homework time is provided daily.

## HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (HEPA) STANDARDS

### FOOD AND BEVERAGE

- Water is accessible and available to children at all times, including at the table during snacks and meals.
- Water, unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, or nonfat milk will be the only beverages served.
- Children serve themselves all food and beverages from common bowls and pitchers with limited help.
- A fruit or vegetable is provided at every snack.
- Fried foods and foods that contains trans-fat will not be served for any snack.
- All provided grains will be whole grains.
- All provided foods will not list sugar as one of the first three ingredients or will contain no more than 8 grams of added sugar per serving.
- Y staff will model healthy eating behaviors at all times. This includes eating with children during snack (if possible) and avoiding consumption of foods or beverages that are inconsistent with the HEPA standards during program time.



## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

- Children are provided opportunities for moderate and vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day for morning and afternoon programs and 60 minutes for a full day program. This will include a mixture of moderate and vigorous activity as well as bone and muscle strengthening activities.
- Physical activity will take place outdoors whenever possible.
- Y staff will model active living by participating in physical activities with children.

## **MEDIA USE AND SCREEN TIME**

- Media use is limited to music and only occasional visual media when it is a part of a one-time special program. When it does occur, visual media will be acceptable only for educational purposes or as a means to get participants moving and participating in vigorous physical activity. Music played in the program is program and age-appropriate.
- Some sites may offer computers for the use of homework and other educational activities. Screen time will be monitored by staff.

## **SNACKS AND MEALS**

Breakfast and an afternoon snack that adhere to HEPA and licensed guidelines are provided daily. We are committed to offering the healthiest options possible, providing nutrition education and role-modeling healthy choices. Please review the menu and alert the staff of any food allergies your child may have. Children must bring a lunch when attending on non-school days. Food cannot be refrigerated or heated, so please include an ice pack if packing perishables in your child's lunch.

Children are encouraged but never forced to try new foods and to re-try foods that they have previously disliked. Please contact staff if you have concerns about your child's eating habits.

If you would like to provide alternate food for your child during snack time (e.g. food from home, extra food from their packed lunch) for dietary, health or other reasons please ask for a YMCA Parent Meal Plan Agreement as required by state licensing (WAC 170-297-7525-Parent or Guardian Provided Food).

## **PEANUT AND NUT ALLERGIES**

To help the YMCA create a safe environment for children with life-threatening nut allergies, you will be asked to refrain from sending your child with food containing peanuts or other tree nuts. If your child has an item in their lunch or snack that contains peanuts or tree nuts we will put a reminder sticker on the item and send it back home with your child. Staff will replace the food with a similar item (ex: peanut butter sandwich will be replaced with a soy-nut butter sandwich). If you have questions speak with the Site Coordinator.

## **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

The YMCA of Snohomish County's School-Age Care Programs do not intentionally or specifically implement religious activities into their programming. Through cultural awareness education and celebrating and exploring a variety of traditions, we learn about other's beliefs and customs. These beliefs and customs may be associated with the culture's religious beliefs and practices. While learning about others, we do not promote or question the beliefs of others. We do encourage children to have discussions with their parents when they have questions.

## **CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS**

Holiday celebrations focus on sharing our home-time plans and the time we get to spend with our families. Please share any family traditions and preferences with program staff. At minimum, we strive to celebrate traditions that reflect our current participants. During the winter holidays, we take a look at multiple traditions and celebrations. Celebrations of all kinds will focus on history, traditions, games and other fun rather than foods.

## **WHAT NOT TO BRING**

- Money/valuables
- Toys and Games
- Electronics/Media source
- Weapons of any kind (toys included)
- Pets or animals

The YMCA cannot be held responsible for broken, lost, or stolen items. In the event that a child brings any item(s) that should not be brought to the program, staff will ask that the item(s) be put away in the child's backpack/bin or may store them and return the item(s) at the end of the day.

## **PETS AND ANIMALS**

The YMCA of Snohomish County will follow the school district policy applicable to each location regarding animals on the premises. Please talk with your onsite staff or see your site's Health Policy for more information.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

All belongings must be labeled. Children will have a bin to store their belongings. The YMCA cannot be held responsible for broken, lost or stolen items. Please remind your child to take everything home every day. Check the Lost and Found regularly.

## **CHILD SAFETY**

### **PERSONAL SAFETY TALKS**

Our staff will engage children in discussions to help them understand how they can set their own personal safety and touching limits. These discussions will emphasize respect, set the ground rules for appropriate behavior and encourage children to tell a trusted adult if someone touches them in way that makes them uncomfortable. The YMCA of Snohomish County respects the diversity and rights of the individuals it serves.

### **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

The YMCA staff shall protect the child in care from child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, as required under RCW chapter 26.44. School-age care staff are mandated reporters and are required to report any suspicion of child abuse. We may NOT notify parents if this occurs except upon the recommendation of Child Protective Services or the Police.

### **SICK CHILD PROCEDURES**

The YMCA cannot accept children for care when they are ill. Staff will observe each child upon daily arrival. If your child is experiencing any of the symptoms listed below, we will ask that other arrangements be made for his/her care:

- Fever of 101 degrees F or higher
- Vomiting within the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea
- Draining rash
- Eye discharge or pink eye
- Lice or nits

If your child develops these symptoms during the day we will require a parent or guardian to pick up the child. We will report communicable diseases to the local health department. We will also notify other parents so appropriate action can be taken to protect children as applicable.

### **MEDICATION MANAGEMENT**

If it is necessary for your child to take medications while he/she is in our care, please give the medication directly to a staff member when you sign-in your child. Written parental consent is required for us to administer any medication, and you will be asked to complete a form when you hand over the medication. Medications are stored in a locked box out of the reach of children. We maintain a record of administration in the locked box on a medication log. The Site Coordinator or designee will be responsible to administer medication per a doctor's instructions.

All prescription medication must be in its original container properly labeled with your child's full name, date prescription was filled/or medication's expiration date, and legible instructions for administration such as manufacturer's instructions or prescription label.

The following non-prescription medications require written parental consent and can be given only at the dosage, duration, and method of administration specified on the manufacturer's label for the age and/or weight of your child

- Antihistamines
- Non aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers
- Decongestants or non-narcotic cough suppressant
- Anti-itching ointments or lotions, intended specifically to relieve itching or dry skin
- Sunscreen
- Hand Sanitizer
- Medicated lip balm
- Mouthwash

A physician's written authorization is required for any non-prescription medication that is:

- Not included in the above list
- To be taken differently than indicated on the manufacturer's label
- Lacks labeled instructions

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

If your child is at risk of having an allergic reaction from food or bee stings or other medical emergency that requires specific action or medication, you must indicate this on your child's registration form and complete an Individual Care Plan.

Any life threatening emergency occurring to any child during program attendance will result in a call to 911. Be sure that your child's Health History remains current and up-to-date so that staff have all information necessary to adequately care for your child. All staff are certified in CPR and First Aid and will administer as needed. Minor injuries will be treated and you will receive a verbal or written report when you pick up your child.

Parent(s) will be called to be informed of the emergency and procedures for picking-up their child at the first possible moment after the child(ren) is safe. Keeping parents informed is important to us. However, our first priority is the safety of the child.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

All sites practice monthly fire drills and have a posted evacuation plan. The YMCA has written emergency policies for a variety of issues. A copy may be obtained from your Branch or by contacting the Program Director.

In case of an evacuation emergency such as fire, bomb threat, or gas leak, children will be kept in the nearest safe area and parents will be contacted as soon as possible to pick up their child. In case of confinement to the facility, parents or emergency contact will be called as soon as possible and informed of procedures. In case of a catastrophic disaster, please call our out-of-area contact at the Spokane YMCA 1 509 838 3577.

## **INSURANCE**

Because the YMCA does not provide accident or health insurance for its members, it is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to provide coverage for children enrolled in our programs.

## **STAFF RATIOS AND TRAININGS**

The required ratio for the State of Washington is 1:15 and the YMCA maintains a 1:15 or better ratio. Site Coordinators are over age 21 and receive a 20 hours of STARS approved certification in Child Growth & Development, Child Guidance, Health, Safety, and Licensing, Professionalism and Communicating with Parents. Many School-Age Care Staff have degrees related to their field and or Elementary Teaching Credentials. Each year directors also received 10 additional hours in STARS approved training in a variety of topics relevant to their positions. School-age care assistants offer an additional support to children. All staff have first aid and CPR training, background checks, and regular in-service training. Upon request, staff professional development records are available for review.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

At the YMCA we welcome parents or guardians to help throughout the day in your child's programs. We also offer many other volunteer opportunities such as helping with field trips, administrative work, classroom decorations, youth sports and involvement in our Annual Campaign. Please speak with staff at your program for more information.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND TRIPS**

Transportation will be in YMCA vehicles or by school bus. Vehicles have regular safety checks and are equipped with seat belts, fire extinguisher, first aid kit and a spare tire. All Drivers are selected for their safe driving record, have insurance, receive Driver Training and are required to have First Aid and CPR training.

Children must use safety restraints and follow bus safety rules. At each transition, attendance is taken and vehicles are checked to ensure all children have evacuated prior to the driver leaving the vehicle.

## **LICENSING INFORMATION**

Copy of most recent school-age care checklist for licensing renewal, monitoring checklist, and facility licensing compliance agreement for any deficiencies noted are available on site for your review. Please contact your Site Coordinator for more information.

## BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The YMCA of Snohomish County policy is based upon developmentally appropriate practice and the core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Staff work closely with children to build relationships that foster trust and mutual respect. A variety of techniques are used to both prevent and correct undesired behavior. These may include role-modeling, redirection, positive reinforcement, accommodations such as changes to the environment, and natural or logical consequences.

If the child's behavior is not acceptable and attempts at guidance have been unsuccessful, our procedures are as follows:

1. The child will be encouraged to use his/her words to try to solve the situation peacefully.
2. The child will be redirected to a new activity.
3. The child will be removed from the situation until he/she is able to rejoin the group.
4. Parents are alerted and encouraged to share ideas.
5. Parent & Staff conference will be held with recommendation for an immediate behavior contract or short-term suspension from care.
6. Complete removal of the child from program.

As a partner in your child's success, we encourage you to share information with us that may affect your child's behavior. We are committed to working with you in the best interest of your child and the rest of the children in our care. We do not use or endorse any form of corporal punishment by anyone (including family members). We do not condone biting, shaking, spanking, slapping, hitting, kicking or any other means of inflicting physical pain.

Because there are such a wide variety of behaviors that children display, the Y reserves the right to make the decision to suspend or expel a child based on the physical or emotional safety of the child, other children in the program and the staff.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

The YMCA is committed to providing a positive atmosphere that is safe and inclusive to all in our community. Therefore, the YMCA of Snohomish County has adopted a code of conduct to govern the actions and behavior of all people while in our facilities and while participating in YMCA programs.

Individuals are expected to:

- Uphold the YMCA core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, & caring
- Provide an atmosphere free of derogatory or unwelcome comments, conduct or actions of a sexual nature, or actions based on an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion, abilities, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected statutes
- Be respectful and cooperative with YMCA staff and others

## NO TOLERANCE POLICY

We want to make sure all children at the YMCA have a positive atmosphere that is safe and inclusive. We are asking for your support in maintaining a fun, safe place where children can achieve their potential. Please talk with your children about the importance of not exhibiting the behaviors described below. Ideally, we want to work with families to **prevent** these behaviors from occurring.

The following will NOT be tolerated at YMCA facilities and in YMCA programs:

- Abusive, harassing, and/or obscene language or gestures
- Threats of harm, physical aggression, violent acts, or bullying
- Weapons of any kind
- Damaging or defacing YMCA or school property
- Possession, sale, use, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Offensive or unlawful conduct
- Purposely leaving the area of supervision without permission
- Improper exposure

Failure to follow this code of conduct will result in disciplinary action, which may include a one to three day suspension or removal from the program. A parent conference will be scheduled to develop a success plan in order for your child to remain in the Program. It may become necessary for the benefit of the child, as well as for the safety of the other children, to remove a child from our Program.

## STATEMENT FOR PREVENTION OF ABUSE

A principal endeavor of the YMCA is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of youth and children. Thus, the mistreatment or neglect of youth or children and the resulting severe effects are of primary concern to the YMCA. Child abuse is mistreatment or neglect of a child by parents or others resulting in injury or harm. Abuse can lead to severe emotional, physical, and behavioral problems. Because of its concern for the welfare of children and youth, the YMCA has developed policies, standards, guidelines, and training to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse. In addition, all employees are screened, and background checks are conducted upon hiring or rehiring. Additionally, employees who have contact with children and youth receive training in recognizing, reporting, and preventing child abuse, which includes training in recognizing signs that a child is being groomed for abuse. Some of the guidelines employees are expected to follow are:

- Avoid being alone with a single child where you cannot be observed by other staff or adults.
- You may not relate to children who participate in YMCA programs outside of approved YMCA activities. For example, baby-sitting weekend trips, foster care etc. are not permitted.
- Giving personal gifts to program participants or their parents is not allowed.
- Program rules and boundaries must be followed, including appropriate touch guidelines.
- Children or youth should not be singled out for favored attention.
- Dating a program participant under age 18 is not allowed. Some YMCA programs may have additional restrictions.
- Children may not be disciplined by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
- Verbally, physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing or punishing children or youth is not allowed.
- Children may be informed in a manner that is age appropriate to the group of their right to set their own "touching" limits for personal safety.
- Children should only be released to authorized persons in programs with controlled pick-up procedures.
- Any information regarding abuse or potential abuse should be documented in writing.
- At the first reasonable cause to believe that any child abuse exists, it should be reported to your supervisor or branch executive so that proper reporting can be initiated.
- At the first reasonable cause to believe that an employee or volunteer abused a child or youth, even if it was not during working hours, his or her conduct should be reported to the program director and the branch executive or another designated branch representative. Additionally, it is the YMCA's protocol to make a report to the appropriate authorities. Appropriate actions will be taken regarding the employee or volunteer, including suspension or termination from YMCA employment or volunteer status.

Confidentiality of information related to child abuse is crucial and should be limited to the immediate supervisor and/or branch executive and designated members of the Association office.

## KNOW, SEE, RESPOND

At the YMCA of Snohomish County, we practice three important habits of Child Abuse Prevention—KNOW, SEE and RESPOND—to create safe spaces where youth can learn, grow and thrive. When we KNOW how abuse happens, SEE the warning signs and RESPOND quickly to prevent it, together we foster a culture of child abuse prevention.

We **KNOW** when we understand the behaviors of those who harm youth and how to stop them. Staff and volunteers who practice the **KNOW** habit:

- Understand the potential risks for abuse that children and teens face, and their role in protecting them at their Y
- Understand how predators operate
- Recognize the importance of proactive engagement when supervising youth
- Interact appropriately and safely with youth at their Y
- Recognize appropriate and inappropriate interactions between adults and youth, and between youth
- Appreciate the difference they make when they practice the Three Habits in Child Abuse Prevention at their Y
- Encourage others to adopt these prevention habits
- Can explain what Know, See and Respond means when asked by a parent or community member

We **SEE** when we can recognize warning signs or behaviors that signal abuse or a risk for abuse. Staff and volunteers who practice the **SEE** habit:

- Interrupt inappropriate interactions between adults and youth, and between youth
- Respect children and teen’s emotional, psychological and physical boundaries—according to the YMCA’s policies—and ensure that others also follow the policies
- Notice and help when staff or volunteers need assistance with a child’s behavior
- Act when something seems wrong and if they observe others not practicing the prevention habits

We **RESPOND** when we take action to stop behaviors we recognize as being inappropriate or questionable. Staff and volunteers who practice the **RESPOND** habit:

- Act when children or others need help
- Interrupt questionable behavior by a staff member, volunteer or youth
- Notify the appropriate people at their Y when they have a concern

Can make a report to child protective services and/or police when they suspect child abuse



**KNOW**



**SEE**



**RESPOND**